



Promoting Rural Prosperity in the Americas

Management Report

2002-2008



**IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas**



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This document, which presents part of IICA's history, is irrefutable proof of the results achieved from 2002 to 2008 vis-à-vis our mission of promoting the sustainable development of agriculture and rural prosperity in the rural communities of the Americas.



Foreword

One of the hallmarks of the administration of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) from 2002-2010 has been its commitment to dialogue and accountability. Such accountability would not be possible without the systematic documentation of the most important results achieved during that period, in pursuit of the objectives of the Medium Term Plans implemented and in compliance with mandates from the governing bodies of the Institute: the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the Executive Committee.

It has been the practice at IICA for the units at Headquarters and the Offices in the member countries to prepare and present a report in the first months of each year on the results achieved in the previous year as a result of their cooperation actions. That document includes information on the state of and outlook for agriculture and rural life, opportunities for cooperation in the future, the most important activities, and publications.

This notwithstanding, in the present report **“IICA’s Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas,”** we have attempted to bring together all the most important results achieved throughout the term of the current administration, thanks to the efforts of more than 70 Institute units at Headquarters and in the Offices in the member countries, which we believe will be of great use to future generations.

This report is divided into two sections. The first focuses on the hemispheric dimension of the Institute’s technical cooperation and summarizes the most important accomplishments achieved by the different technical and administrative units of Headquarters. The second section refers to the major accomplishments achieved in the five regions under which the 34 member countries are grouped, in each country and by the Permanent Office for Europe, located in Spain.

IICA has taken an active role in repositioning agriculture and rural life on the development agendas of the countries, and in helping them to modernize their institutional framework for agriculture and rural life, in compliance with the guidelines set forth in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

At the Fifth Summit of the Americas, held recently in Trinidad and Tobago, the Heads of State and Government had the opportunity to recognize how politically diverse the region is and to discuss the new guidelines and the future of the hemisphere. The topics addressed in those discussions included agriculture and food, which resulted in the inclusion of three paragraphs on those topics in the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, which will have a great impact on the future actions of the Institute.

The technical cooperation actions of the Institute were focused on six strategic priorities: (i) contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life and to a new institutional framework; (ii) promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses; (iii) promoting the development of rural communities based on a territorial approach; (iv) promoting agricultural health and food safety; (v) promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment; and (vi) promoting the introduction of technology and innovation for the modernization of agriculture and rural development.

In addition, in response to needs detected at the hemispheric level and by mandate from the governing bodies of IICA, hemispheric programs were created in the areas of trade and agribusiness, agricultural health and food safety, organic agriculture, agroenergy and biofuels, agrotourism, biotechnology and biosafety, agricultural insurance and rural agroindustry. Horizontal technical cooperation among the countries of the Americas was promoted and strengthened, and the Center for Leadership in Agriculture and Rural Life was created.

As regards administrative matters, IICA focused its actions on the modernization of its financial systems, the renewal of physical infrastructure at Headquarters and in the Offices in the member countries and the development of its human resources, granting awards for excellence, offering professional education and language training programs, implementing a new annual evaluation system and an occupational health program, and promoting more timely and effective internal communication. Particularly noteworthy is the responsible manner in which the Institute administered its financial resources, as borne out by the reports issued by the external auditors from 2003-2008.

In my acceptance speech in November 2001, I stated that IICA needed to embrace a new style of technical cooperation, one which emphasizes operational efficiency, prudent financial management, better use of our human resources, an expansion of our strategic partnerships and a new relationship with our Member States based on participation, transparency and accountability.

The Member States have recognized that IICA has repositioned itself in recent years as an important international organization, given its contributions to the development of the agrifood and rural sectors of the Americas. In part, this success can be attributed to increased operating efficiency, the sound use of financial resources, the new policy on human resources and improved relations with strategic partners.

I can affirm that we now perform the dual role we assumed in 2002, as Technical Secretariat of the ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural life, and as an international organization that provides technical cooperation, more effectively. Consequently, we are confident that IICA will continue to meet the challenges that agriculture will face in a globalized and digital world.

This document systematizes the results achieved between 2002 and 2008. None of the above, which will be explained in greater detail below, would have been possible without the collaboration, feedback and trust of our Member States over the years and without the commitment of all IICA personnel to promoting prosperity, food security and sustainability throughout the hemisphere.

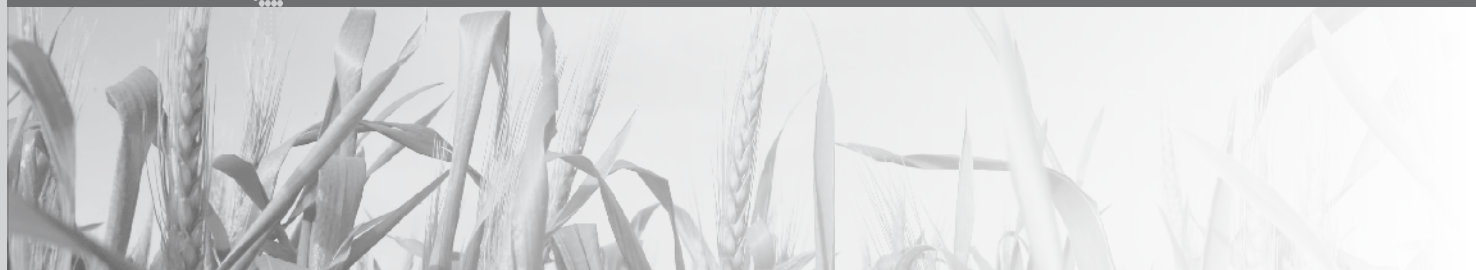
We trust this report will be of use to those who will continue to write the history of this noble organization.



Chelston W. D. Brathwaite
Director General



Hemispherical Report



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

The Vision

Repositioning IICA to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

The Vision

Repositioning IICA to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century

Chelston W. D. Brathwaite¹

1. Introduction

A vision of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) in the future must take as its point of departure the current tendencies in the world economy, a vision for the future of world agriculture, the history of the Institute and the mandates from the recently concluded Third Summit of the Americas and the Thirtieth General Assembly of the Organization of Americas States (OAS).

The agriculture of the 21st Century will be influenced by seven major global factors:

- Globalization and trade liberalization of world markets
- Population increase and urbanization
- Biotechnology
- Information and communication technologies
- Consumer preferences
- The environment
- Government policies

Globalization and Trade Liberalization of World Markets

The world is becoming more integrated as the process of globalization and trade liberalization accelerates. Following the Uruguay Round of negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), new rules and regulations are governing international trade. These rules and regulations are improving market access and opening new markets, drastically reducing and in some cases eliminating tariff barriers, and establishing new standards for trade in products that incorporate social, health, and environmental considerations.

In spite of the emphasis on increased global trade and trade liberalization, non-trade issues such as poverty alleviation, food security, food safety and the environment are critically important for the sustainable development of the countries in the Western Hemisphere. The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) will be challenged to improve the competitiveness of their agricultural sectors in order to participate fully in this new global scenario.

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Population Increase and Urbanization

Recent statistics show that by 2025, the world population will have risen to eight billion; this numerical increase will be the main challenge for agriculture and world food supplies. A much greater impact, however, will result from rapid economic growth in key regions of the planet. This economic growth will very quickly alter the world's eating habits and increase total food consumption. Much of the population increase is expected to take place in the cities of the developing world.

According to the Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), an international research center affiliated to the CGIAR system:

By 2020, about 52% of the developing world's population will be living in urban areas, up from 38%, in 1995. The rapid urbanization of the developing world and associated changes in lifestyles will have significant effects on food preferences and hence on demand. As people move from rural to urban areas, they tend to consume more livestock products, fruits, vegetables and processed foods.

The migration to cities by young people in search of better life and the demand for food are occurring as the rural farm population is aging. Agricultural production and research systems will be challenged to keep abreast of changing dietary preferences in coming years and will have to utilize all the technologies, policies and management systems to increase the productivity of the rural sector.

Biotechnology

There has been substantial development in biotechnology and genetic engineering in the last 20 years, which offer new prospects for increased agricultural production. However,

while biotechnology has the potential to produce crops and livestock that are more efficient, more productive, easier to produce, and use less agro-chemicals, consumer acceptance of genetically modified foods will continue to be a challenge for global application of the results of biotechnological research. According to recent statistics, the global area under genetically modified crops was 40 million hectares in 1999 and this is expected to reach 85 million hectares in 2003 (6% of the total global arable land). The recent release of genetically modified rice called "golden rice", which is rich in Vitamin A and could cure Vitamin A deficiency in 124 million children worldwide, underscores the biotechnology of the future.

Information and Communication Technologies

Rapid changes in information and communication technologies offer new challenges and opportunities for the agricultural sector. They provide easy and immediate access to information on markets, trade opportunities, consumer preferences, and competitors around the world. They also facilitate advertising, promotion and dissemination of information to current and potentially new clients and customers.

The new technologies, together with increased globalization and market integration, are influencing changes in both the demand and the supply of food. Institutions, individuals and enterprises in the hemisphere need to exploit the opportunities provided by the new technology to increase the competitiveness and range of their products and develop new market opportunities.

These advances are leading to the development of more knowledge-based economies; however, the challenge here is to ensure that information is adequately disseminated and utilized in the rural sector of the economy. The new



technologies need to be utilized more to facilitate the provision of market information and technical services, and to bring new experiences and technology to the rural enterprises.

Consumer Preferences

Improved education, communication, and higher incomes have resulted in greater awareness of the importance of adequate nutrition for good health and general well-being, and the demand for fresh fruits, vegetables, functional foods, processed foods, snack foods and organic products has been increasing. In addition, food quality and food safety concerns are of increasing importance in national and international food markets. The challenge to agriculture will be to satisfy consumer demand while ensuring safety and reliability of food supplies.

The Environment

In the past, progress in agricultural development has often resulted in environmental degradation – polluted water supplies, degraded soils, loss of biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and displacement of rural people.

Over the next thirty to fifty years, world food requirements will more than double. The challenge to agriculture will be to provide for the food needs of the vastly increased population on reduced acreages of farm land with water shortages, as well as a switch to food consumption based on more livestock products, fruits, vegetables and processed foods. This challenge must be met within the context of the guidelines for sustainable development as contained in the Brundtland Commission Report (1987) and prioritized in Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro, 1992.

In addition, the recent evidence pointing to the potential disastrous consequences of global warming and the serious

situation of our water supplies for agriculture suggest that environmental issues will be a major challenge to agriculture of the future.

Government Policies

The structural adjustment programmes of the recent past have resulted in a decline in the size and budgetary allocation to Ministries of Agriculture in several countries of the hemisphere. However, the global scenario requires a critical role for the state in the provision of the regulatory framework for agriculture, policy framework, and support services such as rural infrastructure, security of land tenure, training, research and extension, which are all necessary for the development of a competitive agriculture. The traditional private sector and non-governmental organizations are increasingly involved in the provision of technical services to the sector, but the role of government in building new strategic partnerships with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and the institutions of civil society is a critical one.

2. IICA's Evolution: An Overview

The origin of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences stems from the basic idea of creating an Inter-American Institute on tropical agriculture, contained in Resolution XVI of the First Inter-American Conference on Agriculture held in Washington D.C., 1930. The Institute was formally inaugurated in March 1943, in Turrialba, Costa Rica.

In February 1949, the Council of the OAS recognized the Institute as a specialized agency of the Inter-American System

in accordance with the provisions of Chapter XV of the Charter of the Organization.

The progressive evolution of the Institute led to a revision of the 1949 Convention. The text of the new Convention on IICA is the product of these evolutions. It consolidates and broadens the purposes of the Institute to “encourage, promote and support the efforts of the Member States to achieve their agricultural development and rural welfare.” It opened for signatures by the Member States of the OAS or of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences on March 6, 1979.

The 1979 Convention of the Institute, which was ratified on December 8, 1980, began a process of reform and restructuring to reflect IICA’s new purposes and the changing context of the agricultural sector in the hemisphere. During the last twenty years, the adjustment process has had three phases:

■ ***First Phase: 1982 to 1986***

During this phase, the Institute restructured its relations with the Member States and concentrated its efforts on 10 technical programmes, which sought to assist the countries during a period of overwhelming external debt, negative impact of agricultural protectionism, and the era of the import-substitution model. The programmes were:

- Formal agricultural education
- Generation and transference of agricultural technology
- Conservation and management of renewable natural resources
- Animal health
- Plant protection

- Agricultural and forestry production _ Integrated rural development
- Planning and management for agricultural development and rural well-being
- Information for agricultural development and rural well-being.

■ ***Second Phase: 1986 to 1993***

The second phase was characterized by the approval of a medium term plan, which focussed on:

- Strengthening and developing the agricultural sector
- Boosting technological modernization and efficiency in production
- Accelerating the regional integration process.

The work of the Institute was concentrated into five programmes:

- **Program I:** Agricultural Policy Analysis and Planning
- **Program II:** Technology Generation and Transfer
- **Program III:** Organization and Management for Rural Development
- **Program IV:** Trade and Agro-Industry
- **Program V:** Agricultural Health

Subsequently, ideas for the reactivation of the agricultural sector were concretized and a Plan of Hemispheric Scope for Reactivation of Agriculture (PLANLAC) was developed:

The conceptual base of this plan of hemispheric dimensions was agricultural modernization, and an initial portfolio of 74 projects of hemispheric and sub-regional scope was approved for implementation.

In order to enable it to move forward with PLANLAC, IICA amended the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and extended its effective life to 1993. The amended version called for certain institutional adjustments that would equip the Institute to better comply with the Plan's needs. It also incorporated new areas of action into IICA's work, such as the topics of women in development, the environment and training of human resources.

■ **Third Phase: 1993 to 2001**

The third phase was characterized by a style of technical cooperation in which participation, decentralization, flexibility and concentration were emphasized. Five Regional Centres were created and a differentiated strategy for each region was implemented. The work of the Institute was concentrated in four areas of concentration:

- Socio-economic Policy, Trade and Investment
- Science and Technology, Natural Resources, and Agricultural Production
- Agricultural Health
- Sustainable Rural Development

The Institute also became recognized as the agricultural agency of the Inter-American system and the multi-sectoral dimension of agriculture was emphasized.

3. IICA of the 21st Century: New Mandates

Mandates of the Third Summit of the Americas

Free and open economies, market access, sustained flows of investment, capital formation, financial stability, appropriate public policies, access to technology and human resources development and training are key to reducing poverty and inequalities, raising living standards and promoting sustainable development. We will work with all sectors of civil society and international organizations to ensure that economic activities contribute to the sustainable development of our societies.

Summit of the Americas, 2001 Final Declarations

The Third Summit of the Americas held in Quebec City, Canada, in April 2001, has produced an *Hemispheric Declaration* and a *Plan of Action* which clearly defines the strategies and programmes which will create greater economic prosperity, expand economic opportunity, and fashion international relations among the countries of the Americas in the foreseeable future.

The commitment to the formation of the FTAA by 2005 underscores the need for ongoing dialogue and cooperation within the Inter-American system.

In both the *Declaration* and the *Plan of Action*, the Heads of Government of the Americas emphasized the importance of agriculture and rural life in the strengthening of democracy, the creation of prosperity, and the realization of the human potential of their people.

The following sections of the *Plan of Action* are particularly relevant for IICA:

- **Section 6** – Trade, Investment and Financial Stability. Great emphasis was placed on supporting the increased trade integration of the region, particularly through the FTAA Agreement. In addition, activities supporting economic stability as well as strong and sustainable growth were encouraged to ensure that the benefits of globalization are broad and equitably distributed.
- **Section 9** – Environmental Foundation for Sustainable Development. The protection of the environment and natural resources was considered essential to prosperity and the sustainability of the economies of the Americas. Within this, priority was placed on areas such as the conservation of plants, animals, and ecosystems through capacity building, expanding partnership network, and information sharing.
- **Section 10** – Agriculture Management and Rural Development. The fundamental importance of agriculture was reiterated within the *Plan of Action*, along with specific priorities. These included: promoting dialogue among government, parliamentarians, civil society, and the scientific and academic communities; strengthening the enabling environment for rural enterprises; developing markets in the Hemisphere for goods obtained through sustainable use of natural resources; and facilitating access to markets.
- **Section 12** – Growth with Equity - In order to eradicate inequity and poverty a number of areas were targeted for action. Included in these were programs supporting the promotion of information technology in rural areas and

improved market access and support programs for women and youth.

- **Section 13** – Education - Within education, the area of science and technology was seen to be important. Particular emphasis was placed on popularization of science and technology, stimulating the development of science and technology for regional connectivity through information and communication technology, and the exploitation of high-level human capital for the development of science and technology research and innovation.

We value the active support of the Organization of American States and its specialized organs, particularly the Pan American Health Organization, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, and the Inter-American Children's Institute, as well as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the World Bank. We call upon these institutions and other regional and international organizations to establish greater coordination for support to the implementation and follow-up to the Plan of Action of this Summit.

Summit of the Americas, 2001 Final Declarations

IICA as an organization took an active role in the 2001 Summit, being specifically named in the *Plan of Action* as having a role to play in follow-up and implementation. This inclusion as an active partner enhances the role which IICA as an organization has played in the past and makes it more prominent in the future in terms of promoting dialogue and better hemispheric integration.



The role laid out in the Summit documentation potentially changes two aspects of IICA's current role as envisaged in IICA's *Medium Term Plan*.

- The Summit *Plan of Action* extends IICA's role beyond promoting an inter-American dialogue only through the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA)—the traditional route. While this important group will be valuable to the process, the *Plan of Action* also calls for involvement by IICA in other dialogues and coordinating groups.
- IICA is also being asked to shift beyond being primarily a supplier of technical cooperation for agriculture. It is now being asked to take on a broader mandate—one which is more proactive and brings agricultural, environmental and rural development issues into a broader debate of hemispheric integration and prosperity.

Mandates of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS)

At the Thirtieth OAS General Assembly, the Ministers of Foreign Relations from the Member States resolved to:

- “Confer a new dimension on the IABA and recognize it as: ‘...the primary ministerial forum within the OAS for analyzing and building consensus on policies and strategic priorities for the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the Hemisphere.’”
- “Instruct IICA to develop and strengthen mechanisms of cooperation and exchange with other organs, agencies and entities of the Inter-American system for proposing, coordinating, and executing policies and programs relating

to the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the context of the Inter-American system and the Summits of the Americas process.”

These mandates facilitate the definition of a clear role for the IICA of the 21st Century.

4. IICA'S Role in Enhancing Relations within the Hemisphere

The IICA Member States of the Western Hemisphere have a total population of some 800 million people. The countries show considerable variation in size and wealth from Haiti with a gross national product per capita of US\$460.00 to the United States of America with US\$30,600.00, and from St. Kitts/Nevis with a population of 44,000 to the United States of America with a population of 273 million.

Some opportunities are envisioned for IICA's immediate consideration:

- The proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) will create an hemispheric market of some 800 million people. This scenario and the diversity in terms of state of development, population, wealth, and natural endowments provide a rich opportunity for Member States to learn from each other and to draw lessons from each others' experiences in agricultural development.
- This global market will provide unprecedented opportunities for trade in agricultural products and an opportunity to establish an Inter-American Agribusiness Community, which will be the largest in the world. In



addition, the hemisphere is emerging not only as the fastest growing sub-region of the world, but the sub-region with the greatest potential for future growth.

- The small economies of the hemisphere, who are struggling with the twin challenges of eliminating poverty and promoting sustainable development, must be assisted in their efforts to integrate into the global economy.
- A large proportion of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean are employed in agricultural production and associated activities, and the export of agricultural products represents the most important source of foreign earnings in several countries.
- The agriculture of LAC countries in the 21st Century must be competitive, must seek to produce value-added products, must be environmentally sustainable, and must respond to the increasing demand for processed convenience foods.

Against this background, agricultural development in the 21st Century must therefore ensure a sound balance between world food security and a protected environment. The agriculture of the future will be increasingly multifunctional, heterogeneous, complex, knowledge-driven, technology-driven, market-oriented, and adapted to available resources. The key factors driving this new agriculture will be the application of biotechnology and information technology, and the globalization of markets.

IICA, therefore, must consolidate the changes of the past while forging a new dimension in support of the new global scenario of the agricultural sector in the Western Hemisphere. With the Americas on the verge of the development of the FTAA, and the new mandate given to the Institute by the Summit of the Americas and the OAS General Assembly, IICA's importance

as an institution of hemispheric integration of the agricultural sector takes on new significance.

In this context, the Institute must refocus its technical cooperation programme to provide the assistance required by the Member States. This can only be done by instituting a process of internal consolidation, supported by the projection of an external vision through strategic partnerships with sister institutions of the Inter-American system, the private sector, and global partners. These actions will provide the support that the rural sector of the Americas requires and deserves.

The progressive reforms (institutional, technical and administrative), which have been introduced since 1994 must be consolidated and continued. These include decentralization, administrative modernization, a participatory management style, the strengthening of IICA as the Inter-American agency for agriculture and rural life, and the revitalization of links between the Institute and global development partners.

IICA must continue to assist in the preservation of the democracies of the hemisphere by contributing to the alleviation of poverty and reducing social inequity. IICA must be of strategic importance in facilitating development cooperation that makes possible effective technical assistance from the large developed members to the small developing members of the Institute. All states must be able to play their legitimate role in the affairs of the Institute.

IICA is the only international agricultural agency with offices in each of its thirty-four Member States. Consequently, the Institute is well positioned to facilitate the transfer of knowledge, technology, innovation and experience among the countries and must provide the technical support base for agriculture in the construction of the FTAA.

IICA must become a true network of hemispheric cooperation that facilitates access to information technology and experiences on the agricultural sector of the Member States, which can be accessed from any country of the hemisphere. This sharing of information, technology, and experiences will facilitate hemispheric trade in agricultural products, support the implementation of the FTAA, and facilitate globalization.

IICA's future work must be driven by opportunities that will foster the formation of strategic partnerships with institutions and enterprises of complementary capabilities. It is therefore important that IICA engages in opportunity-driven technical cooperation, communication, training programmes, and a private sector-oriented mindset in order to ensure that the results are tangible and meaningful.

IICA must be an institution with principled, centered leadership, whose core values of tolerance, flexibility, accountability, efficiency, and commitment are present and the mindset of a learning organizations is developed.

Forces of Integration and Hemispheric Trade

Over the last decade, there has been a clear tendency for the promotion of efforts to facilitate regional and hemispheric integration and trade in the Americas. The emergence of MERCOSUR, NAFTA, the G3, the Andean Pact, the ACS, the deepening of CARICOM to a single market and economy, and the promotion of FTAA are all expressions of the clear destiny of this region towards an integrated Hemisphere. Trade between countries of the Americas has increased more significantly than has world trade. In the last decade, world trade has shown an annual increase of approximately 8% while regional groupings in the Americas have recorded 20% in the Andean Pact, 12% in NAFTA, and over 20% in CARICOM. These tendencies

suggest excellent prospects for regional trade in the future, which will underpin the formation of the FTAA.

5. Facing the Future: A New Vision

IICA's New Vision, Mission and Objectives

To guide the programming over the next four years, the New Vision for IICA will be:

- To promote food security and prosperity of the rural sector of the Americas.

The *New Mission* will be:

- To support the Member States in their pursuit of progress and prosperity in the hemisphere through the modernization of the rural sector, promotion of food security, and development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed, and socially equitable for the peoples of the Americas.

The *New objectives* will be:

- To support the countries of the hemisphere in their efforts at integration, cooperation and participation in the global economy
- To support the Member States in ensuring the safety of food supplies and removing sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade



- To support agro-industrial and agri-business development of the sector by promoting the incorporation of new technology and business principles into the enterprises of the sector in order to promote competitiveness and the development of a global agri-business environment
- To promote sustainable rural development and sustainable use of natural resources for present and future generations
- To support the Ministries of Agriculture in the process of transforming their role, structure, and functions in order to face the new realities of globalization and modernization of the State
- To support the process of agricultural educational transformation, so as to produce scientist, technicians and entrepreneurs that can effectively develop/reposition agriculture.
- Promotion of a national technical cooperation agenda in all member states
- Incorporation of environmental dimension in development initiatives
- Strengthening national capacity through the use of national professionals for implementation at the national level
- Strengthening relationships with Member States through a strategy for new governance by institutionalization of a mechanism similar to the advisory commission on management
- Promotion of change through institutional modernization of the agricultural sector
- Promotion of technical teams, technical articulation, technical excellence, more horizontal technical cooperation, and the transfer of experiences
- Implementation of a programme of performance audit, monitoring, and evaluation.

IICA's Guiding Principles

IICA will guide its actions in the hemisphere according to 12 fundamental guiding principles:

- Promotion of a new global dimension and a new institutional image
- Promotion of financial prudence, transparency, efficiency, accountability, and respect for the norms of the Institute
- Promotion of respect for diversity and continuous development of human resources
- Decentralization of the Institute to the national level
- Promotion of private sector participation in IICA's work

6. Priorities for 2002-2006

The Development of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda

The national technical cooperation agenda must be developed with the full participation of the national authorities of both the public and private sectors, and the final elements for IICA's support must be priority areas of the plan. Four countries have developed such national agendas: Canada,



Panama, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic. These agendas should be examined as a basis for institutionalizing this process in IICA. The national agenda for IICA actions will form the basis for the definitions of activities for implementation at the national level. The funds provided at the national level must be seen as seed money and used to leverage additional human and financial resources, both nationally and internationally. The national agendas must emphasize a holistic approach to the development of the sector and should seek to identify areas for IICA's intervention in the sector by a strategy with no more than three areas to be financed by quota resources. Additional areas may be defined, but these must be financed by national external funds (NX) or international external resources (IX). The agenda for IICA's action must complement and add value to national initiatives as defined in the National Development Agenda. International professional staff will not be contracted to implement national actions; national actions will be implemented by national staff with the full participation and the supervision of the Representative.

The Development of the Regional Technical Cooperation Agenda

The Institute must continue to support regional integration processes throughout the hemisphere and must build on existing frameworks for regional technical cooperation in the Andean Region, the Caribbean Region, the Central Region, the Northern Region, and the Southern Region. This support must emphasize support for the sharing of technology, information, and experiences and facilitate joint actions, which support the integration process and the construction of the FTAA. Some of the specific actions, which will be continued or initiated, are as follows:

The Andean Region (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela)

- Support the Andean Agricultural Agenda as a basis for support to the integration process in the Andean Region
- Consolidate the existing mechanism for cooperation in research and technology transfer (PROCIANDINO)
- Support the Cooperative Agricultural Health Programme for the Andean Region
- Facilitate cooperation in agriculture between the Andean Region, MERCOSUR, CARICOM, and the Central American common market in the context of the creation of the FTAA.

The Caribbean Region (Bahamas, Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, OECS, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname)

- Strengthen collaboration with CARICOM (CSME) and OECS secretariats
- Continue to support the Caribbean Regional Negotiation Machinery, CARDI, PROCICARIBE, CABA, and CACHE as mechanisms which seek to coordinate trade negotiations, support technological innovation and provide the new environment for change in the agricultural sector of the region
- Provide support to the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Caribbean as a mechanism of regional dialogue and coordination



- Support the Programme for Horizontal Technical Cooperation between the Caribbean and the rest of the hemisphere including the provision of language and translation facilities to facilitate cooperation between the Caribbean and the countries of Latin America
- Provide support for a programme of cooperation which emphasizes linkages between agriculture, tourism, and the environment, and which seeks a multi-sectoral approach to rural development.

Central Region (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama)

- Support the Central American Agricultural Council and other mechanisms which promote integration and advancement towards a common agricultural policy
- Support the creation of a Regional Technology Innovation System based on the experience gained with SICTA
- Continue to support RUTA (in cooperation with the World Bank, FAO, IFAD and IDB) as a mechanism of implementation of regional initiatives
- Support other networks of agricultural cooperation e.g. PROMECAFE, CORECA etc., and CATIE.

Northern Region (Canada, Mexico, United States of America)

- Support efforts which may contribute to the consolidation of agricultural cooperation in the context of NAFTA

- Support joint projects, joint agri-business initiatives, student exchanges, internships, sabbaticals, and other forms of cooperation between the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the other countries of the hemisphere in pursuit of better understanding, cooperation, and the building of strategic partnerships among the countries
- Facilitate the transfer of innovative technologies in information, communication, and agricultural research from countries of the Northern Region to other countries of the hemisphere in order to reduce the digital divide and other technological gaps which exist
- Facilitate the transfer of innovative experiences in agriculture and rural development from the countries of the hemisphere to the countries of the Northern Region.

Southern Region (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay)

- Promote efforts which support cooperation in agriculture and facilitate agricultural trade within the context of MERCOSUR
- Support the Regional Ministerial Forum as a mechanism of regional dialogue and coordination
- Support efforts in cooperation of technology generation and transfer (PROCISUR), modernization and harmonization of agricultural health, water management, and education and training
- Support joint projects, joint agri-business initiatives, student exchanges, internships, sabbaticals, and other forms of cooperation between the countries of the Southern Region and other countries of the hemisphere.



7. Putting the New Approach into Action

To implement these challenges, the IICA of the 21st Century should therefore pursue with the Member States a single strategic goal:

- To support the Member States in their pursuit of progress and prosperity in the hemisphere by modernizing the rural sector, promoting food security, and developing an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed, and socially equitable for the people of the Americas.

To achieve this strategic goal the new administration of the Institute will prepare the **Medium Term Plan for 2002-2006** which will comprise of hemispheric, regional and national agendas.

A team at Headquarters, in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Management Issues, will prepare the first draft of the Hemispheric Agenda, providing the guidelines for the Regional and National Agendas.

The Regional Coordinators, the Regional Specialists, the Representatives in the countries, and regional partners should prepare the Regional Agenda. Representatives in cooperation with the national authorities of both the private and public sectors will begin preparation of the National Agendas, which will focus on a holistic approach to rural development. The Regional and National Agendas provide reality to the work of the Institute.

The new Medium Term Plan for 2002-2006 will focus on five strategic areas:

Area 1: Trade, Policy and Integration

- **Focus: To support the countries of the hemisphere in their efforts on integration, cooperation, and participation in the global economy.**

IICA must provide the technical and policy support for the agricultural sector in the formation of the FTAA and the WTO, and be a dynamic forum for critical strategic thinking, for the establishment of common positions and agendas, for forging alliances in regional and hemispheric integration, and for the development of common standards for such aspects as Food Safety and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) issues.

Area 2: Agribusiness Development

- **Focus: To support agro-industrial and agri-business development of the sector by promoting the incorporation of new technology and business principles into the enterprises of the sector in order to promote competitiveness and the development of a global agri-business environment.**

Agri-business and rural enterprises have a critical role to play in the creation of prosperity, employment, and economic growth in the Hemisphere. IICA has a strategic role to play in providing training and promoting the incorporation of business principles, innovative technology, new information, and communication systems into agricultural production and agri-business enterprises in order to increase their competitiveness in the global market.



Area 3: Sustainable Rural Development

- **Focus: To promote sustainable rural development and the sustainable use of our natural resources for present and future generations.**

The sustainable use of natural resources is critical for prosperity and the sustainability of rural life. IICA must collaborate with other institutions (national, regional, hemispherical, and international) to promote the sustainable use of natural resources. Critical to this theme are issues of deforestation, land degradation, and water for agriculture. Development projects must incorporate environmental management and the sustainability of fragile ecosystems such as hillsides, watersheds, and coastal areas. The preservation of biodiversity is critically important.

Area 4: Agricultural Health and Food Safety

- **Focus: To support the Member States in ensuring the safety of food supplies and the compliance with SPS measures as a means of removing sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade.**

Non-trade issues such as food safety and agricultural health continue to be critically important for the process of globalization and trade liberalization. The coordination of policy initiatives in support of strategies to address these issues is vital for the Member States. This strategic area must therefore support national and regional programmes that focus on the removal of sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade in agricultural

products and seek to harmonize approaches to food safety and the control of pests and diseases of plants and animals, which all present barriers to trade and agricultural productivity. The Member States must also be assisted with the modernization of their organization and operations in this area in order to comply with the new international commitments of the WTO and other trade agreements.

Area 5: Institutional Modernization

- **Focus: To support institutions in the sector, particularly the Ministries of Agriculture, in the process of transforming their role, structure, and functions to face the new realities of globalization and modernization of the State.**

Ministries of Agriculture and other institutions of the public sector are in the process of restructuring and refocusing their efforts and programmes in order to cope with the new challenges of the global trade environment and the need for the agricultural sector to be efficient and competitive in conditions of reduced budgetary allocations. IICA must be able to bring the experiences of other countries to the debate and discussions, and provide technical, policy, and administrative support for this process of institutional modernization.

The new realities of our global environment demand an agriculture that is competitive and modern. The achievements of these objectives can only be realized by the development and training of our human resources to meet the challenges of a knowledge-based society. The rate of change of technology demands human capital that can manage the process of change and contribute to the modernization of the rural sector.

Focussing on these five strategic areas will ensure the use of IICA's limited resources using four instruments of implementations: training, information, technical and policy support, and transfer of experiences.

8. Implications of the New Vision for IICA

In order to put the new approach into action, the internal management structure of the Institute will be strengthened and streamlined in order to enhance the Institute's governance, efficiency, transparency and accountability.

Appropriate adjustments will be made in the corporate management structure at headquarters and more effective lines of communication for the delegation of authority will be established. Appropriate internal committees will be formed in order to ensure adequate discussion of corporate issues, to facilitate the exchange of information, and to promote strategic planning. The evaluation process for IICA's technical actions in the field will be strengthened; appropriate performance standards will be developed and measures to evaluate performance implemented with the appropriate corrective actions.

Enhancing Corporate Governance and Management

The Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the Executive Committee (EC) have over the years provided the corporate governance of the Institute. Modern management and the pace of change demand a closer relationship between the General Directorate and the Member States.

In order to enhance corporate governance and management, the current Special Advisory Committee on Management Issues should be strengthened to provide the Institute with continuing input from Member States on management issues necessary for effective performance and functioning of the organization. This enhanced Advisory Committee should meet twice a year, preferably every six months.

As well, the deliberations of the IABA and the EC would be enriched by strengthening the existing Regional Fora of Ministers of Agriculture. These Fora are envisioned as valuable mechanisms for consultation and for discussions of issues that are strictly regional in character.

With the implementation of these two mechanisms, the Institute may wish to consider the convenience of combining the frequency of the EC and the IABA. The deliberations of the Regional Fora could inform the Committee on Management Issues and vice-versa.

Promotion of Efficiency and a New Style of Technical Cooperation

A frozen quota budget and the increasing demands on the resources of the Institute require a structural change in the method of operation and the use of its human resources. This structural change has two components:

- A small core of highly qualified, skilled international staff in management positions and the strategic areas
- A cadre of highly qualified national professionals and short-term consultants for implementation of the technical programmes at the national level.

This approach will provide flexibility in the implementation of programmes of work and will result in a reduced cost of implementation. Opportunities for the use of “internal consultants”, i.e. professionals from one country assisting in the programmes of another country, will be emphasized.

The posts in the Institute that have international dimensions must be defined and jobs at the national level must not be performed by international professional staff if these can be carried out effectively by national personnel.

- The organization must be agile, flexible, and focussed, and must have personnel of the highest levels of technical managerial competence in the hemisphere to ensure that the Institute remains a centre of excellence.
- The programmes and projects both at the national, regional and international levels must be focussed on the critical mandates of the Member States, allowing for differentiation in size, level of development, and other relevant statistical and cultural characteristics of the countries.
- Greater levels of efficiency and accountability must be fostered. Such strategies as reduction in the number and length of meetings, reducing the travel costs, and the review of use of external consultants will be implemented.
- The offices at the national level must be centres of information, training, and administrative and technical support, and must provide leadership in the specific thematic areas defined in their programme of cooperation. The offices must be service-oriented and managed in a businesslike manner.
- Efforts will be made to facilitate cooperation between offices of the various countries by promoting more joint projects among offices of the Institute.
- It will be important to maintain a balance between regional and national activities in order to ensure that the demands at the national level are not compromised by multinational activities that do not respond to actual mandates. The regional initiatives must be organized in a manner to add value and be relevant to the national activities.
- IICA must become a true network of hemispheric cooperation in agriculture where the exchange of information, technology, and experiences continually occurs between countries. This flow will be facilitated by six strategic actions:
 - i. The building of technical teams at the national, regional, and hemispheric level;
 - ii. The recruitment of information management specialists in the offices to support technical specialists;
 - iii. The greater use of information and communication technologies;
 - iv. Sharing of annual national technical reports;
 - v. Strengthening of the Hemispheric Information Networks e.g. SIDALC;
 - vi. Language training of specialists and support staff.
- IICA's programme of work must include elements that strengthen communities and enhance their role in decision-making at the community level, and thus facilitate the development process by their “ownership” of the projects and programmes. At the national level, IICA's approach must ensure full participation of national authorities in the conceptualization, implementation, and evaluation of the programmes of technical cooperation.



- There is need for a system providing rapid response to emergency situations in the agricultural sector of the Member States.

Financial Prudence

The Institute continues to operate in an environment of limited financial and budgetary resources. The Member States have requested that the international cooperation agencies be more efficient in the use of their resources. Some progress in this direction has been made, but more can be done. The application of the new communication technologies and more efficient management procedures will assist in reducing travel costs and the number of meetings in the Institute. In addition, the Institute must examine the classification of its technical positions with a view of rationalizing the balance between national and international posts.

The Institute must develop strategic partnerships with the international financial community in order to obtain the resources necessary to follow up on the Mandates of the Summit of the Americas and to provide the technical support for the agricultural sector of the countries to participate in the global economy. In addition, the Institute must be proactive in providing results at the national level that are compatible with national needs and that demonstrate to the countries the value they are receiving for the money spent. This will most likely encourage more countries to pay their quota. In addition, the provision of Article 24 of the Financial Rules must be emphasized.

International Dimension

While maintaining its base in the Inter-American system, the Institute must reach beyond the system to obtain

technologies, information, and experiences capable of enriching the development of agriculture in the Member States. The Institute must therefore strengthen its strategic partnership with the FAO, with institutions of the CGIAR, and with institutions in Europe, Asia, and Africa that provide and produce technological services to agriculture with a view to bringing these experiences and technologies to bear on the problems of agricultural development in the hemisphere.

Promotion of Human Resource Development

The success of IICA as an institution will depend on the quality and dedication of its leadership and the level of commitment, application, and competence of its staff. It is therefore vital that:

- The Institute continues to recruit persons of high technical and ethical standards who are committed to the goals and objectives of the Institution
- The staff must be facilitated to work in teams when working on national, regional, or hemispheric projects that require different professional competencies and where the sharing of experiences will benefit the countries
- Strategies will be developed to assist professionals at the national level by providing services in countries other than those of their duty station
- Competent national professionals will be more widely employed in the work of the Institute
- Staff training in areas of strategic importance for the Institute's work will be given priority and staff will be given appropriate support and incentives to become genuinely



multilingual in order to provide appropriate services in the different countries of the hemisphere

- Opportunities will be sought to incorporate more professional women in the affairs of the Institute so as to ensure a gender perspective in decision-making and strategies will be developed to facilitate the involvement of youth in the affairs of the Institute.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

A new strategic vision for the Institute must go beyond the two-year budget cycle and the four-year medium term plans. This strategic vision should provide the Institute with the capacity to anticipate the future of the agricultural sector and to assist the Member States in taking a more long-term view of the reforms and changes that the sector must undertake in order to cope with the evolving global world. The key strategic objective of IICA must be to support its Member States in their efforts to unleash the talent, energy, and enterprise

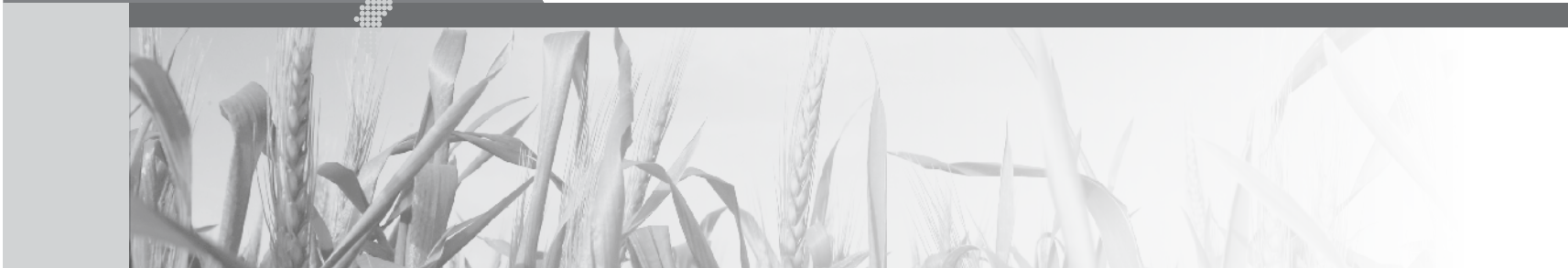
of the people of the Americas so that the agricultural and rural sectors can compete internationally. The Institute must therefore create a culture of excellence which results in the provision of information, knowledge, leadership and technical support which contribute to improving the lives of people and to ensuring prosperity of the nations of the hemisphere.

As a global institution in a globalizing world, IICA must be at the forefront of the hemispheric solidarity and must lead the way in ensuring that agriculture continues to contribute to food security, national social progress, and stability.

The new administration is convinced that this proposed new strategy for the Institute will provide the basis on which to build the IICA of the 21st Century; an IICA of defined priorities, creative leadership, decentralized operations, modern management, efficient and effective in its actions, and an institution of excellence. The challenges for the future, therefore, are to strengthen partnerships with the Member States and to accompany them in the pursuit of a hemisphere that is food-secure, technologically prepared, environmentally managed, and socially equitable for present and future generations.

A New Model for Technical Cooperation

Based on Participation,
Accountability, Consultation
and Transparency



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

A New Model for Technical Cooperation Based on Participation, Accountability, Consultation and Transparency

Chelston W. D. Brathwaite¹

1. Introduction

On January 14, 2002, I presented to the Community of Agriculture of the Americas a document entitled "Repositioning IICA to Meet the Challenges of the 21st Century."

At that time I indicated that, in our hemisphere, there are seven factors influencing agricultural development in the 21st Century:

- globalization and trade liberalization in world markets
- population increase and urbanization
- biotechnology
- information and communication technologies
- consumer preferences
- the environment
- government policies.

Globalization and Trade Liberalization in World Markets

The world is becoming more integrated as the process of globalization and trade liberalization accelerates. Following the Uruguay Round of negotiations and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), new rules and regulations are governing international agricultural trade. These rules and regulations are improving market access and opening new markets, drastically reducing and in some cases eliminating tariff barriers, and establishing new standards to incorporate social, health, and environmental considerations for the trade in products.

Although there is an emphasis on increased global trade and trade liberalization, nontrade issues, such as poverty alleviation, food security, food safety and the environment, are critically important for the sustainable development of the countries of the Western Hemisphere. In particular, the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries will be challenged to improve the competitiveness of their agricultural sectors so that they may participate fully in this new global scenario.

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Population Increase and Urbanization

Recent statistics show that by 2025 the world population will have risen to eight billion people; the resulting increased demand for food supplies worldwide is the main challenge facing agriculture. Much of the population increase is expected to take place in the cities of the developing world.

Rapid economic growth in key regions of our planet will also have a significant impact. It will continue to alter the world's eating habits and increase total food consumption and demand. According to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), an international research center affiliated with the CGIAR system:

“By 2020, about 52% of the developing world's population will be living in urban areas, up from 38%, in 1995. The rapid urbanization of the developing world and associated changes in lifestyles will have significant effects on food preferences and hence on demand. As people move from rural to urban areas, they tend to consume more livestock products, fruits, vegetables and processed foods.”

The migration of young people to cities in search of a better life and the resulting aging of the rural farm population combined with the growing need for food means that agricultural production and research systems must utilize all the technologies, policies and management systems at their disposal to increase productivity in the rural sector while keeping abreast of changing dietary preferences.

Biotechnology

Substantial developments in biotechnology and genetic engineering in the last 20 years offer new prospects

for increasing agricultural production. However, while biotechnology has the potential to produce crops and livestock that are more efficient, more productive, easier to produce and require less agro-chemicals, consumer acceptance of genetically modified foods will continue to be a challenge for global application of the results of biotechnological research.

According to recent statistics, the total area planted to genetically modified crops in 1999 was 40 million hectares; this is expected to reach 85 million hectares in 2003 (6% of the total arable land worldwide). The recent release of “golden rice,” a genetically modified variety rich in vitamin A that could cure vitamin A deficiency in 124 million children worldwide, underscores the importance of biotechnology's contribution in the future. A challenge will be to ensure that genetic materials derived from genetic engineering are made available to the developing world, especially to its smaller and poorer agro-entrepreneurs.

Information and Communication Technologies

Rapid changes in information and communication technologies offer new challenges and opportunities for the agricultural sector. They provide easy and immediate access to information on markets, trade opportunities, consumer preferences, and competitors around the world. They also facilitate advertising, promotional activities and the dissemination of information to current and potential new clients and customers.

The new technologies, along with increased globalization and market integration, are bringing about changes in both the demand and supply of food. Institutions, individuals and enterprises throughout the hemisphere need to exploit the opportunities provided by the new technologies to increase



competitiveness and the range of their products, and to develop new market opportunities.

These advances are leading to the development of more knowledge-based economies. In this area, the challenge is to ensure that information is adequately disseminated and utilized in the rural sector of the economy. The new technologies need to be used more to provide market information and technical services, and to bring new experiences and technology to rural enterprises.

Consumer Preferences

Improved education, communication and higher incomes have resulted in greater awareness of the importance of adequate nutrition for good health and general well-being. Accordingly, the demand for fresh fruits, vegetables, functional foods, snacks and organic products has been increasing rapidly. At the same time, food quality and food safety concerns, including the potential risk of bioterrorism, are of increasing importance in national and international food markets. The challenge to agriculture will be to satisfy consumer demand while ensuring the safety and reliability of food supplies.

The Environment

In the past, agricultural development often produced environmental degradation: polluted water supplies, degraded soils, loss of biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and displacement of rural people.

Over the next thirty to fifty years, world food requirements will more than double. The challenge to agriculture will be to cover the food needs of a vastly increased population on reduced acreages of farm land, and facing water shortages.

It will also have to adapt to food consumption patterns that call for more livestock products, fruits, vegetables and processed foods. This challenge must be met in accordance with the guidelines for sustainable development set out in the Brundtland Commission Report (1987) and later prioritized in Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

In addition, recent evidence pointing to the potential disastrous consequences of global warming and the serious situation of our water supplies for agriculture suggest that environmental issues will pose major challenges to agriculture in the future.

Government Policies

The structural adjustment programmes of the recent past produced cutbacks in the size and budgets of numerous ministries of agriculture in the hemisphere. The present global scenario, however, requires that the state play a critical role in negotiating "best fit" providing the regulatory and policy frameworks for agriculture as well as support services including rural infrastructure, secure land tenure practices, training, research and extension, all of which are necessary for the development of a competitive agricultural sector. Although traditional private sector and non-governmental organizations are increasingly involved in providing technical services to the sector, the role of government in building new strategic partnerships with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and the institutions of civil society is a critical one.

Taking all of the foregoing into account, the Institute adopted a new mission, developed a new structure, and implemented a new model for delivering technical cooperation. This document summarizes the reform process and how it relates



to the development of a common agenda for agriculture and rural life in the Hemisphere, food safety concerns, including the potential risk of bioterrorism, are of increasing importance in national and international food markets. The challenge to agriculture will be to satisfy consumer demand while ensuring the safety and reliability of food supplies.

2. The New Style of Technical Cooperation

The management model adopted by this Administration, after its inauguration on January 15, 2002, is described herein. This included adoption of a results-based management style for its dealings with its Member States and a decision to develop a proactive agenda of mutual interests, in line with a new vision to face the challenges of agriculture and rural life in the 21st Century.

The cornerstone of IICA's new technical cooperation model is its commitment to contribute to modernizing agriculture and improving rural life in the Americas. Accordingly, IICA now focuses on providing technical cooperation driven by the needs and demands of the Member States, in accordance with the countries' own priorities.

The following summarizes the model developed, implemented and validated for managing the Institute in response to the new mandates it received from the Summit of the Americas process and the Thirtieth General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS).

This new model lays the groundwork for building the IICA of the 21st Century: an institution of excellence with clearly

defined priorities, creative leadership, decentralized operations, modern management, and efficient and effective actions.

The new model also reflects the Institute's commitment to pursue the following objectives:

- To strengthen IICA's relationship with the Member States by defining its programs in each country in accordance with national objectives and priorities
- To participate in the broad network for hemispheric cooperation that facilitates the exchange of information, technology and experiences among countries
- To support the Member States in implementing the mandates received from the Summit process
- To support the Member States' efforts to promote integration and cooperation and to participate in the global economy
- To support the Member States' efforts to guarantee food safety and to eliminate sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to trade
- To support agro-industrial and agribusiness development through the adoption of new technologies and modern business practices, with a view to improving the competitiveness of firms and fostering the development of a global environment that favours agribusiness
- To promote sustainable rural development and the sustainable use of natural resources for present and future generations
- To support the efforts of the ministries of agriculture to transform their role, structure and functions so they can meet new challenges posed by globalization and the modernization of the state apparatus



- To support the transformation of agricultural education in order to train scientists, technicians and entrepreneurs to be able to effectively develop and reposition agriculture.

As it strived to forge closer relations with the Member States through partnerships, the Institute determined that it needed to develop a new model for providing technical cooperation to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

Accordingly, IICA's new mission became to provide support to its Member States to achieve progress and prosperity in the hemisphere through the modernization of the rural sector, the promotion of food security, and the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed, and socially equitable for the peoples of the Americas.

In 2000, at the Thirtieth OAS General Assembly, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs conferred a new dimension on the Inter-American Board on Agriculture (IABA) and recognized it as the primary ministerial forum within the OAS for the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere. At the same time, it instructed IICA to develop and strengthen mechanisms of cooperation and exchange with other organs, agencies and entities of the Inter-American system to enhance agriculture and rural development in the region.

At the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec City, Canada, April 2001), a Hemispheric Declaration and a Plan of Action were issued that clearly defined the strategies and programs needed to create greater economic prosperity, expand economic opportunity and fashion international relations among the countries of the Americas. It extended IICA's role beyond that of promoting technical cooperation to that of promoting the development of agriculture in the Americas.

The Plan of Action called on IICA to participate in the group created to follow up on the Summit mandates. It also requested that IICA take a more proactive role in bringing agricultural, environmental and rural development issues into a broader debate of hemispheric integration that promotes the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and the prosperity of rural communities in the Americas.

3. The Three Key Elements of IICA's Vision

The 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan constitutes the Institute's hemispheric agenda, providing a framework for all its actions. IICA's vision is composed of three basic elements, which are discussed below.

Promotion of the Sustainable Development of Agriculture

In pursuit of the sustainable development of agriculture, it is necessary to have a vision of agriculture as a productive, efficient, competitive and environmentally sensitive sector capable of preserving the social fabric of rural communities for future generations.

Given of the complexity of this task, IICA works with the support of its strategic partners in a multi-pronged effort with its Member States to help:

- improve the design of policies and strategies
- strengthen the institutional framework, through its modernization



- adopt a more holistic and comprehensive approach to agriculture
- increase investments in the agrifood system
- upgrade education and training on sustainable agriculture.

Promotion of Food Security

Food security is understood not so much as a condition of national self-sufficiency but rather as a condition in which human beings have physical and economic access to a safe and nutritional diet that enables them to meet their food needs and live their lives in a productive and healthy manner.

The Institute contributes to food security in the hemisphere through initiatives to improve agricultural trade and food safety and through efforts to foster rural development. It coordinates efforts among national, regional and international organizations that support institutional capacity-building at all levels, with a view to:

- defining and adopting a common conceptual and operational paradigm for addressing food security problems in a more holistic manner
- supporting the modernization of institutions in order to enable them to more effectively plan, design and execute policies and strategies
- increasing investments in the rural sector with the aim of reducing poverty, expanding the food supply and improving food distribution

- promoting the development and improvement of domestic markets, including the goods, services and capital markets.

Promotion of Rural Prosperity

Economic growth and market improvement should provide benefits to all strata of society so that economic prosperity, human progress and sustainable development can be achieved in a harmonious and balanced manner.

In pursuit of rural prosperity, IICA supports its member countries in their efforts to:

- design appropriate policies and strategies to target the more vulnerable groups in the rural economy
- promote education and training and improve know-how, skills and capabilities in order to facilitate the effective involvement and participation of marginal groups in agricultural and rural markets
- strengthen civil society organizations and promote greater interaction among participants in agrifood chains in order to generate common agendas and improve their negotiating capacities and advocacy skills
- modernize and expand agricultural services in order to increase productivity
- upgrade the institutional capacity of agricultural and rural organizations, so as to increase their efficiency and effectiveness and their participation in joint public-private actions
- promote increased investments in the rural economy.

4. The Reform Process

The reform process at IICA has been recognized not only within the Institute but also throughout the hemisphere and in the Inter-American System. For example, in his report to the Presidents and Heads of States at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey, Mexico, January 2004), the Secretary General of the Organization of American States noted that:

“The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) is another example of the impact of the Summits on the work of the Inter-American institutions. IICA restructured its

operations to focus on the Summits process; it called on Ministers of Agriculture to develop a coherent overview of needs, to design plans, and to mobilize resources for implementing these plans. The result was a clear consensus on the actions necessary to create opportunities for agricultural producers, to improve food security and compete in international markets.”

Figure 1: The New Structure of IICA

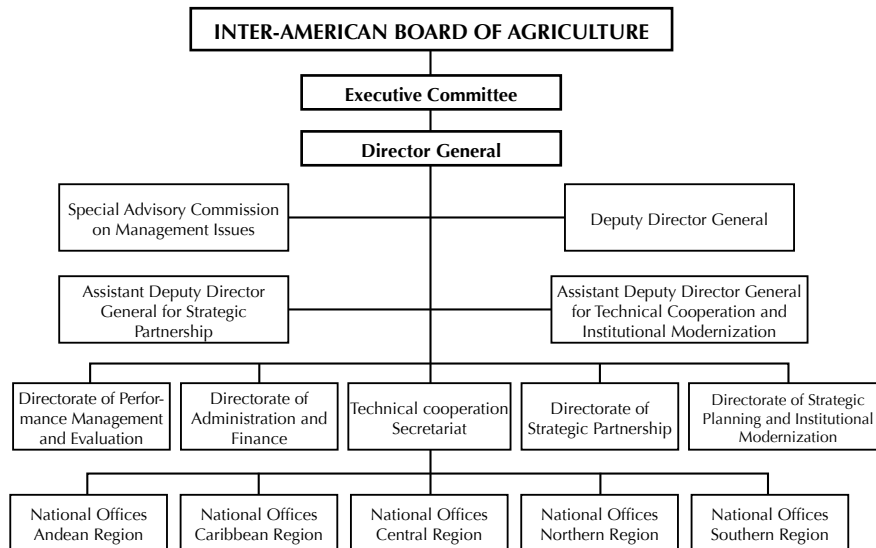
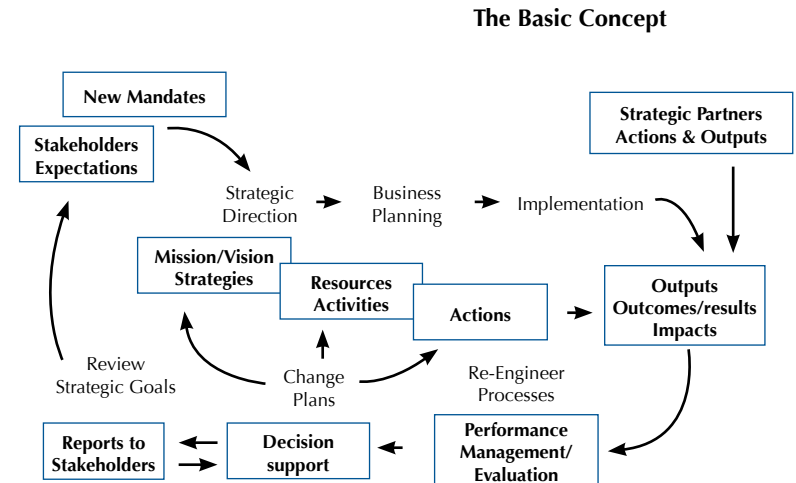


Figure 2: Integrated Management System (IMS)



The reform process comprises the following:

- Implementation of a new structure with an integrated management framework
- Development of a performance management results-based system

- Strengthening of the corporate governance and management systems
- Reduction of bureaucracy
- Promotion of financial prudence and accountability
- Promotion of basic principles and values, including flexibility, accountability, commitment, efficiency, tolerance and spirit of service
- Promotion of a commitment to hemispheric solidarity and social equity
- Development of a new relationship with our Member States, based on participation, accountability and transparency
- Establishment of new human resources policies, including a code of ethical conduct
- Stronger strategic partnerships with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission of Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank
- Promotion of a new programme on trade, agribusiness and food safety operating out of a new IICA Office in Miami, Florida
- Establishment of a Directorate for Strategic Partnerships based in IICA's Office in Washington, D. C.

5. A New Relationship with the Member States: IICA's New Model for Technical Cooperation

In response to these new mandates, a new model was created by this Administration for the Institute's technical cooperation.

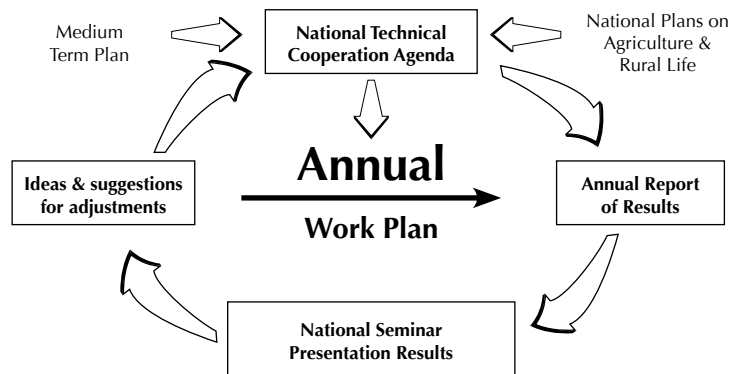
With Offices in its each of its Member States, IICA fostered an ongoing dialogue with national authorities and other key stakeholders in the agricultural sector (private and public organizations, the private sector, civil society, NGOs, academia, etc.) with a view to harmonizing IICA's actions in the countries with national priorities and development plans, taking into account the Institute's strategic areas of action and strengths.

The National Agendas: Participation, Accountability and Partnerships at the Country Level

The first component of the new model is a process of consultation, dialogue and consensus building with national authorities, the private sector, academia and civil society, to draw up National Technical Cooperation Agendas and to spur a principle-centered process of institutional transformation. This process aims to meet the Member States' need for technical cooperation that responds to their demands and priorities. The products of this endeavour are the National Technical Cooperation Agendas, according to which the Institute implements its technical cooperation at the country level.

Preparation of these agendas represents a new approach to technical cooperation, one that emphasizes participation, partnership, cooperation and demand-driven efforts.

Figure 3: Participation, Accountability, Consultation and Transparency at the National Level



The **National Agendas** recognize the unique nature of each of the Institute's Member States and the approach used in preparing them is holistic and inter-thematic. They afford an opportunity for the principal actors in agriculture and rural development to contribute significantly to developing IICA's technical cooperation programme, thus shaping it to their requirements. It is therefore "their" programme, implemented by IICA with mutually agreed upon human and financial resources.

The consultation process

As noted above, the process to prepare an overall strategy for IICA's actions at the country level is based on an extensive process of consultation and consensus-building with key stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the Americas. Its guiding principles are the following:

- The strategy must be based on the interests of the countries and be designed to impact on each one as soon as possible.
- It must take into consideration the Institute's mandates, new vision, mission and priorities, matching them with the countries' priorities.
- Preparation of the agendas is an ongoing process based on consultations with and the participation of partners. It does not impose a result or create a commitment. The strategy must reflect what IICA believes can effectively be done in each country and region.
- The strategy must define areas in which there is an effective match between the interest of the parties and the human resources available for implementing the necessary actions. A realistic assessment of resource constraints is of key importance.

Development and approval of the National Agendas

IICA's Representatives lead the process to prepare the agendas, taking into account the information generated in the consultation and following the established guidelines.

Once agreement on cooperation actions has been reached with national authorities, each Office prepares a draft National Agenda that includes a timetable of activities for the year, as well as an assessment of opportunities for securing additional financial resources to support cooperation actions.

Once the consistency of the draft National Agenda with IICA's Medium Term Plan (MTP) is assured and programming and

budgetary considerations are reviewed, the National Agendas are approved and communicated to national authorities, representatives of the private sector, universities, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Review and periodic updating of the National Agendas

IICA's strategic planning process is dynamic and ongoing, and the National Agendas are evaluated annually to assess the progress made, the results achieved, as well as to identify problems, document lessons learned, and identify and propose changes in needs and priorities. It aims to ensure the relevance of the National Agendas to changing circumstances in agriculture and the rural milieu. This assessment is conducted with all the stakeholders, clients and strategic partners that participated in formulating the National Agenda.

The Regional Agendas: Participation, Accountability and Partnerships at the Regional Level

The second major component of the model is the development of Regional Agendas for Technical Cooperation, which also involves a broad-based process of consultation and consensus building. Every effort is made to encourage the active participation of the key stakeholders involved in IICA's technical cooperation actions at the regional level. Existing institutional regional mechanisms, such as CORECA in Central America, the CAS in South America and the Caribbean Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Caribbean, are key players in this process.

Preparation of the Regional Agendas includes two important components:

- Analysis of the National Agendas of the countries in each given region, in order to develop and promote actions of regional scope to solve problems shared by a group of countries; and
- The Institute's commitment to continue supporting integration processes through existing mechanisms operating at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Taking into consideration the specific characteristics and needs of each region, the first step in preparing the Regional Agendas is to cooperate Institute's efforts and to align IICA's actions with regional priorities in order to achieve significant impact.

IICA's Directors of Regional Operations report to the respective regional council of ministers, or their equivalent, and organize an annual seminar to present them with the Regional Annual Report on the actions taken by IICA during the year at the regional level. This opportunity is also used to review and adjust the Agendas.

The Inter-thematic Nature of the Agendas

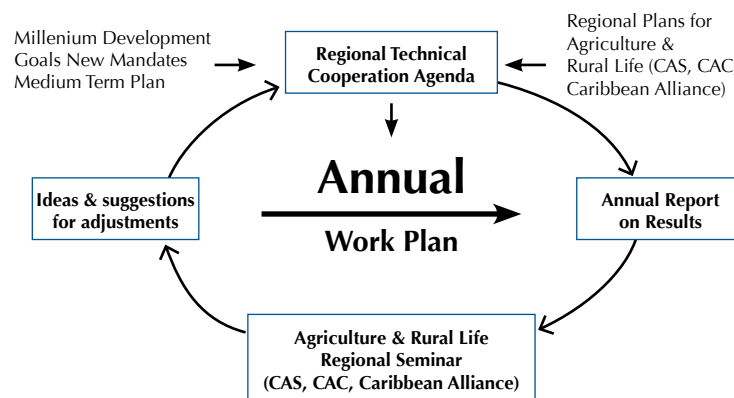
The National and Regional Agendas and the Hemispheric Agenda emphasize actions of an inter-thematic nature which are aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Facilitate hemispheric and regional integration
- Improve agribusiness competitiveness and global trade
- Promote the incorporation of technology and innovation in agriculture

- Foster agricultural health and food safety
- Strengthen rural communities
- Develop human capital
- Promote environmental management
- Further institutional modernization
- Foster horizontal technical cooperation
- Promote strategic partnerships.

These actions are underpinned by the principles of partnership and strategic alliances, cooperation, result-driven actions and accountability. All respond to the mandates received by IICA at the Third Summit of the Americas, the First and Second Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life (Bavaro 2001 and Panama 2003) and the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey, Mexico, January 2004).

Figure 4: Participation, Accountability, Consultation and Transparency at the Regional Level



- CAC: Central American Agricultural Council
- Caribbean Alliance: The Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu of the Wider Caribbean
- CAS: Southern Agricultural Council

6. Internal Support for the IICA Model

IICA's Monitoring, Supervision, Evaluation and Follow-up System

One of the most important internal factors that supports this new model for technical cooperation is the Institute's monitoring, supervision, evaluation and follow-up system, which links planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up activities within the Institute. It involves the IICA Offices in the countries and relevant Directorates and Units at Headquarters, which are expected to work in an integrated and holistic fashion.

The system is designed to be supportive and facilitative, and embodies an essential part of the Institute's responsibility to provide leadership, management, coordination, control and accountability on the use of its resources. It is also designed to foster relationships that contribute to improving individual skills and performance, and to bringing people and resources together, based on clear objectives and priorities defined in IICA's work plans, and in the National, Regional and Hemispheric Agendas.

The support system is responsive and focuses on results, comparing performance with the actions programmed and expectations. It is also of critical importance in efforts to build an organization of excellence whose main building blocks are accountability, results, performance and efficiency.

The support system has four major components, each with specific functions and responsibilities. They are:

- The Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation
- The Technical Cooperation Secretariat, with the Directors of Regional Operations and Thematic Areas
- The Internal Audit
- The administrative support group.

The support system has the following main responsibilities:

- To provide technical leadership and guidance to the Regional Specialists and Representatives in their efforts to execute the National and Regional Agendas
- To coordinate the execution of the actions of the Thematic Areas as outlined in the MTP
- To provide management at the IICA Offices in the countries with relevant orientation and inputs for achieving results and improving performance
- To manage the reporting system, comprised of the semestral and annual reports, travel reports and other reports on performance management
- To provide inputs in a timely manner for the General Directorate's decision-making process so as to improve the Institute's performance and accountability
- To conduct regular reviews, analyses and evaluation of the actions executed by the Offices in the countries and by the Units at Headquarters

- To analyze operational procedures on the use and management of financial resources by Units at Headquarters and the Offices, pursuant to the Institute's rules and regulations
- To support improvement of the administrative support system in the Offices in the countries and Units at Headquarters so as to facilitate achievement of the Institute's goals and objectives
- To support efforts to promote an institutional culture based on performance management and the achievement of results
- These functions provide essential support for the implementation of IICA's new technical cooperation model, and aim to provide leadership, management, coordination and control of the affairs of the Institute as a results-based organization.

The Reporting System

The reporting system is a key component of the new IICA model. Through it, IICA reports at least once a year on the actions it carries out at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

In each country, the IICA Offices organize an annual seminar during which the Representatives give an account to the key stakeholders in agriculture on the technical cooperation actions implemented during the course of the year. At the regional level, the Directors of Regional Operations report to the regional council of ministers, or their equivalent, of their respective regions. This process has been described in Section 5.



More formally, however, every two years during the meetings of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), IICA provides an account of the measures it has taken to implement the Agendas.

In addition, as an agency of the Inter-American system, IICA delivers a report each year to the OAS, in which it accounts for its technical cooperation and operational actions in the Member States. The Director General is invited to present this report to the OAS Permanent Council.

With regard to the Summit of the Americas process, IICA reports through the Summit Implementation Review Group on Agriculture on the progress made to fulfill the mandates received in the Quebec Declaration, and more recently, in the Declaration of Nuevo Leon, which was approved at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey, Mexico).

In addition, on a yearly basis all Directors, Representatives and Regional Specialists meet at IICA Headquarters to report on the actions implemented in each country and region, and also to plan and coordinate future actions. This is a week of intensive meetings during which participants align their work plans and explore possibilities for developing horizontal cooperation activities. Because of its dual purpose of reporting on actions implemented and planning future actions in a coordinated and cohesive fashion, Representatives' Week is considered the Institute's most important strategic meeting.

The Human Resources Management Policy

Another important internal factor that supports the new IICA model is its human resources policy, which is based on the principle that the Institute must be able to maintain

and enhance its capacities and competitiveness, and to attract and retain outstanding professionals. As an institution promoting the development, transformation and transmission of knowledge, the Institute developed a three-year plan that includes:

- reviewing the Institute's classification and compensation system and its recruitment practices,
- developing a language training program, to strengthen staff's language capabilities, and an orientation program for new employees,
- introducing a new performance evaluation system linked to performance incentives and bonuses, and
- introducing an awards for excellence program within the Institute.

Promotion of a Culture of Excellence

One of the cornerstones of the new IICA model is the pursuit of excellence at all levels. IICA understands that recognition is an instrument for strengthening motivation that can contribute to attaining the Institute's strategic goals. IICA aims to be recognized as an institution of excellence, where the quality of the work performed and delivered by all staff members is at the highest standard of international technical cooperation.

To this end, the Director General's Awards for Excellence Program was created to contribute to shaping an institutional culture of recognition for creativity, outstanding performance, leadership and teamwork.



Promotion of a New Corporate Image

Under the new model, IICA attaches special importance to information, communication and the projection of the Institute's image. The promotion of a new global dimension and of a new institutional image is fundamental in repositioning the Institute as an international development organization, one recognized and respected as a reliable strategic partner capable of making important contributions to agriculture and the rural milieu in the Americas.

A New Communication Policy

IICA's new information and communications policy facilitates dialogue with the Community of Agriculture and the Member States and keeps them informed of the activities and results of the Institute's work.

Publication of the National and Regional Technical Cooperation Agendas, IICA's Annual Reports, IICA Connection (an electronic bulletin) and the Director General's Infoletter, together with the improvement of the Institute's new website www.iica.int, are examples of this policy.

7. External Support for the New IICA Model

New Relationships with Global Strategic Partners

The problems that hinder agricultural and rural development in the Americas are so vast and complex that they surpass the efforts and capabilities not only of national governments, but also of any single development agency or international

organization. This is why international organizations and agencies must combine their capabilities and experience with those of their allies and partners in order to optimise contributions and bring solutions that have real impact on the Community of Agriculture and Rural Life of the Americas.

IICA's considers the "working-together" approach as indispensable to achieving its objectives. To this end, it established the Directorate of Strategic Partnerships in Washington, D.C. to strengthen its work with international strategic partners, as part of the fundamental strategy for promoting sustainable agricultural development, food security and prosperity in the rural communities of the Americas.

Decades of experience have shown the need for and the advantages of cooperation among national and international, public and private organizations that work with agriculture and rural life and whose actions complement those of the Institute. For years, IICA has worked in mutually beneficial cooperation with other agencies of the Inter-American and United Nations Systems, international financial bodies, government agencies for international cooperation, as well as other public and private national entities. The synergies created have brought greater relevance to actions undertaken, improved their effectiveness and expanded the scope of services provided. IICA's new model promotes active partnerships as a means of improving cooperation efforts. As a testimony of this commitment to partnerships, the Institute published the document "Working Together."

Private Sector Participation

IICA's relationship with the private sector and, more particularly, the agribusiness sector is of critical importance to the new IICA model.



In this era of free trade negotiations and globalization, market access is key to the economic development of nations. Therefore, agribusiness development was included as a priority line of action in the Institute's 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan. This has given rise to closer cooperation between the Institute and the private sector for implementing actions to promote agribusiness development and competitiveness. Moreover, a trade capacity building facility was established in Miami to upgrade member country capabilities to access international markets. In addition, National and Regional Agendas, IICA facilitates dialogue between the public and private sectors and facilitates consensus building on major issues. An example of this facilitation mechanism is the Caribbean Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Caribbean.

8. Toward a Common Hemispheric Agenda for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas: The Agro 2003-2015 Plan of Action

With the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life and the Twelfth Regular Meeting of the Inter- American Board of Agriculture (IABA), both held in November 2003 in Panama, IICA's model became of even greater importance. On that occasion, the Ministers of Agriculture approved the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life, setting the course for the countries of the hemisphere to move toward a shared vision of agriculture and rural life in the year 2015.

Approval of the Plan represents one step in the efforts to implement the mandates given by the Heads of State and Government to the ministers at the Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec, 2001), to promote the development of agriculture and the improvement of rural life through joint actions involving the stakeholders in agriculture and other organizations working to develop the sector.

Taking into account a shared vision for agriculture and rural life in the future and the efforts under way in the Americas to promote regional and hemispheric integration and trade, the ministers of agriculture agreed to specific strategic lines of action to benefit their populations (Figure 5).

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action agreed upon during the Second Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life was the result of a process initiated in 2001 during the Third Summit of the Americas. Subsequent to the Summit, the ministers of agriculture met later that year in Bavaro, Dominican Republic, where they issued a declaration urging funding and cooperation institutions and the governments to coordinate their strategies for supporting actions aimed at improving agriculture and rural life.

During the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico in January 2004, the Heads of State and Government signed the Declaration of Nuevo Leon, in which they endorsed implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

They also called on eight international and regional organizations, including IICA, *"to strengthen their coordination, and to continue deepening their support, through their respective activities and programs, and committing appropriate resources to implement and conduct follow-up on the Plans of Action of the Summits of the Americas, and this Declaration, and to assist in preparations for the Fourth Summit of the Americas in 2005."*



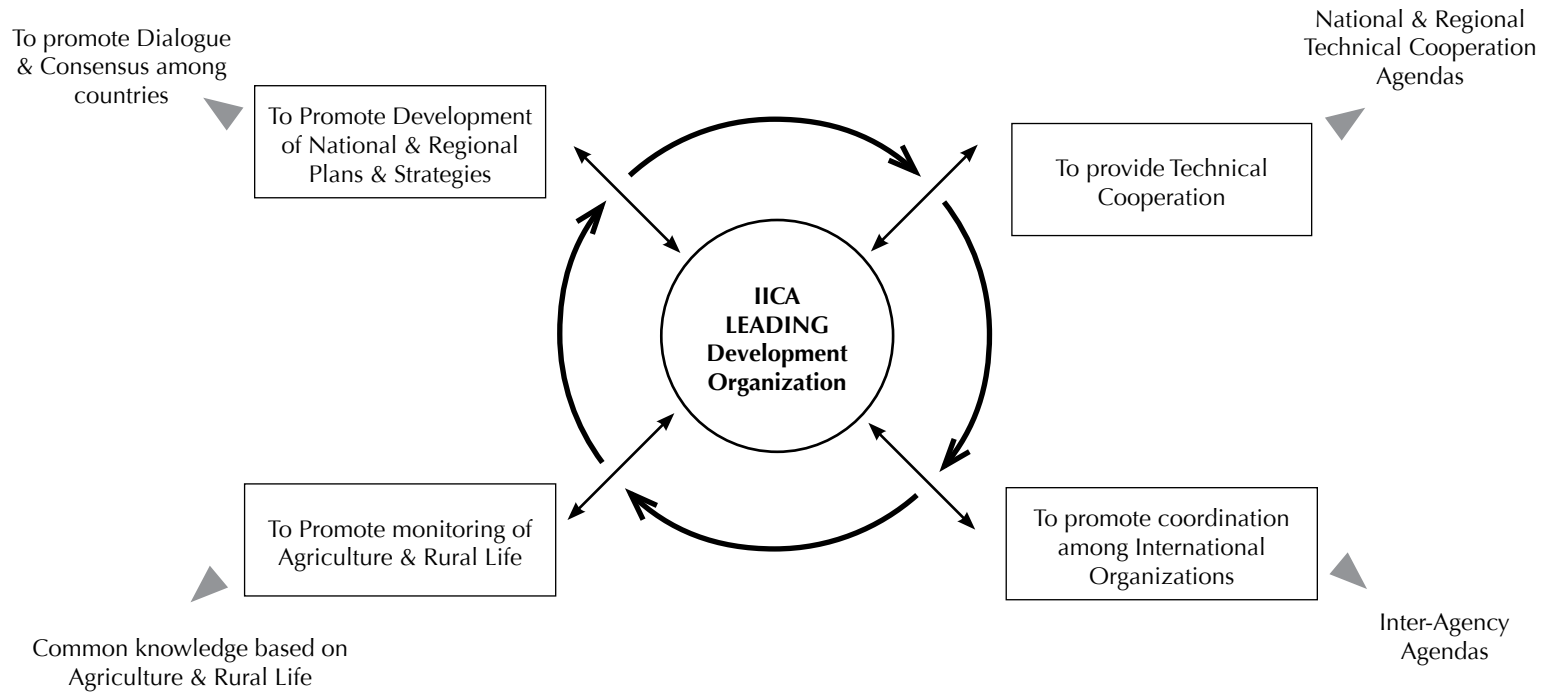
It was in response to the Summit of the Americas process that IICA originally developed its 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan (MTP) and its new model for technical cooperation. The priorities set out in the MTP are reflected in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

We are convinced that IICA's new model, which is based on the development of national, regional and hemispheric agendas,

is the best mechanism for responding to the requirements of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

The Plan reflects the intention of member countries to work towards the shared vision, in the understanding that national governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the shared agenda and recognizing that each government will undertake the Plan of Action in accordance with its national and international commitments and agreements.

Figure 5: IICA's Leadership Role in the Implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action





This is the context in which the IICA model can be most effective in delivering the results expected by its Member States. Because the model is centered on an ongoing consultation process at all levels and the development of partnerships, it creates the conditions necessary for fulfilling the commitments set out in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.


In 2005, during the next Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life, the ministers will have the opportunity to report on the progress made in their countries to implement the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action. On that occasion, the Institute will also report to the ministers on the progress made through its technical cooperation with the countries in coordination with the national, regional and the hemispheric communities.

It is in this spirit that IICA will continue to support coherent and cohesive initiatives that are in line with its Medium Term Plan, so as to contribute more effectively to the sustainable development of agriculture and rural prosperity throughout the Americas.

9. Conclusions

The model adopted by IICA responds to each of the commitments made to the governments of the Americas at the outset of this new Administration.

The proposed model was validated during the 2002-2003 period with the preparation and approval of 34 National Technical Cooperation Agendas, five Regional Technical Cooperation Agendas and the Hemispheric Technical Cooperation Agenda, all of which were drawn up in consensus with IICA's stakeholders in the Member States. Of critical importance is that the modality promotes horizontal cooperation among countries and regions and uses an interthematic approach to technical cooperation and country involvement.



IICA's Contribution to the Implementation of the Mandates of the Summits of the Americas and Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life

*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Implementation of the Mandates of the Summits of the Americas and Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life

Bernardo Badani¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the results of the Institute's contribution to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life, as well as the development of a renewed institutional framework, in accordance with the model of technical cooperation advocated by the Institute. The first priority of this model is to build consensus regarding strategies – particularly Plan AGRO and national and regional strategies for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu – and to follow up on such strategies.

Within the framework of the hemispheric environment created by the Summits of the Americas process, as well as the inclusion of agriculture and rural life in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Third Summit, IICA has assumed an active role in the development of a renewed institutional framework for agriculture and rural life in the Americas. This is reflected by the "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" ministerial process and its meetings, as well as the creation of hemispheric agreements on agriculture and rural life, the development of proposals within the Summits process, and the development of mandates on agriculture and rural life.

To date, four ministerial meetings have taken place, and agricultural leaders have attended and submitted proposals at four Summits of the Americas, including the Fifth Summit, held in Trinidad and Tobago in April 2009.

2. IICA, the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century, and the Hemispheric Dynamic of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

As the new century begins, political leaders and the leaders of national and international organizations have redoubled their efforts to identify challenges and make commitments to the future of humanity. Global and hemispheric dialogue, consensus building, and commitments have been strengthened during this decade, in an effort to achieve a more just, secure, prosperous, and equitable world in the twenty-first century. The Millennium Development Goals, for which a 2015 deadline has been set, include the reduction of extreme poverty and hunger, the achievement of environmental sustainability, and global cooperation for development. They are significant

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results of these processes in the face of the twenty-first century's challenges, as are the mandates of the Summits of the Americas. IICA has lent its full support to these objectives, and is working resolutely toward their fulfillment.

Over the past few years, the challenges of food security, energy security, and climate change have acquired greater public relevance and visibility, due to an increase in the price of food, agricultural supplies, and oil, as well as a global financial and economic crisis and increased information and awareness regarding climate change and its consequences. In this new global and hemispheric environment, agriculture has acquired greater visibility, and its political positioning has improved as a result of its importance to comprehensive and sustainable development.

The mandates and commitments produced by the last four Summits were a notable reassessment of agriculture and rural life. They recognized the importance of agriculture and rural life to comprehensive development, encouraged the "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" ministerial meetings, and influenced the development agendas of the countries and organizations that support their strategies. Moreover, from the Third Summit onward, IICA has been included in every stage of the Summits process as an institutional partner.

In this general environment of challenges, mandates, and commitments, which has created a new hemispheric dynamic for agriculture in the Americas, IICA has been carrying out an institutional modernization process since 2002. The purpose of this process is to decisively support member states in the implementation, follow-up, and biennial updating of the *Agro 2003-2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*, as well as the consolidation of the position achieved by agriculture in the hemisphere's most important political forum.

As an institutional partner in the Summits process, as well as the Secretariat of the "Agriculture and Rural Life" ministerial meetings, IICA has helped to link the ministerial process and the results of its meetings with the Summits of the Americas. Thus, for example, it has provided steady support for countries by informing the chair of the V Summit and the national delegations attending the meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group of the strategic guidelines established by the Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement. The inclusion of these guidelines in the *Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain* is a significant accomplishment for the Institute.

3. Accomplishments of IICA with Regard to the Mandates of the Quebec 2001 and Port of Spain 2009 Mandates: *A political framework for the reassessment of agriculture and rural life*

The heads of state attending the last four Summits of the Americas included agriculture and rural life as strategic issues on the inter-American agenda. The Institute's work as the secretariat of the ministerial meetings and the agreements adopted by the ministers have influenced the mandates on agriculture and rural life adopted at the Summits. Following is a summary of the main policy guidelines adopted at the Summits.

The Third Summit of the Americas (Quebec 2001) was a significant milestone in the development of a renewed institutional framework for agriculture and rural life. The attending heads of state and government recognized the



importance of both to the fight against poverty and the promotion of sustainable development in their countries, given the dual role of agriculture as a way of life for millions of rural people and a strategic prosperity-generating sector of the socioeconomic system. At the request of the attending ministers of agriculture, IICA played a key role in the development of the proposal to the III Summit of the Americas. It also supported countries in the negotiations surrounding the inclusion of agriculture in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Summit, which called for:

- **joint hemispheric action** on the part of agricultural and rural stakeholders, with a view to sustainably improving agriculture and rural life;
- medium- and long-term **national strategies** for the sustainable improvement of both areas. These strategies should be based on discussions that include ministers, lawmakers, and representatives of the various sectors of civil society.

In response to the first mandate and Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro, IICA has assisted ministers of agriculture and their delegates in the development of the Agro 2003-2015 Plan, facilitating hemispheric dialogue, contributing a broad approach that consolidates national proposals (the AGRO-Matrix), and organizing the meetings of the Hemispheric Forum of Delegates and the Second Ministerial Meeting, where the AGRO Plan was approved.

The heads of state gathered at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004) pledged to make a sustained effort to improve rural living conditions by promoting investment and creating a favorable environment for the improvement of agriculture, social development, rural prosperity, and food security. Accordingly, they supported the efforts of their

ministers of agriculture by establishing the implementation of the Agro 2003-2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas – adopted at the Second Ministerial Meeting (Panama 2003) – as a mandate, as well as by acknowledging IICA's contribution to the implementation of the Plan at the national level.

At the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005), the assembled heads of state undertook to develop an institutional framework based on the coordination of public policies. This framework was to include a global rural and agricultural development system to promote investment, job creation, and rural prosperity. To that end, they established the following mandate: *“To support the implementation of the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil in 2005, Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas (AGRO 2003-2015 Plan)”*. IICA continued supporting countries in the implementation of the Plan, executing technical cooperation agendas, facilitating the “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” ministerial process, and working with ECLAC to develop a data system with which to monitor and assess the AGRO Plan from three perspectives: national experiences, performance indicators, and leaders’ expectations.

The countries represented at the Fifth Summit of the Americas – *“Securing our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability”* adopted the *Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain*, which includes mandates regarding agriculture and its importance to human prosperity, energy security, and environmental sustainability.

With regard to agriculture and rural life, the assembled heads of state emphasized, in paragraph 25 of the Declaration, the importance to sustainable development and food security of a broad, multidimensional, and multisectoral approach to agriculture and the rural milieu. They also expressed support

for efforts to reposition the latter as priorities within national strategies, as established by the ministers in the *AGRO 2003-2015 Plan: Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement – Guatemala 2007*. The heads of state also undertook to strengthen national, regional, and hemispheric approaches and strategic actions, with the support of IICA and other relevant organizations.

In preparation for the Fifth Summit, IICA spoke out on hemispheric challenges, continued to support countries in the implementation of the AGRO Plan, and linked the strategic guidelines established by the 2007 ministerial process with the mandates of the V Summit.

The mandates and commitments adopted at these four summits have created the political framework necessary to reappraise agriculture and rural life in the Americas. They have also opened a new chapter in the ministerial process, producing agreements which have helped to implement and update the mandates of the hemispheric summits.

The “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” Ministerial Process and its Meetings: Dialogue, Consensus, and Commitment

The heads of state gathered at Quebec 2001 also recognized the importance of ministerial meetings as a mechanism for addressing strategic issues on the inter-American agenda and coordinating the implementation of summit mandates. Ministerial meetings make it possible to build consensus on strategic priorities and actions to address hemispheric challenges.

At the Third Summit, ministers of agriculture were given a central role in the implementation of summit action plans. It was they who encouraged the development of the “Agriculture

and Rural Life in the Americas” ministerial process, as well as the meetings that followed. Since then, with IICA serving as its secretariat, the ministerial process has become an ongoing cycle essentially comprised of the following:

- the “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” ministerial meetings;
- the adoption of Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMAs);
- the implementation of HMAs;
- monitoring of HMA implementation;
- identification of challenges in HMA implementation;
- dialogue and consensus building for the development of new HMAs for the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

Four ministerial meetings have taken place within the framework of the ministerial process. The attending ministers and secretaries of agriculture have, with the support of the hemispheric forum of ministerial delegates (GRICA), adopted significant HMAs, including the *Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro*, the *AGRO 2003–2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*, the *Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil – 2005*, and the *Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement of Guatemala – 2007*.

Throughout the ministerial process, IICA has assisted the authorities of the Dominican Republic, Panama, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Jamaica in the preparation and development of the hemispheric meetings. It has also facilitated dialogue and consensus building with regard to the eight HMAs adopted thus far, providing ministers and their delegates with technical documents and summaries of national proposals for the discussion and development of HMAs.



The two institutional components of agriculture and rural life discussed below are examples of IICA's technical support for countries: the AGRO Plan – the most important agreement of the ministerial process – and the AGRO-Matrix, which provides the conceptual framework for the process.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas: A Common Reference Point for Decision-makers

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan is a shared agenda adopted by the ministers of the hemisphere to promote the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. It is the result of a broad process of dialogue and development of consensus around national proposals. The process is led by ministers of agriculture, with the help of their delegates. The Plan provides a framework for the achievement of the changes desired by 2015. It is implemented and updated by countries through strategic actions agreed at the ministerial meetings.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan was updated at the Third and Fourth ministerial meetings (Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007) and approved at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004), the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005), and the Fifth Summit of the Americas (Trinidad and Tobago 2009). In it, the ministers and secretaries of agriculture, with the technical support of IICA, took the following actions:

- Developed a renewed understanding of agriculture and rural life. This new understanding, which provides the conceptual framework and organizing principles of the AGRO plan, is summarized in the AGRO Matrix.
- Established a Shared Vision for Agriculture and Rural Life in 2015 which reflects their aspirations regarding the national and international environment, rural territories, and commercial agro-production chains.
- Reiterated the commitments adopted in the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro regarding strategic objectives pertaining to rural prosperity, food security, the international insertion and regional integration of agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, and the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. These objectives lend focus to the efforts of leaders in the field of agriculture and rural life in the Americas.
- Undertook to work with agricultural stakeholders and other actors linked to the development of agriculture and rural life to support the strategic actions of the 2003-2005 hemispheric agenda, with a view to achieving its strategic objectives. This hemispheric agenda is the first of six biennial agendas, and is divided into 12 sections, each of which has been assigned a series of strategic actions.
- Stated that the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan reflects the willingness of member states to work toward a shared vision, in the understanding that the main responsibility for the implementation of the Plan lies with national governments, given their international commitments and agreements. Accordingly, they adopted the following implementation and follow-up measures: (i) preparation of national progress reports on the implementation of the strategic actions included in the current hemispheric agenda; (ii) updating of the hemispheric agenda for future biennia; (iii) request for strategic coordination on the part of international institutions and governments to implement the Plan; and



(iv) establishment of appropriate metrics to assess progress in the implementation of the Plan.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan was updated at the Third and Fourth ministerial meetings (Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007) and approved at the Special Summit of the Americas (Monterrey 2004), the Fourth Summit of the Americas (Mar del Plata 2005), and the Fifth Summit of the Americas (Trinidad and Tobago 2009).

A Broad Understanding and Approach to Agriculture and the Rural Milieu: The AGRO-Matrix

The mandates on agriculture and rural life established at the summits constitute a political framework that transcends the traditional concept of agriculture as a primary production sector in the economy. During the “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” ministerial process, IICA and the ministerial delegates developed a broad understanding of and approach to agriculture and the rural milieu, with a view to promoting their sustainable development. The AGRO-Matrix summarizes this broad approach.

The AGRO-Matrix, used by the Secretariat and the ministerial delegates as the basis for the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, employs a systemic concept of agriculture and rural life, with three fields of action (rural territories, agricultural production-trade chains, and national and international context), as well as a sustainable-development

approach consisting of four dimensions (production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural-human, and political-institutional).

The AGRO-Matrix facilitates understanding of the complex phenomenon of agriculture and rural life. It also helps to promote strategies and actions to address specific issues and coordinate the efforts of different interest groups, in order to achieve the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. This broad vision of and approach to agriculture and

Figure 6: The AGRO-Matrix

Systemic Concept	Rural Territories	Agricultural Production-Trade Chains	National and International Context	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
Sustainable development approach				
Production – Trade	I. Promoting competitive rural enterprises	II. Integrating chains and strengthening their competitiveness	III. Promoting an environment conducive to competitive agriculture	→ Competitiveness
Ecological – Environmental	IV. Being environmentally responsible in the rural areas	V. From farm to table: promoting integrated environmental management	VI. Participating in building an institutional environmental framework	→ Sustainability
Sociocultural - human	VII. Quality of life in rural communities: creating know-how and opportunity	VIII. Advancing learning and expertise in the chain	IX. Promoting policies to create capabilities and opportunities for the rural communities	→ Equity
Political - institutional	X. Strengthening public and private sector participation and coordinated action between them in the territories	XI. Strengthening dialogue and commitments among actors in the chain	XII. Promoting national policies and regional and hemispheric cooperation for agriculture and rural life	→ Governance
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Rural Prosperity ~ Food Security ~ International Positioning			OVERARCHING GOAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL MILIEU

Source: Ministerial Agreements, 2005.



the rural milieu was a key message of the Guatemala 2007 Ministerial Agreement; it was reiterated by IICA in 2008 and 2009, during the discussions leading up to the Fifth Summit of the Americas and the Declaration of Commitment.

IICA's Contribution to the Implementation of Summit and HMA Mandates

Since the Third Summit, IICA has been an institutional partner at every stage of the summit process. Accordingly, it has been assisting countries in the development and consolidation of an "institutional architecture" to facilitate the implementation of presidential mandates on agriculture and rural life, as well as their respective ministerial agreements. This institutional architecture is also intended to ensure the continuity of the "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" ministerial process and its linkages to the summit process. One of the Institute's most significant contributions has been the recognition of this framework at the most recent summit (Trinidad and Tobago 2009) as an ideal tool to monitor the implementation of mandates. Some of its components were formally included in the Declaration of Commitment of Port of Spain, for use in other hemispheric ministerial processes.

The components of this institutional framework, advocated and supported by IICA, are as follows:

- a *national team*, comprised of ministerial delegates and their technical teams, to help ministers organize a national dialogue and coordinate the implementation of HMAs;
- a *hemispheric forum of ministerial delegates* (GRICA) to promote hemispheric dialogue and negotiation, as well as to build consensus regarding new HMAs submitted for consideration at ministerial meetings;

- a *Secretariat* of the ministerial process and its meetings of delegates and ministers. This function is performed by IICA. The Institute's main responsibility in this regard is to support the discussions and work of the delegates, GRICA, and the ministerial meetings;
- a *Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting* within the framework of the summits process – the forum of ministers of agriculture. This is the mechanism used to adopt HMAs and submit proposals to heads of state and government for discussion at the next summit;
- a *strategic framework* for agriculture and rural life in the Americas, comprised of summit mandates on agriculture and rural life and HMAs. The organizing principle of both is the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan;
- a comprehensive and sustainable *broad conception* of agriculture and rural life which seeks its sustainable development, as summarized in the AGRO-Matrix.

Thanks to the political will of the ministers of agriculture, as well as the approval and support of the heads of state at the last three summits (2004, 2005, and 2009) and the technical support of IICA, this institutional framework is now in operation as the Fifth Ministerial Meeting (Jamaica 2009) approaches.

In keeping with the mandates and challenges of its role as an institutional partner in the summits process, the Institute embarked upon an institutional modernization process in 2002 which led to the adoption of two supplementary functions: one – traditional, yet renewed – as an international cooperation agency aligned with the new institutional dynamic of the Americas, and another (new) role as the Secretariat of the "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas" ministerial process.

As a *cooperation agency*, IICA has consolidated a cooperation model which guides its actions through *national technical cooperation agendas* (developed through consultations and dialogue with public authorities and the private, scientific, and academic sectors) in its 34 member states. It has brought its technical cooperation activities into line with the current hemispheric dynamic, the guidelines established by the ministers during the hemispheric ministerial process, and the mandates produced by the summits. The Institute has also strengthened its technical capacity to promote the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu vis-à-vis strategic cooperation issues such as agro-energy, organic agriculture, agrotourism, biotechnology, and natural resources.

As the *Secretariat of the hemispheric ministerial process*, IICA helps to ensure the continuity of the process and establish linkages to the Summits of the Americas. Accordingly, it has supported the ministerial meetings held in Bavaro (2001), Panama (2003), Guayaquil (2005), and Guatemala (2007), as well as the meetings of the Hemispheric Forum of Ministerial Delegates held during those same years. The Institute is currently assisting the Government of Jamaica as it organizes the Fifth Ministerial Meeting. As Secretariat of the process, it has also prepared and disseminated biennial reports such as the following:

- *In Pursuit of a Renewed Institutional Framework for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas. The Public, Private, and Social Sectors Working Together. Report of the Secretariat on the 2006-2007. Ministerial Process “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” and the Fourth Ministerial Meeting – Guatemala 2007. IICA, 2008.*
- *AGRO 2003-2015 Plan for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas. Bavaro 2001 - Panama 2003 -Guayaquil 2005 -*

Guatemala 2007. Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements. IICA, 2007.

Within the framework of the summits process, IICA has, since 2001, participated in the Joint Summit Working Group (a group of international organizations which serve as institutional partners of the summits process), the Summit Implementation Review Group, and the Quebec 2001, Monterrey 2004, Mar del Plata 2005, and Trinidad and Tobago 2009 summits, where it has submitted the guidelines and proposals developed at the ministerial meetings.

■ *The continuity of the ministerial process*

IICA is committed to the implementation of summit mandates and the agreements adopted at the “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas” ministerial meetings. Since 2002, the Institute has been implementing a *cooperation model* made up of four strategic elements which complement one another. They are as follows:

- To support member states in the implementation of mandates through a technical cooperation model. The first action required by this model is to hold consultations with national authorities, in order to jointly establish the Institute’s technical cooperation agendas. These agendas are reviewed annually, in order to accommodate the evolving needs of countries and the challenges of the AGRO 2015 Plan.
- To encourage the monitoring of agriculture and rural life and, on that basis, to promote reflection and dialogue among agricultural stakeholders. To that end, IICA prepared reports on the situation and prospects of agriculture in 2003, 2005, and 2007. In response to a mandate established at the Fourth Summit, the Institute



also worked with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to develop a data system for the monitoring and assessment of the AGRO Plan.

- To support ministers of agriculture and their delegates in the organization and development of ministerial meetings. In this regard, the Institute has facilitated dialogue between agricultural stakeholders, as well as the development of hemispheric consensus regarding strategies for the sustainable improvement of agriculture and rural life.
 - To coordinate actions with other international organizations working to improve agriculture and rural life in the Americas. In keeping with the spirit of the summits process, IICA has increased its cooperation and joint efforts with institutional partners of the process, as well as other international organizations present in the hemisphere.
- ***Coordination of the ministerial process with the summits process***, this includes the following:
- Briefing the Summit Implementation Review Group – comprised of the ministers of foreign affairs of the hemisphere and their national coordinators – on the progress of countries in the implementation of summit mandates, the ministerial process and its agreements, and the contributions of the Institute.
 - Participating in the last four summits as an institutional partner.
 - Participating in the Joint Summit Working Group coordinated by the Organization of American States (OAS)

and submitting reports and proposals to the Summits of the Americas Process, including the following:

- ***Desafíos Hemisféricos en Preparación de la Quinta Cumbre de las Américas*** (“Hemispheric Challenges in Preparing for the Fifth Summit of the Americas”). Document submitted to the Joint Summit Working Group. IICA, 2007.

The positioning of agriculture and rural life on summit agendas has thus been strengthened. The contributions of IICA to the process have also been made more visible, and its joint efforts with other institutional partners – such as ECLAC, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and the World Bank – have been strengthened.

In summary, IICA has supported the efforts of ministers of agriculture to promote the sustainable development of agriculture and rural communities by implementing national technical cooperation agendas. These agendas address the issues and strategic actions established in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, within the technical capabilities of the Institute. At the same time, the Institute has made efforts – with tangible results – to ensure that this process is linked to the objectives, actions, and mechanisms established to implement the mandates of the Summits of the Americas. To that end, it has facilitated dialogue and consensus regarding the *strategic actions* countries must consider at the “*Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas*” ministerial meetings. It has also helped to strengthen the position of agriculture and rural life on the inter-American summit agenda.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical Cooperation Services: Implementation of the 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



The Hemispheric Dimension of IICA's Technical Cooperation During the Period 2002-2008

The Hemispheric Dimension of IICA's Technical Cooperation During the Period 2002-2008

James B. French¹ and Julio C. Mora²

1. Introduction

IICA uses the term “technical cooperation” to refer to the activities it carries out in support of the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and rural prosperity in the Americas. Those activities include the transfer of knowledge, skills, experiences and innovations in order to develop and strengthen institutional and human capabilities, improve the living conditions of people in the agricultural sector and contribute to efforts to solve specific problems encountered in agriculture and the rural milieu.

The Institute's technical cooperation is designed to support the modernization of agriculture with an eye to making it more competitive and efficient, integrating its products into world markets and improving living conditions in the rural milieu.

The Directorate of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management (DLTGC) is the unit responsible for ensuring the quality and relevance of the technical cooperation that IICA provides to its Member States, promoting knowledge management in the area of agriculture and rural development and providing a prospective vision of agriculture and its significance for the Americas. The following report presents

that hemispheric vision of technical cooperation related to the development of capabilities and leadership, institution strengthening and modernization, information and knowledge management, and the analysis of policies and the performance of agriculture and rural life.

2. Results Achieved

IICA developed and implemented cooperation methodologies and instruments, coordinated and articulated the actions of the units that provide technical cooperation and promoted the articulation of the Regional Directorates with the Offices in its member countries, all with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of its technical cooperation services.

The Institute also promoted the integration of its technical areas and the construction of a new institutional framework. In doing so, IICA managed to create a single technical team, integrated at the institutional level, with a prospective hemispheric mission and vision and objectives, priorities, orientations and areas of shared responsibility. The Institute grouped together under a single structure all the strategic Technical Areas and the programs and units that provide

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direct technical cooperation or lend support to those areas and units.

New **crosscutting hemispheric technical programs** were created in response to specific demands from the countries, ensuring that the cross-thematic activities in question were properly articulated with the Technical Areas. The first program established was the **Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Agricultural Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety**. Subsequently, in keeping with resolutions adopted by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the Executive Committee, programs were developed in the areas of **biotechnology and biosafety, agroenergy and biofuels, rural agribusiness, agrotourism, organic agriculture and agricultural insurance**. All of them have two objectives in common: a) to assist the countries in developing institutional frameworks and local technical capabilities, and b) to manage information and knowledge.

With a view to promoting the development of leaders for agricultural and rural development, IICA created the **Center for Leadership**, which carries out comprehensive training activities for leaders, forums and workshops, with the participation of IICA's Technical Areas. One of the most important programs that the Center implemented was entitled "Executive Leadership in Food Safety."

Preparation and Implementation of the Institute's Technical Cooperation Agenda

IICA crafted and implemented conceptual and methodological proposals for preparing, validating, executing, monitoring and adjusting the (institutional) hemispheric, regional and

national agendas. The agendas encapsulate the demands, needs and interests of the countries, the regional entities dedicated to improving agriculture and rural life and the IABA, and marry those demands with the Institute's capacity to respond to them.

At the hemispheric level, IICA has an Institutional Cooperation Agenda that focuses on five strategic priorities, namely: i) the development and strengthening of the capabilities of agribusinesses and small rural enterprises; ii) information and knowledge management; iii) the development and strengthening of the agricultural and rural public private and institutional framework; iv) methodologies, analyses and studies needed for decision making; and, v) the promotion of hemispheric, regional and national technical cooperation with cooperation agencies and international cooperation and financial organizations.

Thanks to this institutional agenda, the Institute was able to facilitate the articulation of the Technical Areas with the National and Regional Agendas, to make the latter easier to implement. The Hemispheric Agenda provided a roadmap for the articulated work that has reflected the changes in the demands and needs of the countries.

Based on the experience gained, IICA improved the process of preparing, reviewing, approving and providing feedback on the national and regional technical cooperation agendas, to ensure that they dovetail with the demands of the countries.

Knowledge management as a tool for enhancing the impact of technical cooperation. IICA reoriented its approaches and actions from the hemispheric level down, making knowledge management the conceptual and practical linchpin around which the Institute's technical cooperation revolves.

The Institute promoted *knowledge management* as a group of processes designed to make the Institute a learning organization. Those processes focused on facilitating and promoting the creation and use of tacit and explicit knowledge, to increase and strengthen the organization's ability to attain the objectives established in its Medium-Term Plan (MTP). Knowledge management was geared toward creating, disseminating and using knowledge as part of a "knowledge-sharing" process. Knowledge management entails comprehensive processes for sharing knowledge and experiences to improve technical cooperation. IICA's knowledge-management efforts sought to develop collaborative processes for sharing and constructing knowledge, with an eye to strengthening the organization's technical cooperation. Thanks to those actions, the Institute has become a proactive source of new ideas and knowledge of critical issues related to sustainable agricultural and rural development.

IICA endeavored to identify critical issues to facilitate the generation of ideas and new knowledge, share them with its clients and strategic partners, and support their application in the areas of interest to the countries. The Institute actively promoted the exchange of new ideas, innovations and technologies with clients and strategic partners.

IICA increased its capacity to generate, gather, share and apply knowledge and experiences for the critical issues in agriculture and rural life, in order to become a hemispheric point of reference on sustainable agricultural and rural development. The main achievements include:

- The creation and implementation of processes for identifying, gathering and organizing the knowledge and experiences of the participants in technical cooperation processes;

- The promotion of processes to gather implicit and tacit knowledge and transform it into explicit knowledge that can be shared with other participants;
- The facilitation of an enabling environment for the creation and dissemination of new knowledge inside and outside of IICA; and,
- A greater flow of knowledge and experiences, and support for processes designed to disseminate them among participants in technical cooperation processes.

The main outputs and outcomes were:

- Development of a first version of the Institute's Web page (2003-2007) that made it possible to position IICA's message and its technical contributions on the Internet.
- Establishment of a Steering Committee that oversees knowledge management within IICA.
- Development of a Web portal (in 2008) designed to support knowledge management as a decentralized, interactive tool that interconnects the Web pages of the Offices. As a result, all the information and knowledge that IICA generates is made available to the Member States.
- Implementation of the Institute's new Intranet, with a graphic format that facilitates the decentralized management of its content.
- Design and implementation of a project management system that makes it possible to link projects with the topics addressed by the Technical Areas.

- Development of the conceptual, technological and operational model of communities of practice (IICA now has 30 in operation).
- Strengthening of information systems by thematic areas, programs and hemispheric initiatives that generate information and knowledge, which are shared via InfoAgro.net.
- Redesign of “ComunIICA” magazine, to make it a tool for disseminating technical articles targeted at public and private decision makers in the hemisphere.
- Adoption of a publications policy, whose objective is to ensure the quality and technical consistency of the articles and books published, while at the same time promoting debate and the exchange of ideas among IICA’s technical personnel.
- Proactive participation of IICA’s technical personnel in international activities to allow them to monitor crucial global developments that affect agriculture and keep abreast of the state of the art of the areas in which the Institute specializes. Links were also increased between the units of the DLTGC and global and regional centers of excellence, to identify, assimilate and disseminate new information and knowledge that would strengthen the capabilities of the Institute and the member countries.
- Transformation of the Distance Training Center (CECADI) into a knowledge-sharing service dedicated to supporting technical cooperation through training, exchanges and technical discussions on topics related to IICA’s areas of specialization, and the promotion of hemispheric communications.
- Improvement in the conditions and services of IICA’s main libraries: the Orton Commemorative Library (at CATIE) and the Venezuela Library (at Headquarters). Both updated their document collections and digitized their resources to reach a wider audience.
- Institutionalization of the SIDALC and increases in the number of countries and institutions involved, and in its document collections, making it one of the biggest agricultural information services in the world.
- More sharing of experiences among decision makers thanks to the periodic holding of forums and technical activities on emerging and current issues related to agriculture and rural life, making effective use of technological tools (the Web and tele- and video-conferencing) to broadcast them live.

Assessment and Improvement of the Institute’s Technical Expertise

IICA carried out an external assessment of the technical capabilities at its disposal for meeting the countries’ technical cooperation needs and demands. Undertaken on the initiative of the present Administration, the Institute’s governing bodies endorsed it by means of resolutions N° 462 and 490 of the Executive Committee and N° 483 of the IABA.

As part of the institutional team responsible for the assessing the organization’s technical capabilities, the DLTGC contributed the information available and facilitated one-on-one meetings, and then took part in the analysis of the recommendations made in the subsequent report, which was endorsed by the Executive Committee.



The Executive Committee instructed IICA to prepare a strategic framework for the period 2010-2020 that would position IICA for the future (Resolution N° 490). The DLTGC played an active part in the technical and administrative processes involved.

■ **Restructuring and consolidation of the DLTGC**

As part of the efforts to implement the aforementioned resolutions, IICA set in motion several initiatives designed to strengthen its technical expertise and improve the quality of cooperation, most of which were spearheaded by the DLTGC. The initiatives included restructuring and consolidating the Directorate (with the technical units becoming part of it), articulating efforts at the hemispheric, regional and national levels in a single institutional orientation and direction, and the gearing of knowledge management to technical cooperation needs.

■ **Strengthening of the Institute's human resource base**

IICA implemented a comprehensive, consistent policy for administering its technical and professional human resources, based on the resolutions of the Executive Committee and the current Administration's decision to steadily improve the Institute's human resource base in order to carry out the mandates of the governing bodies to the best of its ability and meet the needs of the Member States. The main results to which the DLTGC contributed are as follows:

- ***Development of profiles for professional positions***

Working with the Human Resources Division, the Directorate developed a comprehensive system of competencies, comprising three main components: a profile for each position, an up-to-date service record for each staff member and an effective evaluation mechanism that makes it possible to compare the position profile with the competencies and performance of the staff member concerned. The Institute currently has job descriptions for 75% of all its technical positions. An institutional electronic database containing information on IICA's personnel was also set up and is updated continually. The Institute has since made progress in developing generic and specific profiles of its professional and technical posts.

- ***Enhancement of recruitment processes***

Members of IICA's International and Local Professional Personnel (IPP and LPP) are now hired based on previously developed or updated profiles of positions that establish minimum requirements in terms of academic training, experience and the specific characteristics needed to perform the duties involved. Recruitment processes are carried out pursuant to the Institute's rules and are open, transparent and competitive.

The DLTGC took part in the selection of international professionals for regional and hemispheric posts (including Director-level positions) and assisted IICA's Offices with the definition of profiles for technical positions and the selection of candidates.



- ***Development of the system and database for consultants***

IICA developed a database of consultants to facilitate the mobilization of additional technical expertise and interconnect consultancy resources in the countries. A consultant management system was also designed and implemented.

- ***Estimate of the critical mass that IICA requires***

The Institute analyzed the technical capabilities that it currently possesses and contrasted the results with the technical resources required to perform, to a high level, the tasks and responsibilities established in the 2006-2010 MTP, implement the specific resolutions of the governing bodies and answer the needs of the Member States.

This exercise, which encompassed all of the Institute's Technical Areas, revealed that the organization needed to strengthen its human resources in order to provide the support required to promote the development of agriculture and rural life in the 21st century.

- **Identification and conceptual development of cooperation instruments**

The Institute prepared the document "IICA's technical cooperation and its instruments: core concepts", to explain to technical staff, clients and partners the key technical cooperation concepts and instruments that IICA uses to provide its services to the countries.

- **Preparation of the "Guide to the quality of technical cooperation"**

In 2007, IICA developed a proposal aimed at improving the technical quality of its technical cooperation and publications. The proposal emphasizes that the quality of the Institute's professional staff determines the quality of the technical cooperation that the organization provides. It sets out the guiding principles, strategic emphases, instruments, stages and other information related to the process of improving technical quality.

Design of IICA's Food Security Strategy

The Institute established guidelines for potential areas in which it could intervene in the field of food security. It was decided that the issue should be addressed by means of an integrated, long-term approach, since the structural causes of the food crisis have yet to be resolved. Once the crisis developed, IICA began monitoring the situation and its evolution. It now keeps the countries informed by means of communications from the Director General, information published on the Web, studies and technical analyses and news articles. A guide was also produced to orient the preparation and implementation of responses to the needs and demands of the countries.

The Institute defined three strategic lines of action in relation to food security: 1) Institutional innovations for technological change for food production and diversification; 2) Institutional framework and services to strengthen the capabilities of small and medium-sized agricultural producers and family agriculture, to integrate them into markets; and 3) Analysis,

follow-up and dissemination of policies and information on the situation and outlook food security.

Based on the above, IICA developed a conceptual vision, an institutional strategy and regional and hemispheric programs and projects, complemented with actions carried out in the countries. Hemispheric proposals and regional and national projects were formulated that are consistent with the objectives set and financing is being sought.

Strengthening of IICA's Technical Cooperation

a. Institutional planning and programming process

IICA carried out integrated planning processes with an institutional vision in each of the regions where it works with its member countries. The teams involved defined the methodology of the processes and agreed on the actions to be carried out at both the regional and national levels.

b. Streamlining of programming processes

The work of the Programming Committee was strengthened to carry out the resolutions adopted by IICA's governing bodies. It was made a condition that all projects submitted for approval must include components involving IICA's areas of technical expertise. This led to a decrease in the number of projects involving only the administration of funds. Measures were taken to improve and ensure the quality of the projects approved. The procedures related to technical and administrative matters submitted to the Committee were also simplified and the time taken to reach a decision was reduced.

c. Membership and operation of IICA's Technical Committee

The Technical Committee became the main body for discussing, analyzing and making decisions related to relevant topics that form part of the Institute's technical brief. All emerging and current issues that are important for agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere are presented to, and discussed by, the Committee, and follow-up is provided to the implementation of agreements reached and decisions taken as a body.

d. Improvement of the internal coordination and integration of the DLTGC

To promote integration, coordination and internal articulation, dialogue among units and teamwork, the Directorate held periodic meetings to make decisions on technical and managerial matters. IICA also created an environment for cross-thematic teamwork on the subjects of rural development with a territorial approach, rural poverty alleviation and the competitiveness and integration of small-scale producers into markets.

Promotion of Strategic Partnerships

IICA strengthened its links with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on matters of mutual interest, such as knowledge and information management and the adoption of information technologies. The key areas for collaboration were identified and the Directorate participated in the work of the Steering Committee of the Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK). After participating in the International Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean of the E-Agriculture project (IICA is a member of the Steering



Committee), the strategies and policies for the new model the project is endeavoring to implement were harmonized and aligned.

By signing and executing agreements, the Institute established and strengthened relations with important academic centers of excellence, including the universities of Nebraska, Florida, Berkeley and Cornell. This led to the strengthening of the Center for Leadership, thanks to the collaboration of a professional from the University of Nebraska; support from the University of Cornell to endow IICA with methodologies for systematizing knowledge; and the organization of leadership activities with the University of Berkeley and the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE).

IICA expanded its cooperation with American Distance Education Centers (ADEC), with a view to strengthening distance learning. It also carried out a series of activities with CATIE in the areas of joint technical cooperation. The Institute strengthened its relations with the global and regional centers that promote agricultural research, technology and innovation at the world and hemispheric levels, such as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

The Institute also supported the Forum of the Americas for Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), carried out various joint activities with the IDB - with which it negotiated resources to finance initiatives for the development of agriculture and the rural sector - and promoted the restructuring and strengthening of the Interagency Group for Rural Development.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

*Miguel García Winder¹, Danilo Herrera², Frank Lam³,
Hernando Riveros⁴ and Daniel Rodríguez⁵*

1. Introduction

In 2002, the Institute adopted a renewed institutional vision based on the design of new technical cooperation model and on the implementation of a new structure and operational and administrative processes to support a common agenda for the development of the agrifood and rural sectors in IICA's member countries.

In order to implement this development agenda, IICA focused its technical cooperation efforts primarily on capacity building, institutional strengthening and creating an appropriate environment to allow its member countries to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the opening of new and larger markets and to respond to consumer demand in an effective and timely manner. This report contains a summary of the Institute's main achievements in the area of promoting trade and the development of agribusiness.

IICA considers "agribusiness" as an integrated consumer-oriented business system that includes primary production, processing, manufacturing and storage, distribution and marketing activities, together with the necessary public and private services to enable the sector's companies to operate competitively.

2. Strategic Lines for Technical Cooperation to Promote Agribusiness Competitiveness

Based on the institutional priorities defined in the Medium Term Plans that guided IICA's actions during the period 2002-2008, the Institute's work focused on the following strategic lines of action, which were modified in response to the demands and feedback of its member countries and partners:

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- Strengthening the public and private institutional framework in order to establish, develop and promote competitive agribusiness.
- Capacity building in agribusinesses with small-scale agricultural and rural businesses.
- Supplying methodologies, analyses, studies and tools for decision-making related to trade.

In relation to promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses, IICA has a long-term vision and is committed to supporting the successful market insertion of small and medium-scale farmers and rural businesses.

3. The Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety

IICA created the strategic area of Agribusiness with the aim of helping small and medium-scale producers to take advantage of the opportunities offered by open trade and the expansion of national and local markets. This thematic area pays special attention to private-sector demands, coordinating and giving coherence and a common vision to various initiatives and actions that IICA has already implemented in that field, including efforts to strengthen agricultural marketing mechanisms, the development and consolidation of agricultural production chains, the work carried out by the Center for Agribusiness Integration and Development (CIDA) and the activities of the Program for the Development of Rural Agroindustry (PRODAR).

As a complement to this thematic area, IICA launched the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety, headquartered at the IICA Office in Miami, in the United States. This cross-thematic program, implemented by a team of international specialists, works closely with producers and agro-entrepreneurs in IICA's member countries to enable them to position their products competitively in international markets. Since its inception, the program has basically focused on strengthening agribusinesses, improving countries' export capacities and providing information to help small and medium-scale producers and agribusinesses make better business decisions.

Through the Inter-American Program, IICA has promoted the "Export Platforms Program" with the aim of strengthening the export capacity of the hemisphere's small and medium-scale agribusinesses and diversifying and increasing the number of exporters, and the destinations and value of agrifood exports. This initiative consists of three phases, namely: i) international business training; ii) validation of products in the target markets; and iii) in situ marketing, i.e. supporting businesses' participation in relevant trade fairs or organizing trade missions to specific markets. Each platform is designed to include 10 to 15 firms with a common interest in exporting to a specific market.

A key element in the success of these platforms has been the creation of national-level coordinating committees, made up of various public-sector institutions, including: the ministries of agriculture, export promotion organizations, representatives of private-sector agriculture and the food industry, associations of exporters and international cooperation organizations, such as the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ)



and the Trade Facilitation Office of Canada (TFOC). The Coordinating Committee in each country is responsible for disseminating the program, securing funding, selecting the fair or destination of the trade mission, identifying and selecting the companies that will participate and supporting the development of the platform.

To date, a total of 15 export platforms have been implemented: four in Costa Rica, four in El Salvador, three in Honduras, two in Nicaragua and two in the Dominican Republic. These platforms are directed at the markets of Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Miami and New York. The main achievements of this initiative include:

- Contributing the modernization of more than 175 small and medium-sized agrifood enterprises by facilitating tools to develop or strengthen their exporting capacity and helping them prepare their own business plans.
- Validation of more than 300 products, enabling the participating businesses to adapt their products to consumer tastes and preferences, and comply with market access requirements.
- 50% of the companies that complied with all the suggested processes and selection criteria managed to export their products to the selected markets.
- The main products exported include mini-vegetables, watermelon, roots and tubers, chayote, grapefruit, oriental vegetables, frozen fruits (melon, pineapple and watermelon), frozen okra, frozen coconut, pre-fried and frozen green and ripe plantains, heart of palm, loroco flower, organic sesame, traditional green coffee, gourmet coffee, organic roasted coffee, fair trade roasted coffee, guava and pineapple pastries (puff pastry), horchata (rice-based drink), red and black beans, gourmet tuna fish, plantain and yucca chips, sugar, honey, meat, biscuits and shrimp.

The experience gained from the implementation of these export platforms resulted in other efforts to enhance the export capacity of small and medium-scale businesses, including:

- Design and implementation of workshops to strengthen countries' exports and to teach the basic principles of the export process, in which 300 producers and officials in Guyana and Paraguay participated.
- Organization of the seminar "The ABC of Exporting," in which 15 small business owners from Homestead, Florida, received training on how to export their products to the Caribbean and Central America.
- Seminars to analyze the opportunities and risks of international markets, particularly those of Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Miami, New York and Mexico. These events were attended by more than 400 producers and other interested parties from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Argentina and Ecuador.
- Workshops held in Barbados, Haiti and Chile to promote good manufacturing practices.
- Training workshops and seminars held in Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador, Panama, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Dominican Republic, Honduras and Paraguay, on requirements for exporting to the United States, Canada and the European Union, in which 1,000 entrepreneurs and producers participated.
- Implementation of an electronic platform to assess the degree of preparedness for exporting among small and medium-scale businesses. This system was tested in 50 companies in Ecuador and Paraguay.

With regard to publications, the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety

produced the “Agribusiness Series: Handbooks for Export,” in response to a set of common needs identified among the majority of the hemisphere’s small and medium producers and agribusinesses. The aim was to provide these groups with useful tools, concepts and ideas to support their efforts to access international markets. As shown in Table 1, twelve Export Handbooks were published, both in Spanish and in English:

Table 1: Export Handbooks Published Between 2002 and 2009.

Handbook 1:	The United States Market. Guide to identify the primary official requirements to import fresh and processed agricultural products.
Handbook 2:	The Canadian Market. Guide to identify the primary official requirements to import fresh and processed agricultural products.
Handbook 3:	The European Union Market. Guide to identify the primary official requirements to import fresh and processed agricultural products.
Handbook 4:	Bioterrorism Law. What an agrifood exporter needs to know about the Bioterrorism Law.
Handbook 5:	Knowing my company
Handbook 6:	How to calculate export costs for agricultural products.
Handbook 7:	How to choose and negotiate with an intermediary in another country.
Handbook 8:	International trade contracts.
Handbook 9:	How to participate successfully in international trade shows.
Handbook 10:	Logistics for exporting fresh and processed agricultural products.
Handbook 11:	Good Agricultural Practices. Guide for small and medium agribusinesses.
Handbook 12:	Good Manufacturing Practices. Guide for small and medium agribusinesses.

In addition, IICA used its “*Agroenlace*” radio program to disseminate agribusiness experiences in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. A total of 25 radio programs were produced covering topics such as: “Logistics for exporting fresh and processed agricultural products”, “How to participate successfully in food fairs,” “How to calculate export costs,” “Knowing my Company,” “Requirements for exporting to the United States, Canada and the European Union,” “The challenge of Exporting,” “Export Consortia,” “Business Plan for Exports,” “Competitive Strategies: Associativity,” “Export Platforms,” “Agrifood Exchanges” and “Rural Agroindustry.”

The Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety also promoted and forged partnerships that enabled agribusiness firms to participate in 20 international trade fairs (Table 2). Prior to these events, training courses were held to provide the participating firms with information on the target markets, the market performance of different products, export requirements, transportation routes and costs, and recommendations for achieving success at these fairs. As a result of these activities, a number of businesses established partnerships and found buyers.

IICA was also instrumental in organizing and implementing ten trade missions, details of which are shown in Table 3. These missions served to promote the image of the participating countries and facilitated business meetings, which resulted in new exports of different products and volumes, especially to the United States and Canada.

Table 2: Summary of the International Fairs Attended with Support from the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety During the Period 2002-2009.

Fair	Participating country	Number of fairs
Canada		
Grocery Innovations. Toronto	Costa Rica	2
	Nicaragua	1
	Honduras	1
Grocery Showcase West. Vancouver	El Salvador	1
SIAL Montreal, Montreal	Costa Rica	1
	El Salvador	1
	Honduras	2
	Haiti	1
United States		
Expo Comida Latina. Los Angeles	Nicaragua	1
Expo Comida Latina. New York	Dominican Republic	1
Fispal Latino. Miami	Honduras	1
PMA Fresh Summit. Orlando	Costa Rica	1
Food and Beverage. Miami	DR- CAFTA stand	1
	Dominican Republic	1
	Trinidad & Tobago	1
European Union		
Biofach. Central American Stand*	Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama	2
ANUGA, Germany	Honduras	1
Others		
ALIMENTEXPO 2, Costa Rica	Nicaragua	1
Total fairs		21

* Regional initiative supported by national and international cooperation organizations, including Acicafoc, Agexpront, Agronatura, Austrian Cooperation, Expo-USAID, FAO, FECAEXCA, FPX, GTZ, HIVOS, IICA, Oxfam, PNAO, PROCOMER, SIPPO and Swiss Contact.

Table 3. Support Provided to Trade Missions by the Inter-American Program.

Mission	Participating country	Number of missions
United States		
Trade mission to Miami, United States.	Nicaragua	3
	El Salvador	1
	Honduras	1
	Dominican Republic	1
Trade Mission to New York, United States.	Dominican Republic	1
Trade Mission to Los Angeles, United States.	Nicaragua	1
Canada		
Trade Missions to Montreal and Toronto, Canada.	Honduras	2
	Haiti	1
Total		11

Source: IICA.

The Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety has continuously operated the Infoagro/Agribusiness information system, which provides decision-makers with relevant, up-to-date information on trade and marketing. This system (www.infoagro.net/agribusiness) has enabled 850 registered users to: i) access the publications of the "Agribusiness

Series: Export Handbooks;" ii) access information on requirements for the import of agrifood products into the Canadian, United States and European Union markets; iii) receive the latest news about developments in agribusiness around the world; iv) access the agrifood sector's leading information sources; and v) users also receive a fortnightly bulletin containing the main news items published by the system, as well as information about the Program's most important events, services and activities.

Continuous efforts, both by public and private institutions, to improve countries' agricultural production systems have yielded positive results, reflected mainly in increased productivity and improved technical efficiency. In the measure that agricultural markets open up to new stakeholders, the increased competition not only demands greater productivity, but also better management and a more comprehensive vision of agribusiness. One of the main weaknesses identified in the agricultural-rural sector by the Program since its inception, is the limited business capacity to respond to market demands. To address this need, IICA developed the "Business Strengthening Program," aimed at providing practical knowledge to improve the business management skills of small and medium-scale agribusinesses. This program, consisting of a series of training modules applied in workshops and followed by the design of action plans, enabled participants from Guyana, Ecuador, Peru, Panama, Paraguay, Colombia, Nicaragua and Guatemala to gradually resolve some of the management problems they face.

The launch of the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety, based in Miami, Florida was an innovative effort that led to the consolidation of a multidisciplinary team whose mission is to serve the interests of small and medium-scale producers and agro-entrepreneurs in IICA's member countries.

4. Rural Agroindustry: Adding Value and Promoting Diversification

The Program for the Development of Rural Agroindustry⁶ (PRODAR) was created in the context of an inter-institutional partnership between IICA, the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). In 2002, this program was incorporated into the Institute's Area of Agribusiness Competitiveness and, in 2008, in recognition of its achievements and of the importance of this topic, it was elevated to the category of a hemispheric program.

PRODAR provides knowledge management services in the area of rural agroindustry, technical assistance (in associative models, collective actions, design and implementation of territorial and geographic identity brands, marketing and adding value to local products and agro-tourism) and has supported the formulation and application of policies, plans and projects to strengthen small-scale rural agroindustry.

⁶ Rural agroindustry is considered as "a set of activities that add value to rural products, through tasks such as the selection, washing, classification, packaging, storage, preservation, processing, transportation and marketing, as well as coordination with tourism activities and placing value on the special attributes of small-scale agricultural producers".



PRODAR's main achievements during the 2002-2008 period were:

- Together with FAO, PRODAR designed a training program in agribusiness management in associative rural enterprises, which was implemented in Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Argentina. As a result, more than 100 organizations of small-scale agricultural and agroindustrial producers in those countries improved their knowledge of agrifood systems and chains, rural agroindustries, rural business clusters, post-harvest and quality management systems.
- Operation of PRODARNET, AGROTUR and SIALNET, online interest lists used by more than 4,000 technicians and professionals to share information, offer services and make proposals related to rural agroindustry, agro-tourism and localized agrifood systems (SIAL).
- Implementation of the Latin American SIAL network of researchers and professionals interested in localized agrifood systems.
- Together with FAO, and using mechanisms such as denominations of origin, IICA improved the competitiveness of small-scale producers through a Latin American project to promote quality products associated with their geographic origin and local traditions. This project worked with agricultural authorities in Mexico, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, improving their knowledge and application of these tools to protect agricultural products that possess distinctive characteristics associated with their territories of origin.
- Support for the design and implementation of the first international Masters Degree Program in Rural Agro-industry, Agrifood Systems and Territory, offered by the

Autonomous University of Mexico, in conjunction with the Institute of Political Studies of Toulouse and the GIS-SIAL Network.

- In the context of the IICA-CIRAD-CATIE agreement, IICA supported efforts to develop and consolidate rural agroindustries in Chiapas, Mexico. This resulted in the formation of the Alliance of Rural Agroindustries of Selva Lacandona, which prepared sustainable development plans for more than ten small-scale indigenous enterprises in that area.

PRODAR has proven to be a highly successful cooperation model, particularly because it has managed to capitalize on complementary actions with strategic partners and has benefited from the cooperation of IICA's different strategic areas.

5. Agricultural Production-Trade Chains as Tools for Dialogue and Action

After more than 15 years of work and experience in this field, IICA is regarded as a leading referent on the topic of production chains and their use as tools for dialogue, consensus-building, analysis and action. During the last eight years, the Institute promoted the use of agrifood chains as a research tool for: i) understanding the linkages between agriculture and the rest of the economy and ii) fostering dialogue among all stakeholders of a given chain, in order to implement actions that enhance the development and competitiveness of the chain as a whole. The main results of IICA's technical cooperation in that field were:



- Several ministries of agriculture used the chain concept to facilitate a more productive dialogue with the institutional bodies concerned with agroindustrial development and the distribution and consumption of products. This resulted in a better application of agricultural policies, improved dialogue with private actors of the production chains and a better understanding of the expanded concept of agriculture.
- Several countries applied the chain concept to create institutional bodies consisting of representatives of the public sector and of the different linkages of the agrifood chains. To date, at least five countries have implemented various types of institutional bodies or arrangements - however, all share the common feature of facilitating dialogue among the actors of the chains and between these and the governments. These bodies negotiate and define action plans to boost the competitiveness of agrifood chains and establish mechanisms to monitor their performance, normally via a “Chain Committee” or a Technical Secretariat of a permanent nature. In this sense, agrifood chains have become mechanisms for improving coordination and fostering relations based on cooperation instead of confrontation. For example, in Honduras IICA supported the establishment of beef, dairy, apiculture, vegetable, fruit, cacao and bioenergy chains; in Guatemala, it supported the agrifood chains of beef, dairy, honey, goat and sheep products, mango, lemon, avocado, onion, tomato, potato, maize, beans; in Panama, progress was made in consolidating the cow’s milk, rice, maize and fruit tree chains. Other countries, particularly Colombia, consolidated their agrifood chains in the context of so-called “competitiveness agreements,” focusing on 22 products, most notably cotton, apiculture, rice, coffee, cacao, bananas, beef cattle, dairy and oilseeds. To complement this effort, the Ministry of Agriculture

and Rural Development established the Agricultural Supply Chain Observatory of Colombia, an Internet portal containing information about the country’s agrifood chains, which receives technical support from IICA. In Peru, IICA worked to develop several agrifood chains, in the wake of a pilot project to organize and operate the Maize-Poultry production chain in the Huaura Valley. Similar experiences were implemented in other countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia.

- IICA also developed methodological tools and technical materials to support these efforts throughout the hemisphere.

6. Market Information

In 2004, IICA signed a technical cooperation agreement with the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA) to strengthen the institutional framework with the aim of: i) promoting cooperation among MIOA’s member institutions and sharing knowledge for the gathering and dissemination of agricultural market information; ii) standardizing the terminology, methodology and technology to facilitate the exchange of market information; iii) facilitating the timely exchange of information, and iv) serving as a catalyst for joint efforts to improve information services on agricultural markets.

The main results of this cooperation effort were: MIOA increased its membership from 19 to 27 countries, with the incorporation of the Caribbean nations; those responsible for operating the Agricultural Market Information Systems



(AMIS) in MIOA's member countries assessed the strengths and weaknesses of their respective systems; IICA coordinated five regular meetings of the MIOA and eight meetings of its executive committee; three training workshops, attended by 50 professionals responsible for operating agricultural information services, were implemented to strengthen the AMIS in the Central American countries; a project was designed to create a market intelligence system in Central America; and horizontal cooperation programs were established to help countries strengthen the capacity of their market information systems.

With IICA's cooperation, the MIOA has become consolidated as an organization with a defined structure, up-to-date rules of procedure, a medium term work plan and a clearly defined vision and mission.

7. Competitiveness in Agribusiness

In the area of agribusiness competitiveness, IICA achieved other important results, including the following:

- In coordination with the IICA Offices, the ministries of agriculture of El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Ecuador, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Peru strengthened their policies, strategic visions and intervention mechanisms to improve the competitiveness of agribusiness.
- IICA worked with the Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE), the Investment and Export Network (REDIEX) of Paraguay, the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) of Trinidad & Tobago and the Federation of Exporters (FEDEXPORT) of Ecuador to develop their strategic plans, evaluate their services and assess their work plans in order to improve their operations and services.
- The Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) was established, with the aim of involving young people in agribusiness throughout the Caribbean Region.
- IICA supported efforts by various universities and higher education centers to improve or develop their academic programs and strengthen their capabilities, including: the University of San Carlos (Guatemala); the Catholic University of Paraguay; three Mexican universities (Autonomous University of Chapingo, the Postgraduate School and the Autonomous University of Mexico); two institutions in the United States (the Tropical Research and Education Center of the University of Florida, and Florida International University); the University of El Salvador; and the Antenor Orrego Private University in Peru.
- IICA supported the United States in disseminating the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act, more commonly known as the "Bioterrorism Law," throughout the hemisphere and helped member countries and their entrepreneurs to comply with the requirements of that Law. The Institute organized videoconferences (supported by the Distance Training Center, CECADI), workshops and seminars and prepared documents so that the region's producers could familiarize themselves with the terms of that law, obtain information and be able to comply with its requirements regarding prior notification, record-keeping and administrative detention.
- Organizations of poultry and pork producers and processors in Chile and El Salvador participated in training programs aimed at improving poultry and pork processing systems



and controlling *Listeria monocytogenes*. Training was also provided on equivalence in inspection processes for exports to the United States.

- The Tropical Fruits Agribusiness Forum was established for the purpose of sharing information and promoting discussion between agribusinesses, the public sector and stakeholders involved in promoting the competitiveness of fruit production. The Forum includes international speakers and representatives from prestigious public and private companies and institutions, mainly in America and Europe. Three international and country-level meetings were held to develop a regional cooperation system for the fruit subsector and formulate the Regional Cooperation Program to foster competitiveness in the Central American fruit sector, approved by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in 2008 (BPR-IDB/Mesoamerica Project⁷/IICA).
- IICA supported the program “Andean Countries Cacao Export Support Opportunity,” better known by its acronym ACCESO, implemented with funds from a consortium that includes USAID, the World Cacao Foundation, the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission

(CICAD) and the Organization of American States (OAS). This program strengthened the business capacities of 42 producers’ organizations of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. More than 130 facilitators and leaders were trained and more than 20 action plans were prepared for these organizations.

- IICA was recognized for its contribution to the development of marketing systems and domestic markets in its member countries. During the period 2002-2008, the Institute continued its efforts to strengthen the commodity exchanges in Latin America and the Caribbean, to develop wholesale markets and to promote new marketing models. In the case of the agricultural commodity exchanges, IICA supported the development and implementation of the operating system of the Venezuelan Commodities Exchange and also supported the agricultural commodity exchanges of Peru, El Salvador, Venezuela, Colombia and Costa Rica on technical and regulatory issues. In addition, the Institute developed various methodological tools to facilitate decision-making by agricultural commodity exchange operators, the most important of these being a methodology to determine the best moment to buy or sell a product.

⁷ In 2008, the Puebla-Panama Plan was renamed the Mesoamerican Integration and Development Project, or the Mesoamerica Project.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Carlos Jara¹ and Johana Rodriguez²

1. Introduction

This report describes IICA's achievements in the field of sustainable rural development (SRD) during the period 2002-2008, based on the commitments established in the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) and the mandates adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Americas at the Third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec, Canada, in 2001.

At the Third Summit, the governments pledged to redouble their efforts to strengthen environmental protection and promote the sustainable use of natural resources. They also decided that policies were needed that would contribute to sustainable development, to strike a balance among the environment, the economy and society. At the same summit, the Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and acknowledged the importance of agriculture as a way of life for thousands of rural families and as a strategic sector of the socioeconomic system.

In the field of SRD, IICA's aim is *"to support the countries in formulating development strategies that focus on rural territories and*

promote prosperity in rural communities by creating employment opportunities and income and reducing the gaps between rural and urban populations." Achieving this involves supporting the formulation of policies and institutional mechanisms that promote the territorial approach to rural development, helping to diversify production and make family agriculture more competitive, fostering the equitable participation of women and youths who operate rural businesses in development processes and encouraging knowledge management processes.

2. IICA's Approach

IICA and other international organizations recognize that there is a very important territorial component to rural poverty, which especially besets small-scale and family agriculture. The Institute is also aware of the interdependence of processes and sectors, as well as the need to articulate the rural economy, the social and institutional fabric and the environment in a harmonious way. Hence, the importance of devising new ways of acting and studying the situation, and methods of managing rural development tailored to the decentralization of the State.

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Despite the above, during the period under review in LAC the concept of “rural” and the practice of rural development continued to be linked to rural poverty alleviation policies, programs and projects targeted mainly at small and medium-sized farmers who possess assets and are capable (according to traditional thinking) of participating in the market economy. Given the limitations of the conventional approach to rural development, IICA, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and other international organizations set about formulating more comprehensive proposals that would foster economic growth, the reduction of poverty and inequality and respect for ecosystems. To tackle rural poverty, they decided to develop and apply new theories for action and stimulate the emergence of new management models, proposing the implementation of a new SRD strategy implementing a *territorial approach*.

IICA also proposed two other concepts, namely: a) the concept of *expanded agriculture*, which makes it possible to adopt a systemic vision of agriculture and articulate agricultural production chains and rural territories with the national and global context; and, b) the concept of *new rurality*, which is a different way of observing and valuing the rural milieu, taking into account its agricultural and non-agricultural characteristics, urban-rural relations, the multiple activities of small farms and the new directions in production, such as biofuels, organic agriculture, service companies and agrotourism.

The objectives set for the Area of Rural Development were:

- To formulate policies, institutional mechanisms and projects with a territorial approach, with a view to improving the management of rural development
- To collaborate in the formulation of policies, institutional mechanisms and projects aimed at diversifying production and making family agriculture more competitive
- To foster the equitable participation of women and youths who operate rural businesses in the development of rural territories
- To develop and disseminate knowledge on, and instruments for, devising, implementing, monitoring and evaluating rural development policies, programs and projects with a territorial approach.

3. Results Achieved

a. Management of Rural Territories

IICA promoted rural prosperity by designing policies and strategies aimed at fostering development for the most vulnerable groups in the rural economy, educating and training small farmers to integrate into markets, promoting rural investment, particularly microfinance, strengthening civil society organizations and facilitating institution building and the modernization of agricultural services, to improve productivity and the negotiation and management capabilities of social actors and economic agents.

In 2003, the Interagency Group on Rural Development, made up of the IDB, the World Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), IICA, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Germany’s *Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit* (GTZ), began to advocate the development of a “consolidated” rural development strategy and stimulate the debate on the *“territorial approach to rural development.”* The group also decided to make greater efforts to promote rural development



with a territorial approach and help countries in the region to adopt that type of approach.

As a result, IICA initiated actions aimed at promoting joint work and forging partnerships with entities specializing in rural development, renowned nongovernmental organizations and universities in LAC. At the same time, each country created its own national network for cooperation in SRD.

In this context, the Institute assisted a number of governments in crafting rural development strategies and programs, including those of Brazil, Colombia, Uruguay, Honduras, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Ecuador and Venezuela. Parallel to these efforts, in various forums and international events - many of them organized by IICA - the Institute promoted the inclusion of the territorial approach in policies to help highlight the new conditions in the rural areas of LAC and focus investments on the strategic lines of action of the rural economy, using new management mechanisms capable of translating the interaction among sociocultural, political, and environmental sectors and systems.

In 2005, IICA supported the efforts of the Secretariat of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) to formulate the project "Andean Rural Development Forum: toward a community strategy for rural development." The aim was to create a subregional forum by drawing on the Rural Development Network, the rural development observatories established in the Andean countries, a horizontal cooperation program and the identification of "pilot territories."

In 2008, IICA promoted the creation of the project "Andean Alliance for Dialogue on and the Revaluation of Agriculture and Rural Life," which involved leaders from the areas of research and technological innovation, agricultural health, food safety, financing, integration, rural development, university education,

biotechnology, and biosafety, agricultural production chains, sectoral policies and agribusiness; and leaders of organizations of rural women, rural youths, producers and indigenous peoples. The members of the project's ad hoc groups, set up in each CAN member country, decided to systematize rural development experiences with a territorial approach and select rural territories for the application of the concept.

With support from IICA, the Andean Rural Development Forum was established. Comprised of the ministries of agriculture and rural development and social welfare of the CAN member countries, it is focused on the formulation and implementation of the Andean Rural Development Strategy.

IICA decided to consolidate a hemispheric strategy to garner the experience acquired with regard to SRD policies and programs in Brazil, Mexico and Colombia, calling it BRAMCO. This tri-country platform made it possible to share experiences related to policies, methodologies and models for applying the territorial approach and generating new approaches to the sustainable development of rural areas in the other countries. BRAMCO's main components were:

- A knowledge management system with nodes in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica and Mexico
- A program aimed at capacity building and the updating of knowledge related to rural development with a territorial approach, linked to universities.

Under Mexico's Sustainable Rural Development Act, and working with the country's Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA), IICA proposed the Zocalo Rural de Mexico (ZRM) initiative as an institutional opportunity for dialogue among the different actors in rural development. Taken into account was the fact



that Mexico had established a new rural development policy that placed “territories” at the center of the development of territorial economies and competitiveness, thereby spurring the emergence of a new institutional framework.

Also in Mexico, the Institute supported the institutionalization of the Group for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies for Rural Development with a Territorial Approach. An analysis of the local SRD institutional framework was essential to reach a decision about the operation of regulatory and management mechanisms. IICA facilitated the sharing of experiences on rural development among the country’s different territories, including the experiences of other countries, thereby contributing to the creation of knowledge and research networks.

Brazil is probably the Latin American country that has made the most progress with regard to SRD with a territorial approach. In 2003, the Ministry of Agrarian Development created the Territorial Development Secretariat (SDT), which adopted the “territorial dynamic” as the strategic line of action for all aspects of rurality. Also in 2003, Brazil conducted an evaluation of the National Council for Sustainable Rural Development (CONDRAF) that led to the modification of the Council’s functions and structure. Brazil instituted a strategy to promote SRD with a territorial approach that included twelve training courses and the enhancement of multipliers of knowledge on the subject, ten international seminars, nine workshops on specific topics, a virtual debate and five technical exchanges in the territories.

IICA’s action in Brazil included support for the management of CONDRAF, the institution building process of the SDT and the implementation of the Program for the Sustainable Development of Territories. The Institute also contributed to the theoretical-conceptual and methodological analysis of SRD, which led

to the preparation of the “territorial typologies” model and the subsequent identification of 160 “identity territories” that encompass over 1800 municipal districts. It also supported the implementation of a broad process of consultations concerning SRD that CONDRAF carried out throughout the country. This led to the holding, in Olinda in 2008, of the First National Conference on Sustainable and Solidary Rural Development, where the participants formulated the “National policy for the sustainable development of the Brazil’s rural milieu.”

In Colombia, under the aegis of BRAMCO, the Institute contributed to the organization of the Colombian Rural Development Institute (INCODER), a decentralized agency of the country’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The institute adopted the principles of multifunctionality, multisectoral action and integrated rural development, and set about implementing the territorial approach, thereby facilitating the social, environmental and economic-productive management of Colombia’s different regions.

IICA’s technical cooperation was essential to strengthen and consolidate INCODER’s planning capabilities. The Institute helped identify rural areas where agriculture is an important activity that share similar socioeconomic, geo-productive and cultural characteristics that make them homogeneous in more than simply political and administrative terms. The areas were then defined as “territories.” IICA applied its micro-regional planning methodology in the territories along the coast of Cordova, in the plains of Sucre, in Catacumba de Santander, in the Tenza Valley and in Suma Paz de Cundinamarca. It also supported the establishment of financial and technical mechanisms to promote the development of productive enterprises in rural settlements of landless small farmers; and worked intensively on the issue of the small farmer economy, reaffirming its economic, social and political importance for the development of Colombia and the democratic system.



IICA contributed to the consolidation of Mexico's policy on sustainable rural development with a territorial approach, which passed into law, and fostered the emergence of an institutional framework that incorporates systems for monitoring and evaluating public policies.

Thanks to IICA's horizontal cooperation, Brazil and Mexico have become benchmarks for the other countries, which are studying and replicating their experiences.

The Institute provided technical assistance for the establishment of observatories of rural territories in Brazil, Colombia and Peru that made it possible to improve the competitiveness of production chains and their links with the market. IICA also collaborated in the production of inputs that facilitated decision-making with respect to policies that encompass more than simply sectoral aspects.

In addition, IICA supported the formulation of rural development strategies and programs in Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Venezuela. At the same time, in a variety of international forums and events, many of them organized by IICA itself, the Institute disseminated the territorial approach to rural development, drew attention to the new conditions in the rural milieu of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), urged greater investment in efforts to promote the achievement of prosperity for rural inhabitants and promoted the design of draft rural development strategies that encourage equitable social participation and reflect the interaction among sociocultural, political and environmental systems.

The ministers of agriculture of the Central American countries set up an Intergovernmental Technical Group (GTI). IICA worked with the group to prepare the Central American Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Rural Development

(ECADERTS), drafting the frame of reference and organizing and co-financing the national consultations in the Central American countries.

Thanks to the support received from IICA, Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru have a set of desertification indicators that are providing accurate and reliable input for the decisions that need to be taken for the development of arid areas.

In accordance with the provisions of the 2006-2010 MTP, IICA also supported the implementation of the international seminar "Rural development and the agrifood sector," which took place in Queretaro, Mexico. This seminar highlighted the importance of the territorial approach and the results achieved provided important inputs for a meeting of the deputy ministers of rural development of Colombia, Brazil and Mexico.

The Institute's technical cooperation also produced significant results in countries such as Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Chile, where it helped define the criteria for selecting and delimiting "reference territories" (RT) for the application of the territorial approach to rural development.

Thanks to IICA's support, some LAC countries adopted the territorial approach to rural development to underpin their policies and organize new institutional arrangements with regard to SRD. Ecuador is a case in point. Article 275 of the country's new constitution contains a definition of the territorial approach. Many countries also have instruments and methodologies for formulating SRD policies and strategies, plans and projects with a territorial approach. In addition to the 160 "identity territories" defined in Brazil with the SDT, IICA established reference territories in Costa Rica (Central Pacific, Northern Region and Southern Region), Nicaragua (Cinco Santos), El Salvador (Altos de Chalatenango),

Honduras (Belen Gualcho), Panama (Darien), Belize (Dolores), Colombia (Tequendama), Ecuador (El Oro), Peru (Huara), Chile (Corral), Uruguay (Canelones), Paraguay (Paraguari), Argentina (Formosa) and Bolivia (Carmen Pampa).

b. Consolidation of Family Agriculture

The SRD Area focused especially on family agriculture and the promotion of small and medium-sized rural businesses. This was done via important components of rural development programs that underline the sectoral perspective and promote the integration of farmers into markets of products and services. IICA was convinced the State had a strategic role to play in strengthening family agriculture and conducted various studies to characterize the practice in Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina and Uruguay. Working with the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agrifood and Agroindustry Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR), the Institute is part of the Regional Family Agriculture Platform that helped improve in those countries levels of competitiveness, the articulation and integration of the different actors, the creation of alliances and the facilitation of access to credit.

In Brazil, IICA supported the National Program to Strengthen Family Agriculture (PRONAF) of the Ministry of Agrarian Development, particularly in areas like rural credit, technology transfer networks, the strengthening of the management capabilities of municipal councils and settlement plans.

The Institute supported studies that helped provide a better understanding of the diversity and multifunctionality of family agriculture and of the role it plays in food security, the preservation of natural resources and the consolidation of the social fabric, especially in Brazil. IICA also assisted the

National Confederation of Agricultural Workers (CONTAG) with leadership training.

In the Andean Region, IICA supported the diversification of production and the competitiveness of small-scale family agriculture through methodologies that promoted the integration of farmers into markets and agricultural production chains. In Central America, working with the Network of Rural Studies and Alternatives (REDESAR), activities were held to discuss the issue of small-scale family agriculture.

c. Promoting Access to Development for Rural Women and Youths

IICA promotes the interdisciplinary and cross-thematic approach to the strengthening of micro and small rural businesses (both agricultural and non-agricultural), and the contribution of rural women. The Institute generated differentiated strategies and methodologies in view of the heterogeneity of productive agents and social actors, including rural women. It promoted processes to that end in Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica and Brazil, where alliances were also forged with strategic partners.

In the Southern Region, through the Standing Forum on Rural Development, IICA facilitated and disseminated experiences highlighting the contribution of rural youths and women, in particular those engaged in family agriculture. In Uruguay, the Institute supported groups of small-scale rural producers that belong to the Rural Federation, thereby fostering partnerships.

In the Andean Region, working with its partners in the countries, IICA promoted the incorporation of the gender approach and



the development of rural women microentrepreneurs in rural territories in Ecuador (Chimborazo), Colombia (Tequendama) and Peru (Huaura and Junin). In Ecuador, it supported the consolidation of the Ecuadorian Corporation of Rural Women Entrepreneurs. In Colombia and Mexico, it helped implement the agreement of the Microfinance Fund for Rural Women (FOMMUR), which trains rural women in business management and aspects of the solidarity economy.

In Colombia, the Institute stimulated the Project to Support the Development of Rural Microenterprises (PADEMER), organizing an international seminar to share successful experiences of rural women entrepreneurs that made it possible to analyze the scope of the new conceptual ideas concerning “gender” in policies designed to promote microenterprises and development with a territorial approach in LAC.

Furthermore, IICA collaborated in the organization of a workshop called “Opportunity to study and reflect on current women’s issues” and supported the formulation and subsequent approval of the Rural Women Act in Colombia.

Thanks to IICA’s technical assistance, Venezuela, Bolivia, Chile and Colombia now have rural youth networks, which is strengthening the leadership of young people in relation to SRD with a territorial approach.

In addition, the Institute helped Colombia establish mechanisms that afford all small producers (including women and rural youths) access to financial services.

In the Central Region, IICA supported various territorial development processes. In Honduras and Costa Rica, emphasis was placed on the importance of gender equity. In Nicaragua, the Institute continued to support groups of rural women

entrepreneurs organized in associations and cooperatives. Furthermore, working with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), IICA provided technical assistance for implementation of the second phase of the project “The economic agenda of the women, Nicaragua component.”

In the Northern Region, the Institute promoted a North-South technical cooperation agenda to make it possible for rural women entrepreneurs to share their experiences and to establish networks of women and youths. Formal contact was also made with the American AgriWomen (AAW) organization, an umbrella group of 51 organizations of women producers or women who provide agriculture-related services in the United States, both in the different states and at the national level.

IICA collaborated with the AAW’s Advisory Board in Education in establishing a cooperation agreement designed to facilitate dialogue and the sharing of experiences with other networks of rural women producers in the Americas.

In Mexico, IICA supported the National Network of Rural Women (RENAMUR) and provided follow-up to the IICA-RENAMUR-CONGES agreement (CONGES is the Consortium for Fair, Ethical and Solidarity-based Trade), which will afford RENAMUR’s members access to ethical and solidarity-based trade niches in Europe.

In the Caribbean Region, the Institute supported the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP), which now has nine national chapters. In collaboration with the Office of the First Lady of Dominican Republic, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry for Women, IICA held the international seminar “Gender and sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2006.” The participants

prepared the annual work plans for the various countries and a regional plan to attempt to secure funds for CANROP. Various agreements and collaboration initiatives were established with other networks, such as RENAMUR.

d. Knowledge Management for Rural Development

IICA supported the consolidation of BR AMCO by implementing a knowledge management system with regional nodes in Brazil, Mexico and Colombia. This led to the launch of a training program and efforts to strengthen both the “system of experts” and the horizontal technical cooperation program that works with local action groups.

In the Andean Region, the Institute contributed instruments and methodologies for managing SRD in “reference territories.” It helped set up the Peruvian Rural Development Network, under the Andean Rural Development Forum project “Formulating an Andean Rural Development Strategy.” The forum is comprised of the ministries of agriculture and rural development and social welfare of the CAN member countries.

In Mexico, as part of the Zocalo Rural de Mexico (ZRM) initiative, IICA collaborated in the design and execution of a Master’s Degree Program in the Management of the Development of Rural Territories, with SAGARPA and the National Institute of Agricultural, Forestry and Livestock Research. It also supported the organization of two international events on rural development with a territorial approach.

The institutionalization of the Standing Forum on Sustainable Rural Development in Brazil was important for knowledge

management and public policy making. IICA supported the development of concepts and innovative methodologies; gathered, characterized and disseminated SRD experiences; supported the formulation and validation of policies, institutional mechanisms, methodologies and work approaches; and promoted horizontal cooperation processes. The forum, which has 68 members (including academic institutions, civil society organizations and public entities), promoted and organized teleconferences, seminars and onsite and virtual workshops. It also produced a number of publications, created a website and organized competitions on different subjects. The events organized by the forum included the so-called “*Salones de territorios rurales*,” which made it possible to disseminate and exchange knowledge and experiences related to SRD in LAC.

The forum’s objective is not limited to promoting knowledge management; it also aims to serve as a mechanism for supporting Latin American integration with respect to SRD. In Central America, the SRD Area worked with the IICA-Holanda Laderas project implemented in nine municipalities of Honduras and El Salvador, involving the systematization of information. This effort provided extremely valuable lessons about the role of the social fabric in constructing the territory and in intersectoral management.

The SRD Area also continued to support the formulation of postgraduate programs, such as the Master’s Degree in Rural Development with a Territorial Approach in Argentina and the rural development module of the postgraduate development science course of the Universidad Mayor de San Andres, in Bolivia.

The Institute restructured the portal of the InfoAgro.net technical information management system and promoted an entire process of systematizing experiences in the field of



rural development. IICA also spearheaded the information nodes for the countries of Central America (portal of the territories), Andean Region, Southern Region and Brazil (rural development forum).

With support from IICA, the Action Training Program for Rural Leaders “Unleashing Local Energies” was formulated, which strengthened the management of talents, the search for innovative solutions and joint action for change. The program held four meetings: one in Quito, Ecuador, in which 25 young people participated; a second in Venezuela, with 30

participants; a third in Colombia, that 30 youths attended; and a hemispheric-level meeting in which 81 young people took part.

The Institute also contributed to the publication of 80 documents and was directly involved in 100 international events on a variety of issues, including policies and investments designed to make agriculture more competitive, rural prosperity, food security, rural poverty alleviation, sustainable rural development, the territorial approach to SRD, the social management of territories and gender.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans

**Promoting Agricultural
Health and Food Safety**

Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Ricardo Molins¹

1. Introduction

As the 21st century dawns, the global trade in food and other agricultural and marine products, the increased human mobility achieved with the expansion of transportation systems, the boom in tourism and growing world trade have eliminated many natural barriers to the transmission of animal, plant and human diseases. A culture of food consumption that refuses to recognize or accept seasons, together with global food storage and distribution systems, has led to the emergence of a “global supermarket,” where food products from all over the world are available all year round.

As a result, since the 1990s, the countries of the Americas have found it necessary to comply with the standards and procedures established in the Agreement on the Application of Measures Sanitary and Phytosanitary (AMSF) —one of the agreements that gave rise to the World Trade Organization (WTO) — and, therefore, to modernize their animal health and food safety (AHFS) services, along with all their regulations, resources and infrastructure. This modernization process has been made even more urgent by the threat of emerging or re-emerging diseases and by the accelerated spread of vectors of animal and plant pests and diseases, facilitated in part by climate change.

During the 2002-2008 period, IICA’s AHFS program focused on helping member countries to comply with international standards in order to safeguard consumer health, protect animal and plant health and facilitate the trade in agrifood products.

2. Strategic Areas, Activities and Results

In the area of AHFS, IICA has focused on four major areas: sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS), institutional modernization, developing leadership in food safety, and addressing emerging issues and emergencies.

a. Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS)

To help prepare member countries to comply with the SPS Agreement, in October 2002 IICA implemented the Initiative for the Americas in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), first in conjunction with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the 2002-2004 period, and then unilaterally during the period from 2005-2008. The purpose

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of this program was to develop the countries' institutional capacities and enable them to play a more active role at meetings of the World Trade Organization's SPS Committee. The Initiative carried out the following actions:

- Coordination mechanisms were established between the public and private sectors. As a result of the Initiative, 20 of the 34 countries of the Americas now have a formal or informal coordination mechanism for the joint formulation of national SPS agenda.
- Fluid and permanent communication channels were established between the organizations responsible for SPS and their representatives at the WTO. By the end of 2008, 23 countries of the Americas had such mechanisms in place.
- Delegation of responsibility for providing follow-up on international SPS issues to national officials; by the end of 2008, 60% of the countries had at least one official responsible for this task.

Through the Initiative, the countries have acquired extensive knowledge of the work carried out by the WTO-SPS Committee and its benefits; established regional and international contacts; and strengthened the national information and notification points. They have also defined their positions on SPS issues, strengthened their capacities to conduct bilateral negotiations and have created a hemispheric community to discuss and analyze technical issues. The countries now participate more actively in the CMSE, making contributions on topics such as special and differentiated treatment, equivalence, regionalization and private standards.

The Initiative has benefited more than 230 specialists and technicians from the ministries of agriculture, trade and

health of IICA's member countries. It has supported the WTO in training events and has facilitated cooperation among countries through the transfer of successful experiences. But most importantly, the Initiative for the Americas has created a new institutional framework in some countries, while strengthening the existing framework in others. In total, 32 member countries of IICA have benefited and representatives from 28 of those nations participated in 19 meetings of the SPS Committee between 2002 and 2008.

In terms of institutional relations, the Initiative has allowed IICA to strengthen its strategic partnerships with international organizations such as the WTO, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). In 2003, the WTO entrusted IICA with the task of overseeing training programs in the Southern, Andean, Central and Caribbean regions, a mission that was accomplished between 2004 and 2008.

In 2008, IICA obtained funding from the Standards and Trade Development Fund (STDF), administered by the WTO, for a hemispheric project to develop "institutional capacity in the countries of the Americas." The project was implemented in 26 of the 28 countries participating in the Initiative, with the support of the six member countries of the Advisory Group (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, United States and Mexico). IICA also designed a new "*Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool for National Systems of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures,*" which was used to assess the national SPS systems and prepare national SPS agendas in 26 countries. In addition, four regional SPS projects were designed, which are now under implementation. The project has also enabled IICA to participate as an observer in the STDF Work Group.

In the area of plant health, the Institute worked with the IPPC Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM), contributing



the “Performance, Vision, Strategy (PVS) tool for National Plant Protection Organizations,” which is used as a rapid diagnostic tool to complement the IPPC’s own “Phytosanitary Capacity Evaluation (PCE)” tool.

In 2004, IICA provided similar cooperation in the area of animal health, when it completed its “Performance, Vision and Strategy tool for Veterinary Services,” which was shared with the OIE. This is the origin of the “Evaluation of Performance of Veterinary Services,” the tool that the OIE uses all over the world to assess these services.

In food safety, IICA supported the FAO/WTO Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) in the analysis of standards and the dissemination of the results of meetings, through the AccessPlus online newsletter. The Institute also participated as an observer at meetings of the Commission and shared the results with key public and private-sector stakeholders in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

Conscious of the need to increase its member countries’ participation in international SPS forums, IICA offered distance courses on the regulatory processes of the Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the IPPC, in partnership with the Codex Secretariat, the OIE and the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE). The courses were financed by USDA and were implemented through IICA’s Distance Training Center (CECADI). A total of 1,352 public, private and academic sector representatives in 32 countries of the Americas received training. These courses were widely regarded as pioneers in their field, and received a public acknowledgement from the WTO-SPS Committee.

IICA also strengthened its strategic partnerships in SPS, forging closer links with the Pan-American Health Organization

(PAHO) in the fields of food safety and animal health. The Institute has participated in the Pan-American Committee on Food Safety (COPAIA), in the South American Commission for the Control of Food and Mouth Disease (COSALFA), and, since 2008, in the preparation of joint agendas for the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA). In addition, the Institute consolidated its support to regional bodies such as COSAVE, the Permanent Veterinary Committee of the Southern Cone (CVP), the International Agricultural Health Organization (OIRSA), CaribVet, a network comprising the national veterinary services of the Caribbean, the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) and the Inter-American Coordinating Group in Plant Protection, for which IICA acts as Technical Secretariat. It also supported the creation of a regional plant protection organization in the Caribbean. In 2007 and 2008, the Institute signed cooperation agreements with the Universities of Lincoln-Nebraska and Minnesota in the United States, to provide training in AHFS for its own specialists and to implement food safety, risk communication and leadership programs.

In the area of communications, IICA published newsletters and developed other tools to disseminate information on SPS, and on the work of the WTO, the international reference organizations and regional organizations. The electronic newsletter *CODEX-SPS Opinion Forum*, specializes in topics related to the *Codex Alimentarius* and the WTO-SPS Committee, analyzes the standards issued, promotes their study and disseminates information on events and activities. Its main audiences are the South American countries, but it is available to all member countries at www.iica.org.ar. The AGROSALUD network distributes information related to AHFS and the standards issued by the WTO and international reference organizations. The newsletter *Acceso*, with 18 editions published in English and Spanish, reports on the work carried out by the WTO-SPS Committee.



b. Institutional Modernization

The AHFS services are critical to safeguarding a country's health and well-being. Therefore, efforts to strengthen these services - which often require more leadership rather than financial investment – are indispensable to prevent and deal with emergencies and emerging issues.

Based on this premise, IICA has designed a tool to assess the performance of AFHS services and systems through an evaluation of institutional processes, outputs and services and their subsequent comparison with other similar organizations. This model is based on a definition of the components considered essential for the operation of those services, and includes all stakeholders of the public and private sectors, in order to cover all AHFS tasks and responsibilities in the agrifood chain.

This process began in 2003 with the “Common Vision, Evaluation and Action” (CVEA) tool, designed by IICA and applied to Mexico's national AHFS services in 2004. The model was later adapted and applied to a project aimed at improving the quality of the beef chain in Central America. As a result of that experience, the tool was further improved and the “Performance, Vision and Strategy” (PVS) tool was born.

In 2002 the PVS model was adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the implementation of the Program for Fruit Fly-Free Areas in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Honduras. Subsequently, between 2002 and 2007, IICA prepared three PVS instruments: one for national veterinary services, another for national plant protection organizations and a third for national food safety services. In 2008 a new PVS tool was created for the national SPS systems.

During 2004-2006, as part of IICA's strategic partnership with the OIE, the PVS for veterinary services was applied in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Paraguay. Later, the PVS for national plant protection organizations was applied in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru, while the PVS for national food safety services was applied in Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru. As a result, a number of countries adopted action plans for improving their national services.

More recently, IICA has expanded its cooperation efforts to include the design and implementation of modernization projects based on the results of the PVS, with very successful results in 2006-2008 in Paraguay (veterinary and phytosanitary services, and food safety system in process), as well as in 2007-2008 in Jamaica (veterinary service) and Costa Rica (veterinary and plant health services).

During the 2006-2007 period, the OIE adapted IICA's PVS instrument to veterinary services and converted it into an assessment tool different from the original. Meanwhile, IICA continued to use the PVS for all three areas as a tool for modernization and continuous improvement, enabling the countries themselves to determine the direction and priorities of their national services. In 2006-2008, the PVS for veterinary services was applied in three states of Brazil as well as in Argentina, Jamaica, Costa Rica and Paraguay. This last country also applied the PVS tool in plant health and food safety. As a result, the project to modernize Paraguay's national veterinary services was completed and a similar process is currently under way in Jamaica and Costa Rica. The application of the PVS tool to the national plant protection services of Paraguay and Costa Rica resulted in projects to modernize those services, which are currently under execution.



In 2008, IICA updated the PVS tools and published the second edition of some of these. The “Manual for the Application of the PVS Tool” was also published for use both by IICA staff and by officials of the national services interested in this system.

Also in the area of institutional modernization, IICA provided technical cooperation to the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) in the regulatory process for the establishment of the Central American Customs Union (UAC), involving El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Among the results of the joint program between the Secretariats of the Central American Economic Integration Subsystem, IICA and OIRSA, we can mention the following: the preparation of manuals on harmonized quarantine procedures; the design of a regional project to modernize quarantine posts and provide appropriate management training; the implementation of the Work Plan of the UAC’s SPS subgroup; advances in the harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary standards; a proposal for the establishment of a regional risk assessment unit; the design of a regional traceability project; and facilitating the active participation of countries at SPS meetings.

In 2008, the Institute provided technical assistance to Ecuador to establish a new institutional framework in AHFS and to design a policy in this thematic area. Meanwhile, in Bolivia, IICA provided assistance in the design and implementation of a national AFHS policy.

The Institute undertook comprehensive efforts to modernize the food safety inspection systems in the Americas, based on the PVS tool. In Panama (2006) it supported the development of a conceptual framework and the creation of the Panamanian Food Safety Authority (AUPSA), while in Trinidad and Tobago (2008) IICA participated in the creation of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency

(NAHFSA). Similarly, in 2008 the Institute provided technical assistance for the modernization of Paraguay’s national food safety system.

IICA also promoted education on food safety in primary schools, as a long-term strategy to improve the hygiene of food for domestic consumption in the countries, using teaching materials donated by USDA in 2007. In Paraguay, Uruguay and Costa Rica educational pilot programs were implemented in this area.

c. Executive Leadership in Food Safety (ELFS)

In 2002, IICA and several international cooperation organizations participated in the launch of the Executive Leadership in Food Safety (ELFS) Program. This initiative was prompted by concerns that, despite the importance of agriculture in their economies and the need for effective food safety measures, few countries in the Americas had comprehensive policies and programs to meet present and future demands in this area. The ELFS Program used non-traditional training modules, including conferences, lectures, interactive case studies and analysis, promoted relations with government officials, food industry representatives and international organizations, and facilitated opportunities to share experiences and exchange ideas.

The ELFS Program accomplished its goals of strengthening the technical knowledge and leadership skills of the participants and establishing permanent support and cooperation networks. Four modules were offered over a two-year period, benefiting 30 professionals working in the field of food safety in the public, private or academic sectors of 18 countries. The modules included the following topics: Globalization and Public-Private Partnerships; Laws, Ethics and Regulations; Food Safety and Agrifood chains; and Tourism.



As an additional outcome of the 16 AHFS projects executed in 23 countries, partnerships and networks were established between the public, private and academic sectors in the Central, Andean and Southern regions; between regions, e.g. in the case of the poultry producers of South America and the Caribbean; with governments, through programs in specific areas, such as food safety in the hotel industry; and between national certification bodies and quality programs, as occurred in Central America. Other partnerships enabled IICA to contact experts in Costa Rica and Honduras, who imparted training in good agricultural practices (GAP) in Belize and Honduras and provided timely information on food manipulation in Paraguay and Honduras.

It is important to emphasize that, after participating in these projects, approximately 50% of the participants were promoted to higher positions in their respective institutions and 90% were assigned a greater level of responsibility in the field of food safety. These individuals have become a force for change in their workplaces, promoting community actions that combine knowledge, skills, passion and values. These initiatives include integrated epidemiological surveillance networks for municipalities and regions; food safety initiatives with indigenous populations; and promoting food safety practices among small-scale farmers in specific geographic areas.

d. Addressing Emerging Issues and Emergencies

In order to help its member countries deal with emergencies in the area of AHFS, IICA has defined a medium and long-term strategy aimed at strengthening the national AHFS services, promoting the participation of national and regional-level production sectors and improving communications in risk and crisis situations.

This strategy was put to the test when the Americas faced the specter of an avian influenza (AI) pandemic and IICA responded by establishing the Hemispheric Program in Avian Influenza. This program encouraged the poultry sector to participate actively in preparing for this pandemic; supported efforts to organize simulations in response to outbreaks of AI in Ecuador, Colombia, Guyana and Mexico; helped countries to prepare regional and national funding proposals to combat AI, and to identify funding sources; supported Chile in drafting an AI plan and drafted guidelines for the formulation of funding proposals which were distributed to the countries. IICA also secured World Bank approval for an AI project in the Southern Region, which was launched in 2007. In the Andean Region, IICA helped the Secretariat of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN) to disseminate the “Guide for the design and presentation of investment projects in AI prevention at country and regional level,” in the context of a UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) regional project.

In Colombia, the Institute supported the implementation of a national AHFS policy, while in Peru it played a major role in setting up the strategic plan of the National Animal Health Service. In Venezuela, IICA contributed to the design of a strategic plan to modernize and strengthen the entire AHFS system. It also promoted the Andean Forum on Agricultural Health, which operated for many years with the active participation of representatives of the region’s national agricultural health services.

In the area of AI risk communication, IICA worked with other cooperation agencies such as FAO, PAHO, the *United Nations System for Influenza Coordination-Pandemic Influenza Contingency* (UNSIC-PIC), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and OIRSA, and prepared general guidelines on risk communication procedures. The main outcomes of this effort were the following:



- The creation of an institutional AI Work Group responsible for defining IICA's policy in response to the emerging threat of that disease and providing an internal forum for discussion on this topic.
- A radio program on AI and a series of ten talks directed at small and medium-scale poultry producers (series produced in Spanish and translated into English, Portuguese and Creole). This program obtained worldwide recognition. The material was sent to the region's ministries of agriculture and poultry producers' associations for distribution.
- Four radio programs on AI were prepared for *Agroenlace* (What is bird flu?, Biosafety Standards, Notification and Lessons Learned), with the aim of disseminating basic information on prevention and response to AI outbreaks.
- An audiovisual production on AI was used in training courses for small-scale poultry farmers in LAC.
- Publication of the article "Avian Influenza in the Americas: IICA's Vision," in *COMUNIICA* magazine, setting out IICA's institutional position on the issue of AI.
- Development of a specialized website offering up-to-date information on the AI situation around the world.
- Permanent participation in the Interagency Group on Strategic Communications for the Prevention of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and in FAO/OIE's Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs). As a result, IICA has been included in international efforts to prevent IA and respond to potential outbreaks.

In 2005, IICA supported the organization of the Hemispheric Conference on the Surveillance and Prevention of Avian Influenza, co-sponsored by Brazil, IICA, PAHO, OIE and FAO. This resulted in the Declaration of Brasilia, an agreement that includes technical, political and financial commitments to carry out joint actions to combat AI at country and hemispheric level. In 2006, IICA and PAHO organized a meeting of ambassadors in Washington to create awareness in the Organization of American States (OAS) on the importance of this issue and to implement rapid and coordinated actions to combat the disease. The World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and poultry sector representatives also participated. A similar meeting was co-sponsored by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), IICA, PAHO, OIE and FAO to discuss essential actions to tackle AI in the Caribbean.

As follow-up to these meetings, the Institute implemented numerous training activities on AI during the period 2004-2007. In partnership with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA-APHIS), IICA offered training courses on the localization and monitoring of live bird markets in the Central and Andean regions (2007-2008) and on the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) in seven Caribbean countries (2007) to improve national plans to deal with AI outbreaks. As a result of these efforts, the countries of the Americas now have plans for responding to AI outbreaks, which could also be used to deal with other animal health emergencies.

In the Caribbean, these efforts were supplemented with a project launched in 2007 to reinforce the epidemiological surveillance network in nine countries (ten islands), in cooperation with USDA-APHIS, the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD) and the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVet). The project



involves training ten epidemiologists with a view to forming a task force to respond to emergencies.

Since 2006, the Federation of Central American and Caribbean Poultry Producers (FEDAVICAC), with the support of IICA and OIRSA, have been working on a program to harmonize regulations, facilitate workshops and provide training on international food safety standards, with a view to improving the quality and competitiveness of the Central American poultry sector. As a result, regional protocols were approved accompanied by training programs for the staff of production and processing plants.

With respect to foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), IICA coordinated bi-national and regional simulations for the control of FMD in Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela, and designed a course on epidemiological surveillance, quarantine procedures and sampling for trainers. Together with the Pan-American Center for Foot-and-Mouth Disease (PANAFTOSA), IICA participated in a project sponsored by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to develop capacity in South America in the diagnosis of swine vesicular diseases and epidemiology in order to respond promptly to FMD outbreaks. IICA also took part in the meetings and actions of the Inter-American Group for the Eradication of Foot and Mouth Disease (GIEFA), which enabled it to carry out international reconnaissance missions to Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia, and issue recommendations to accelerate FMD eradication in those countries.

Similarly, IICA has supported international efforts to control classic swine fever in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, as well as rabies in Haiti. About 86% of Haiti's swine population was vaccinated in 2008 through a joint program involving the ministries of agriculture, USDA-APHIS and IICA. As a result,

the incidence of rabies in Haiti was reduced from eleven cases in 2006 to just four in 2008.

With respect to other animal diseases, in 2004 the Institute began to disseminate information on bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), with the aim of preventing the introduction of this disease in LAC. Conscious of the need to develop mechanisms to respond effectively animal health emergencies, in 2007 IICA organized a technical meeting to discuss the issue of compensation. In 2008 it co-sponsored a workshop with the OIE on infrastructure and the capacity of diagnostic laboratories, helping to raise awareness in the hemisphere on the importance these factors in combating zoonoses.

In Central America, IICA evaluated screw-worm infestations, quantified the economic losses caused to livestock, analyzed the damage caused to other socioeconomic sectors and recommended actions for the control and prevention of this pest, which has been eradicated in Central America.

In order to continue increasing the emergency response capacity of its member countries, in 2008 IICA implemented the Observatory of Emerging Issues and Emergencies. This mechanism provides countries with advance warning not only of emergency situations, but also of emerging issues with a potential impact on animal health, plant health, food safety and trade. As a result of a hemispheric meeting organized jointly by IICA and Michigan State University (USA) in 2008, whose main theme was the global link between animal and human health, IICA decided that its future programs should include epidemiological surveillance actions at community level, in order to ensure the earliest possible detection of disease outbreaks and take immediate action to prevent their spread.



In the area of plant health, in 2002 IICA implemented a plan for the control and prevention of the giant African snail in the Caribbean. The plan included risk assessments, proposals to update legislation related to this pest and regional seminars to support education campaigns on plant health. A project to reinforce quarantine services was also implemented in the Caribbean, in compliance with the ASPS on plant health. As a result, the countries prepared plans to respond to pest and disease outbreaks, which included training on good agricultural practices (GAP), quarantine, risk assessment and updating of legislation.

Having determined the need to establish a regional risk analysis center on plant pests, IICA promoted the establishment of the Center for Phytosanitary Excellence (CEF) in Colombia. This Center provides services at national and regional level, which IICA continues to support. The Institute also supported the Binational Chile–Peru Program for the Control and Eradication of the Fruit Fly, a pest that has now been eradicated from southern Peru.

With regard to specific pests and diseases, IICA worked with national plant protection authorities to combat red palm mite, black sigatoka and moko disease in bananas throughout the Caribbean region; carambola or starfruit fly in Guyana and Suriname; *Anastrepha* in Grenada, Haiti and St. Vincent and the Grenadines; citrus tristeza virus (CTV) in Dominica; and lethal yellowing of palm in Nevis. The Institute also provided training to the Caribbean region's plant health services in the diagnosis of plant pests and diseases, enabling these countries to improve their surveillance, prevention and control procedures.

Finally, IICA played a key role in preparing a proposal for the establishment of the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA); it contributed to the establishment of the Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC), and currently serves as its Secretariat; it provided support to the Caribbean Invasive Species Work Group (CISWG); and contributed to the planning of the Regional Intervention Strategy for Invasive Species (CRISIS).

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Gustavo Cardenas¹ and Jeannette Cardenas²

1. Introduction

For IICA, development and the conservation of natural resources are not incompatible. Rather, such conservation contributes greatly to making development sustainable. Therefore, efforts to promote and strengthen the conservation, protection and restoration of the different ecosystems of the territories will bring stability to food security and guarantee the health and well-being of the population.

Following is a summary of IICA's accomplishments from 2002-2008 in promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment.

2. Strategic Lines of Action for Technical Cooperation in the Area of Natural Resources and Environmental Management

Both the environment and natural resources were included in the 2006-2010 MTP as priorities for the technical

cooperation actions of the Institute. In that MTP, the general objective of the Area of Promotion of the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment was defined as: *To support the efforts of the member countries to transform their institutions, with a view to ensuring that the environment and natural resources are managed in such a way that the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu will be possible.*

In addition, IICA was given new mandates related to for its future work in the Americas. The ministers of agriculture emphasized the need to make significant progress in *improving food security and reducing rural poverty via the execution of ten strategic actions, in at least three of which the topic of the environment is considered directly:*

- The development of an institutional framework conducive to the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu;
- The promotion of environmentally friendly agriculture; and,
- The prevention and mitigation of natural disasters.

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The Institute, as a result of the continual improvement process implemented from 2002-2008, defined four strategic lines of action:

- Linking agriculture, trade and the environment;
- Integrated management of natural resources for agricultural and rural development;
- Impact of global environmental changes on agrifood systems; and,
- Promotion of good environmental management practices in agricultural and rural production.

In 2008, the Area of Natural Resources and Environmental Management was created for the purpose of strengthening leadership in this field, developing a hemispheric agenda in the field and including it on the national and regional agendas.

3. Impact of Technical Cooperation in the Area of Natural Resources and Environmental Management on Agriculture and Food Security of the Americas

IICA launched the Program to Combat Desertification and Mitigate the Effects of Drought in South America. This initiative, which was executed by IICA, began in 2003. Its main objective was to provide a conceptual base for addressing the degradation of lands in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid regions,

as well as the effects of drought in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru.

Furthermore, a course entitled “Agroenvironmental Policy” was aimed at building up local capabilities and leadership in dealing with environmental issues, and at making actors of production chains in different reference territories more aware of the importance of the topic.

IICA conducted a broad campaign and presented the paper “Natural resources, agriculture and food security in the face of climate change” in the United States (Univ. of Nebraska, IDB, World Bank and OAS), Panama, Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica (including CATIE), Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil and the Bahamas, which helped call attention to the topic in those countries and in cases such as Ecuador, Argentina and the Bahamas, to include it on the national technical cooperation agendas, as requested by the ministries of agriculture.

The Institute drew up a comprehensive set of project profiles which were presented to Canada to seek funding for their implementation, including one dealing with a natural resources project for Haiti entitled “Program for the Sustainable Development of Natural Resources in Haiti.”

Moreover, thanks to several technical missions, IICA was able to establish agreements calling for collaboration with the ministries of agriculture of Argentina, the Bahamas, Ecuador and Venezuela, which led to the execution of technical cooperation actions.

As for the dissemination of information, IICA published a series of documents related to natural resources and the environment, including:



- Sepúlveda, S. 2002. *Desarrollo sostenible microrregional: métodos para la planificación local*. San José, CR.
- Cordero, P; Rodríguez, A; Sepúlveda, S. 2004. *Temas de comercio y medio ambiente. Cuaderno Técnico N.º 25*. San José, CR.
- Sepúlveda, S; Chavarría, H; Rojas, P. 2005. *Metodología para estimar el nivel de desarrollo sostenible de los territorios rurales: Biograma versión 2005*. San José, CR.

Likewise, IICA has contributed to the formulation of initiatives in the following fields: Mexico-Guatemala cross boundary river basins, the river basin approach for food security, field schools (pilot project in Chiapas, Mexico), development and implementation of community aqueducts in Costa Rica, and diversification of food production in the Andean Region.

Lastly, the Institute succeeded in strengthening the strategic partnerships established with the University of Nebraska, the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The Institute also drafted a memorandum of understanding with the World Bank on the subject “Water factories: the moorlands of the Andean Region.”

It should be pointed out that IICA and CATIE worked together to help small- and medium-scale producers make their agricultural operations more competitive and sustainable and, in doing so, protect natural resources.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Enrique Alarcón Millán¹

1. Introduction

Agriculture faces diverse and complex challenges in the twentieth-first century and tackling them involves interventions of an economic, social, environmental and technological nature. The growing world population requires increasingly larger amounts of food, the availability of which has been affected by climate variations, lack or excess of water, and a decline in agricultural productivity. Other factors are also creating pressure on agriculture, including the need to increase production in a context of restriction of resources (such as land) and to promote new uses for agricultural products (agro-energy, for example), without this affecting food production.

Furthermore, at the global level, various events have had an impact on the development of agriculture, including the revolution that has occurred in several areas of the biological and physical sciences, and with regard to information and communication technology (ICT).

Technological innovation plays a decisive role in a country's development, and it has been demonstrated that, on average, technological change explains between 30% and 40% of

the variations in agricultural production. Moreover, it can contribute to achieving a more efficient use of natural resources and their sustainable use. Technological innovation also has an impact on poverty reduction, and on the improvement of the supply of food and continuous access to it.

In general, the countries of the America have a rich ecological capital compared to other regions of the world, and most of them have acquired the capacity to generate and transfer technology. Given IICA's acknowledged record in the area of research since its creation, one of the strategic priorities of its Medium Term Plan (MTP) is the promotion of the incorporation of technology and innovation into agriculture. The Institute's main achievements in this area over the period 2002-2008 are presented below.

2. The strategic Framework for Innovation and Technology

The general objective that IICA proposed in the area of innovation and technology in the 2006-2010 MTP was to support the efforts of the member countries to modernize

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agriculture and to maximize its contribution to economic, social and environmental development by promoting technological and institutional innovation policies and processes that encourage and facilitate the incorporation of new knowledge and technology into agro-productive chains.

Accordingly, it was decided to focus technical cooperation on the following areas of concentration: (1) *Prospective vision of technology and innovation applicable to agriculture*; (2) *Support for institutional modernization and the design of technological policies for the development and incorporation of new technologies*; (3) *Strengthening of the hemispheric system of inter-country cooperation in agricultural technological innovation, and its links with the international research system, and* (4) *Promotion of information management to support technological innovation processes.*

3. Results Achieved

a. Prospective Vision of Technology and Innovation applicable to Agriculture

IICA supported the design of technology policies and decision-making processes for the management, financing and organization of research and technological innovation. The situation and performance of agriculture in Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) was analyzed from a technological perspective and, in this context, the relevant information has been updated every year. Interest groups in the public, private and academic sectors, as well as civil society in general have access, through different media (the web sites of IICA, FORAGRO and INFOTEC, conferences and workshops), to

each year's study analyzing the progress made by agriculture and the gaps between the LAC sub-regions and between this region and others in the world. The reports show that promoting technology and innovation is essential for the competitiveness of the region, for the sustainable use of natural resources, and for poverty reduction.

During the period referred to in this report, the presentation of the studies evolved, changing from informal documents to a 2008 publication that underscored the challenges faced by technological innovation and institutional innovation. It also stressed the need to take advantage of the political will to promote technological services for agriculture, in relation to both technological development and to the (re)organization of agricultural extension services.

A key action for the "prospective vision of technology and innovation in agriculture" is to have information on the institutional actors involved in research and technological development and on the investments and human resources assigned to these activities. IICA entered into alliances with different partners who undertook efforts to update information. For example, with the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, a project was executed to prepare the "Directory of agricultural research institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean," which made it possible to compile indicators on agricultural science and technology. In addition, with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and through the ASTI project, a contribution was made towards updating the information on the indicators for science and technology in Central America and to prepare the LAC report in this regard. In this way, IICA and IFPRI worked together to update information on the institutional actors who carry out research and technological development activities in the countries included in the study,



on the investments made in these areas, and on the human resources involved in these activities, all of which resulted in indicators on the progress achieved in developing national capacity. The study on LAC was disseminated during the fifth International Meeting of FORAGRO, Montevideo 2008. Lastly, within the framework of the Innova Network, IICA also contributed to the methodological development of indicators and the analysis of the impact of technological innovation in partnership with the Ibero-America Science and Technology Development Program (CYTED).

b. Support for Institutional Modernization and the Design of Technological Policies for the Development and Incorporation of New Technologies

To support national appropriation of the new paradigm based on technological innovation, IICA disseminated the corresponding conceptual and operational framework. This was done during national and regional workshops and seminars, and international fora, such as the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO) and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR). The Institute also supported the processes of institutional modernization and/or evaluation for research and/or agricultural extension that was carried out in institutions and ministries of agriculture, such as the National Institute for Forestry, Agricultural and Fisheries Research (INIFAP) of Mexico; the Institute for Agricultural Technology Transfer and Innovation (INTA) of Costa Rica; the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (CORPOICA); the National System of Agricultural Research and Transfer (SNITA) and the Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (ICTA), both of Guatemala; the National System of Agricultural Research

and Technology (SNITTA) of Honduras; the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) of the Dominican Republic; the Dominican Agricultural and Forestry Research Institute (IDIAF); the Ministry for Agricultural Development (MIDA) of Panama; the National Agricultural Technology Transfer Program (PRONATTA) of Colombia, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) of Paraguay – in this case supporting an assessment of the national research system.

In Venezuela, support was provided for the dialogue to establish and strengthen a system of research and technology transfer. In Bolivia, the Bolivian Agricultural Technology System (SIBTA) received support but, subsequently, support was focused on the establishment of the National Institute for Agricultural and Forestry Innovation (INIAF). In support of this action, the Cooperative Program on Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer for the Andean Sub-Region (PROCIANDINO), the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation in the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS) and the Cooperative Program for the Technological Development of the Agro-food and Agro-industry in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) provided a mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and experiences on the structure of the national agricultural research institutes (INIAs) of South America.

Regarding actions to encourage the development of institutional innovations, the design of the hemispheric project *“Inter-regional Cooperation on Institutional Innovation for Technological Innovation”* with contributions from national and international, public and private institutional actors of technological innovation must be highlighted. Similarly, in Costa Rica workshops were held for directors of research and technology transfer institutions during which leadership in technological innovation and the streamlining of agricultural technical assistance services were promoted.

The following were the most significant actions to support the design of policies to develop and incorporate technology:

- i. Support for the participation of the LAC countries in the global project “International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development” (IAASTD), co-sponsored by the World Bank, FAO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Health Organization (WHO), with the participation of Governments and civil society. IICA, in partnership with UNESCO, coordinated the assessment in LAC (IAASTD-LAC), which focused on synthesizing the main currents of opinion on the way that knowledge, science and technology can contribute to improve the welfare of the population of LAC, in particular the poorest, and identified non-prescriptive recommendations for the design of policies on the issue and on the processes of institutional change and innovation management to reduce poverty and hunger. IICA contributed to the consultation *ex ante* on the relevance of the IAASTD for the region and then to the implementation of the project through agreements with the World Bank and, in this context, organized five regional meetings in Costa Rica, Buenos Aires and Lima and facilitated the participation of global actors, member of the LAC Bureau in three global meetings. The results of the IAASTD were disseminated by several media, and were presented during the FORAGRO and in a videoconference, in which six authors interacted with 100 participants from public and private institutions, civil society, international organizations and the press in five countries (www.agassessment.org).
- ii. Provision of inputs for the design of institutional policies and support for decision-making processes in the countries by the preparation and dissemination of the following studies: (1) *Conceptos, políticas y directrices para el desarrollo de innovaciones institucionales para la innovación tecnológica*; (2) *Innovaciones institucionales y tecnológicas para sistemas productivos basados en agricultura familiar*; (3) *Evaluación multidimensional de impacto a la investigación regional*; (4) *Extensión y los servicios de apoyo: discusión conceptual, situación in ALC y propuestas para el futuro*; (5) *Las agriculturas de América Latina y el Caribe: El papel del conocimiento, la ciencia y la tecnología*; and 6) *Gestión de los derechos de los bienes protegibles mediante redes regionales, PROCI y FONTAGRO*. In addition, an article entitled *Vinculando a los pequeños productores con los mercados: análisis de experiencias exitosas en América Latina* was prepared and published in the journal COMUNIICA, which includes material on issues related to agribusiness, agroindustry and technology.
- iii. Support for the design and implementation of rural extension policies within the framework of the project sponsored by the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO) called “*ESAS-LAC Research on Extension and Support Services*” executed by the consortium, MAG-Costa Rica, INTA-Argentina, FEDECAFE-Colombia and IICA. The following products were obtained and disseminated: (1) an analysis of the actual situation and the tendencies of rural extension services in the Americas; (2) subregional studies on specific issues; (3) a framework with different elements to support the design of public policies to streamline extension services, and (4) the conceptual and operational bases for the establishment of the Latin American Rural Extension Network. These products were presented in a regional workshop held in Costa Rica and made accessible on



the web site of the System to Share Scientific and Technological Information in the Agricultural Sector of the Americas (INFOTEC).

- iv. The *Ministerial Conference on the Use of Science and Technology to Increase Agricultural Productivity* was held, sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Ministries of Agriculture and of Science and Technology of Costa Rica, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the US State Department, and IICA. Participants included the Ministers of Agriculture of the United States, Mexico, and the countries of Central America, and 150 representatives of the private sector, the academic community, non-governmental organizations, and regional and international agencies. Discussions were held and partnerships were identified among the different interest groups to promote the improvement of food security by applying science and technology to improve agricultural productivity in a way that was environmentally sustainable.

c. Strengthening of the Hemispheric System of Inter-Country Cooperation in Agricultural Technological Innovation, and its Links with the International Research System

IICA supported the establishment of a culture of cooperation among the countries and institutions in the area of agricultural technological innovation and research. In this regard, it assisted in the consolidation of the **regional technological innovation system**. This cooperation permitted the countries to address together common opportunities and problems that would have been difficult or costly to tackle individually. It also promoted the hemispheric dialogue, enabled the execution of regional research projects, and encouraged the relationship

of LAC with the international technology system under the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) and with technical and financial cooperation agencies from countries such as Switzerland, France, Spain and the United States.

Some of the most relevant results achieved in this strategic area were as follows:

- i. Support and promotion, through FORAGRO, of the hemispheric dialogue for the development of a shared vision of agriculture and rural life from a technological perspective, the design of policies, the elaboration of hemispheric research agendas, and the coordination of intra-regional and global mechanisms. IICA, mandated by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), provided the Technical Secretariat for this forum. Three international meetings of FORAGRO were held during the period covered by this report: Brasilia 2002, Panama 2005 and Montevideo 2008, at which issues were discussed relating to hemispheric technological integration, technological innovations for agribusiness, and the development of institutional innovations to streamline the technological change. 200 people from 30 countries took part in each meeting, representing the different components of FORAGRO: national institutes, peasant organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities, institutes of the international agricultural research system, producer groups and the private sector. The most important decisions taken at each meeting were incorporated into the respective “declarations” in which 13 issues were proposed as a guide for regional research and hemispheric and international cooperation. Furthermore, through FORAGRO, hemispheric agendas were promoted on the management of scientific and technological information, support was provided for the institutional innovations



required to implement technological innovation, the hemispheric initiative on agro-biotechnology and bio-safety received support, and the conservation of plant genetic resources was promoted. Support was also provided to the hemispheric dialogue that took place during the international meetings of FORAGRO, for which the IICA Technical Secretariat, together with strategic partners, namely: the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), PROCISUR, PROCIANDINO, PROCITROPICOS and the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) of Venezuela, prepared reports on the situation and perspectives of regional cooperation in LAC for research on five of FORAGRO's priority issues: agro-biotechnology, plant genetic resources, natural resources, agribusiness, and family agriculture, which were disseminated by different means, including INFOTEC.

FORAGRO incorporated GFAR, and this allowed it to exchange ideas with the corresponding forums in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Asian-Pacific and Caucasian regions. In addition, through FORAGRO, IICA also helped strengthen the links of LAC with the international research system of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), by promoting discussions on the benefits of a renewed presence of the Group and its international centers in LAC. In this regard, a position paper "In favor of a renewed presence in LAC of CGIAR" was presented at the V International Meeting of FORAGRO in Montevideo.

- ii. Promotion of financing for regional research. IICA contributed to the consolidation of FONTAGRO under an agreement signed with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and, in this regard, it interacted with the Fund's member countries and worked closely

with its Administrative Technical Secretariat (STA). During a first stage, 15 projects from the Fund's second and third competitions were executed in the Region. Subsequently, IICA's cooperation focused on supporting the preparation of FONTAGRO's 2005-2010 Medium Term Plan and in prospective analyses. Assessments were also made of its socio-economic, environmental and institutional impact; these demonstrated that the results of the Fund's regional projects had resulted in internal rates of return of 24%; more than those obtained from other investments. In addition, the projects generate knowledge that is very useful for the decision-making processes concerning technological policies. Support was provided for the technical monitoring of the regional projects that were being implemented by means of workshops organized with the STA in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Panama. In addition, the ability of national researchers to prepare proposals for competitive funds was enhanced by the organization of four courses in Cartagena (Colombia), Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia), Antigua (Guatemala) and Caracas (Venezuela), in partnership with the INIAs of these countries and the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI), and by the elaboration of guidelines for the formulation of regional projects. The results of the Fund's projects were disseminated by different means and support was provided for the Fund's efforts to promote the incorporation of Honduras, using different strategies; in particular the issue, in 2007, of a resolution of the Executive Committee of IICA that urged its member countries that were not yet members of the Fund to join it.

- iii. Strengthening of reciprocal cooperation for research among the countries of the five regions of LAC and the Amazonian tropics, through the technological



innovation cooperative programs supported by IICA: PROCIANDINO, PROCITROPICOS, PROCISUR, the Cooperative Program in Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE), the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System (SICTA), and the Regional Cooperative Program for Technology Development and the Modernization of Coffee Cultivation (PROMECAFE). The continuous cooperative efforts under these programs benefit the countries by developing new knowledge and, among other matters, the use of modern techniques and efficient technologies for production, technology transfer, and the conservation and use of plant genetic resources have been significant. These programs have been important instruments for facilitating exchanges by means of technical forums, training for professionals, dissemination of the results of research, and support for institution-building. Mechanisms such as PROCISUR and SICTA have become the technological arm of the respective regional councils of Ministers of Agriculture, such as the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) and the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC).

The following is a summary of the principal results obtained through these programs:

- **Andean Region (PROCIANDINO):** This cooperative program encourages cooperation in technological innovation through specialized networks for fruit, vegetables, potato, corn, dual-purpose cattle, and plant genetic resources, such as the Andean Phylogenetic Resources Network (REDARFIT). Over the years, it has assisted the implementation of FONTAGRO regional projects. PROCIANDINO also encourages the development of platforms for the exchange of knowledge and experiences in agricultural research, technology

transfer and innovation. In addition, the Program has an action plan that includes the five priority topics for regional cooperation, each one led by an Andean country: food security (Venezuela), institutional development (Bolivia), climate change (Peru), agrobiotechnology (Ecuador) and agro-energy (Colombia). Training actions, joint research and the exchange of information are carried out on each topic.

- **Amazon Region (PROCITROPICOS):** This program gave continuity to actions relating to the horizontal transfer of spearhead technology by holding various workshops and seminars on issues such as conservation and the sustainable use of the genetic resources of the Amazon, the recovery of degraded areas, and the sustainable management of renewable natural resources. In addition, technological platforms were established in the production chains for cacao, coffee, oil palm, aquaculture, and animal production, as well as integrated agricultural, forestry and livestock production systems. Several networks were brought into operation, in particular those on agro-energy, cacao, coffee and phylogenetic resources, in collaboration with the Global Trust within the framework of the Amazonian Network on Plant Genetic Resources (TROIPIGEN). In the person of its Executive Secretary, the Program takes part, for FORAGRO-IICA, in the European Commission's Agriculture Research for Development Dimension of the European Research Area (ERA-ARD), representing the priorities of LAC before research and financing agencies. Other important actions in which PROCITROPICOS has been involved include the preparation of a proposal to set up an aquaculture network for Amazonia; the provision of technical cooperation to promote the integration of agricultural, forestry and pasturing systems in the savannah regions and in Amazonia,



and the support provided for the establishment of a Latin American inter-country cooperation network designed to promote the use of *Jathropha curcas* to produce biofuels.

- **Central Region (SICTA):** This regional technological integration mechanism established by CAC is supported by IICA and CATIE, and IICA provides the Program's Executive Secretariat. SICTA has helped reactivate cooperation among the countries of Central America by integrating the national research and technology transfer systems. Among its most significant achievements is the definition of a regional policy for technology and innovation prepared in response to the request of the Ministers of Agriculture, which was incorporated into the process of elaborating the 2009-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy. IICA participated in the preparation and implementation of the regional project, SICTA Network, with the support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation Agency (SDC), designed to promote the establishment of technological innovation consortia. A regional strategy for agrobiotechnology and biodiversity was prepared based on a CAC mandate. Also, in relation to the conservation of biodiversity and genetic resources, a project to be executed by the Meso-American Network of Plant Genetic Resources (REMERFI) has been submitted to the World Bank/GEF. In addition, a course on technological innovation leadership was held for directors of national agricultural research and technical assistance institutes. For the 2007 FONTAGRO competition, US\$1,000,000 was secured for regional research projects. These results were achieved with the participation of the 10 SICTA knowledge networks, which function as a virtual platform supported by IICA.
- **Northern Region (PROCINORTE):** This cooperation mechanism, in which Canada, the United States and Mexico participate, is constituted by the research task forces in library and information services, plant genetic resources, animal health, plant health, and tropical and sub-tropical fruit trees. Support was provided for consolidating the North American Plant Genetic Resources Network (NORGEN), which permitted the acquisition and implementation of the technological platform for the implementation of the database of the Germplasm Resources Information Network (GRIN), the development of a research project on the collection and characterization of wild bean varieties in Mexico, and support for the development of the strategy for conserving plants of the Americas, which has contributed to the conservation of important germplasm banks in several countries. The task force dedicated to tropical and sub-tropical fruit trees began a study of the areas that produce and pack mango and avocado pear in Mexico, during which it assessed the quality of the fruit and analyzed other relevant characteristics for the development of the chain, such as storage and transport. The Agricultural Library and Information Services Network was the first network to begin operations under the Program and it has made a significant contribution to ensure that Mexico, Canada and the United State are interacting permanently on this issue, and has also helped Mexico develop a network of agricultural libraries, prepare a national catalogue of agricultural information, and develop the pertinent capacity.
- **Southern Region (PROCISUR):** Over the period 2002-2008, PROCISUR established regional technological platforms, technical cooperation areas and networks.



It also expanded its external financing sources, its international connections, and its contacts with world-class research institutes. IICA strengthened its relationship with the Program's member institutions, and this allowed it to incorporate in the medium term plans of these institutions actions responding to the demands of the countries in the area of science and technology. Progress was made in consolidating the Program's management model, based on improvements under the headings of monitoring and evaluation, prospection, and programming. Projects were implemented financed with its own capital (5) or with financing from different sources: FONTAGRO (7), German Federal Ministry for Economic Development Cooperation (BMZ)/International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) (1), the European Commission (3), the World Bank (1) and the consortium INIA-Uruguay/INIA-Spain/CIMMYT/PROCISUR (1). Owing to these projects it was possible to implement actions to tackle issues of strategic importance, additional resources were generated for the Program, and relationships with scientific and technological institutions were reinforced, all of which helped enhance capacity in these areas in the Southern Cone. The results were included in 19 publications and 10 institutional documents. These achievements have resulted in the IICA/PROCISUR association being considered an ideal example of a successful strategic partnership.

- **Central and Caribbean Regions (PROMECAFE):** Under the Genetic Improvement Program, three new F1 hybrids were produced that are very important for coffee-growing in the region. The effort was supported by the National Coffee Association (ANACAFE) of Guatemala, the Salvadoran Foundation for Coffee Research (PROCAFE), the Honduran Coffee Institute

(IHCAFE), the Coffee Institute (ICAFE) of Costa Rica, the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD). Ownership of this genetic material is by "*proindivisión*"; in other words, all the institutions are co-owners. Under the Research Program, notable work has been carried out on biotechnological techniques that have been disseminated and transferred to the producers. In addition, the Regional Program for the Protection of Coffee Quality Linked to its Origin has been implemented, with the strategic cooperation of the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECI) and the Regional Project on Geographical Indications for Agrifood Exports, supported by the IDB Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF). These projects strengthened the institutional framework, promoted integration with the public institutions involved in recording geographical indications and denominations of origin, and enhanced the process of improving the quality, safety and traceability of coffee in order to facilitate its access to international markets.

d. Promotion of Information Management to Support Technological Innovation Processes

Based on the development and consolidation of INFOTEC, a system to provide updated scientific and technological information, it was possible to assist the process of sharing information and the provision of communication tools. INFOTEC, an effort that also responds to the needs of FORAGRO, was developed within the framework of IICA's inter-thematic platform known as InfoAgro.net, as a system



for the management of specialized knowledge on topics related to agricultural technology. In mid-2002, the system had 1,500 “members” or registered subscribers, and the number had quadrupled by the end of 2008.

To promote increased use of information-sharing systems, IICA developed a platform for regional subsystems in InfoAgro.net. The Institute provided cooperation and training to those responsible for the regional technological information systems who decided to use this platform; the most important of which were: the SICTA Network (IICA-SDC), the PROCISUR Regional Organic Agriculture Platform, and the SICTA information system. IICA also promoted capacity-building in technical information management through different activities, including an online course on management of information on agricultural innovation and research offered in 2006 in partnership with the FAO Regional Office for LAC, with the participation of 55 professionals from 13 Latin American countries.

IICA, through INFOTEC, as the FORAGRO information system, took part in several interregional consultations organized by GFAR (2005, 2006, 2007), which discussed topics and approaches relating to the management of technical information in LAC; also, since 2007, INFOTEC has presided the Working Group of EGFAR (the electronic platform of GFAR). In addition, it consulted experts on information systems and, during several international meetings, experts on management of technological information for agriculture, and it represented the Institute in the global initiative “Coherence in Information for Agricultural Research for Development” (CIARD).

In partnership with GFAR, the Institute implemented the Information Management Project for Agricultural R&D: Indicators, Successful Cases and Sensitization Strategy for LAC,

which developed a strategy to sensitize decision-makers to the issue of information management as a crucial aspect of research and innovation, made an assessment of the management of information in the LAC agricultural research institutes, and prepared a publication that compiled successful cases of the use of ITC at the service of agricultural technological innovation in the Region.

Lastly, through various knowledge management initiatives, IICA facilitated the public’s access to information on technical cooperation in technology and innovation by including it on the IICA web site.

4. Strategic Partnerships

IICA’s achievements in the incorporation of technology and innovation in agriculture over the period 2002-2008 were possible largely due to the steps taken to establish strategic partnerships. This permitted an exchange of knowledge and experiences, promotion of sensitization and political support for science and technology, and mobilization of human capacity and financial resources for regional and hemispheric projects, the latter for a sum of almost US\$10 million during this period, including contributions by the countries and by external partners of the cooperative programs for agricultural research and technology transfer (PROCI).

The Institute established partnerships on technology and innovation with the following national, regional and international institutions, which are listed in no particular order: GFAR, FAO, SDC, CATIE, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the World



Bank, GEF, IDB, UNESCO, CIRAD, the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), the European Union (EU), the CGIAR research centers (CIAT, CIMMYT, BIOVERSITY (formerly IPGRI) and IFPRI), several INIAs in Ibero-American, AECI, FONTAGRO, INIAs-PROCI, EMBRAPA, the National Agricultural Research Institute of (INIA) of Uruguay, the Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP), USDA, the Central American Cooperative Program for the Improvement of Crops and Animals (PCCMCA), the Universidad Estatal de Campinas (UNICAMP) of Brazil, and the International Coffee Organization (ICO).

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Policies and Trade

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Policies and Trade

Antonio Donizetti¹ and Henry Benavides²

1. Introduction

As the specialized agency of the inter-American system for agriculture, agricultural policies, negotiations and trade are priority issues for IICA. Based on the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the inclusion of agriculture in the multilateral trade negotiations, IICA adapted its cooperation activities to the new situation that the negotiations have created in the agricultural sector and studied the effects on agrifood policies.

The upshot was that IICA focused its efforts on strengthening the institutional capabilities of its member countries and enhancing the expertise of professionals involved in the sector. The aim was to equip the countries to take part in the agricultural negotiations and develop policies that would help them meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities created by the agreements signed. As part of its technical cooperation activities, the Institute generated analytical documents and information networks on matters related to regional integration and negotiations; established regional consultation and coordination mechanisms; provided information and trained public officials and private sector

specialists throughout the hemisphere; and created and consolidated units specializing in trade policies and agricultural negotiations within the region's ministries of agriculture.

With the launch of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations under the umbrella of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Doha, Qatar, in 2001, known as the Doha Development Agenda, the issue of trade took on a new dimension and became a priority for IICA. The Institute thus maintained its commitment to supporting the competitive and sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu. Mindful of the fact that trade should drive development and contribute to the well-being of the population, and especially of rural sectors, IICA endeavored to ensure that the negotiations placed sufficient emphasis on the objectives and interests of countries in the region.

As a result, the Institute provided cooperation on agricultural policies and negotiations at different levels (hemispheric, regional and national), often in partnership with international agencies like the WTO, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)/Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean (INTAL), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Latin American

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Integration Association (ALADI), the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

2. The Institute's Mandate

In keeping with the mandates issued by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), and in response to the specific needs of the member countries, set forth both in the 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 medium-term plans (MTP) and the regional and national technical cooperation agendas, IICA endeavored to support the countries' efforts to enhance their capabilities for designing and analyzing agrifood policies, and promoting integration and cooperation so that agriculture and the rural sector could participate successfully in domestic and international markets (2002-2006 MTP).

The Institute also focused its efforts on collaborating with the member countries in the establishment of free trade areas and bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral trade agreements (2006-2010 MTP).

3. Results Achieved

IICA provided technical support to the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and to the private sector in Central America by means of national consultations that made it possible to better analyze and define bargaining positions during the process that led to the signing of the free trade

agreement involving the Dominican Republic, Central America and the United States (DR-CAFTA), and to analyze the results of the treaties on sensitive products within the framework of the U.S. negotiations with Peru, Ecuador and Colombia.

To enhance the expertise of professionals involved in managing and implementing free trade agreements, the Institute established and carried out a horizontal technical cooperation program entitled "Policy and Trade Node: Focal Point Mexico," under which other countries in the hemisphere benefited from Mexico's experience.

With respect to educational programs, a virtual course on agrifood policies and trade was created for professionals from the public and private sectors that made it possible to increase the number of technical personnel trained in the subject.

Furthermore, at the training workshop that the WTO organizes and finances each year through the IDB-INTAL, IICA took charge of the module on agriculture. This also allowed it to consolidate its relationship with the global organization.

Honduras, Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Barbados and Bolivia received direct technical support in the area of agrifood chains; the Chains and Dialogue for Action (CADIAC) methodology was used to improve the process of building consensus between the public and private sectors and to enable them to reach agreement on programs and policies designed to help overcome the problems that hinder competitiveness.

IICA worked with several Central American federations of producers and industrialists, such as the Central American Rice Federation (FECARROZ), the Federation of Central American and Caribbean Poultry Producers (FEDAVICAC) and the Central American Dairy Sector Federation (FECALAC),

to devise a regional strategy to tap the opportunities offered and address the threats posed to the sector by the DR-CAFTA. Several analytical documents were prepared on the trade agreement's effect on the chains of rice, chicken and beef, and the fruit sector.

The Institute also provided cooperation to FEDAVICAC for the formulation of a regional strategy for the poultry and egg sector.

IICA devised quantitative indicators for trade and agriculture that served as the basis for several institutional publications, such as "State and performance of agriculture and the rural milieu in the Americas, 2003," "More than food on the table: the true contribution of agriculture to the economy" and "Social accountability matrix for Costa Rica."

By means of the Infoagro/Trade information system, the Institute monitored agricultural issues in the multilateral and bilateral negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the WTO, keeping at least 5000 registered users abreast of developments. Weekly e-bulletins were prepared and distributed with news about the state of the negotiations.

To provide another technical cooperation tool, IICA published the digital magazine InterCambio, which disseminated information about trade, trade negotiations and agribusiness. The publication's coverage was hemispheric. Two printed issues were distributed and the rest in a digital format.

IICA's participation in the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the WTO, held in Cancun, Mexico, made it possible to strengthen

training and direct technical cooperation actions requested by public and private entities in the agrifood sector.

To support the adoption of regional positions and efforts to achieve consensus on agricultural trade and sectoral policy, the Institute facilitated the First Meeting of Agricultural Trade Policy Offices of the Central American Countries and served as the technical secretariat of discussion forums such as the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), the Informal Group of Agricultural Negotiators for the Southern Region (GINA Sur) and the Network for the Coordination of Agricultural Policies of the Southern Region (REDPA).

Furthermore, within the framework of the WTO and the FTAA³ IICA supported the meetings of the GINA, serving as the Technical Secretariat, and the Workshop-Seminar on the Current State of the WTO Agricultural Negotiations and the Positions of the United States and Europe. The Institute also took part in the meeting of experts, "Liberalization and integration of agriculture: what is expected from the FTAA and the WTO," organized by the IDB. These initiatives made it possible to create opportunities for consensus building and enhance expertise in relation to trade and agricultural policies.

4. IICA's Achievements in the Area of Policies and Trade in the Different Regions⁴

In the *Northern Region*, the Institute took part in the meetings of the North American Agrifood Market Integration Consortium

³ This trade integration initiative is currently suspended.

⁴ This section describes the main initiatives undertaken by the Regional Specialists in Policies and Trade Negotiations.



(NAAMIC), an ad hoc group comprised of the Secretariat of Agriculture of Mexico, the Economic Research Service (ERS) - representing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - and Agri-food Canada. This permitted the Institute to be involved directly in the organization of training activities on market integration and the structuring of the workshops that are held annually.

In the *Central Region*, IICA studied the cases involving the settlement of disputes and, in partnership with the IDB/INTAL and the Inter-American Commercial Arbitration Commission (CIAC), organized a regional conference on the subject for governmental technical personnel, representatives of the private sector, legal experts and members of academia. At that conference, personnel from the Secretariat of the WTO and SIECA provided an overview of developments in the region and discussed the settlement of disputes and Central American integration. To provide follow-up to the issue of dispute settlement and arbitration, two publications were produced as informational tools and handbooks for governments and members of the public. One of the publications was prepared in partnership with the International Trade Centre (ITC) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)/WTO and the CIAC.

IICA trained a critical mass of informed people who were conversant with trade and negotiating issues by means of a tool for exchanging views on the state of the negotiations. This made it possible to improve regional knowledge of those issues and create a level playing field, given the high turnover of staff, especially in the public sector.

Between 2002 and 2008, IICA carried out training activities that had a positive impact on agricultural sector institutions by making them aware of the need to devise policies that, through free trade, would help make the sector more competitive.

The inventory of the region's agricultural policies was concluded with support from the Institute. IICA also promoted the establishment of the Network of Policy Directors, which supported the formulation of the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA) as part of the integration process. Furthermore, the Institute kept decision makers informed by continuously analyzing the most relevant aspects of the trade negotiations and doing so via the CAC, whose secretariat IICA operates.

At the request of the CAC ministers, the Institute helped conduct research on the practices and restrictions used by countries in the region to manage the quotas negotiated at the WTO and in the FTAs, and the quotas designed to prevent shortages. The research led to a series of actions aimed at facilitating the transparent management of quotas in line with what had been agreed.

After the DR-CAFTA came into force, IICA organized national and regional training activities for government technical personnel and related to the bilateral agreements, integration, the Central American Customs Union and the progress of the negotiations of the WTO Doha Round. Nine workshops and seminars were held, in El Salvador, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica and Belize.

To complement the training activities, IICA assisted in the production of a manual on the free trade agreements that the Central American countries had signed up to 2004 (*Acuerdos de libre comercio de los países centroamericanos: temas de administración*). Furthermore, the Institute and the Chamber of Exporters of Costa Rica conducted an analysis of several potential export products and the conditions for exporting to the U.S. market. The results were used to identify the negotiating conditions that would best facilitate trade with that market and to propose solutions to some of the restrictions that existed at the time when the DR-CAFTA was negotiated.



IICA was involved in the entire process of formulating the PACA, as a member of the interagency group that facilitated the methodology, revised and systematized the proposals for the development of the policy and prepared the national and regional consultations, including prior induction workshops. After the PACA was approved, the Institute set up a cross-thematic group that reviewed the areas in which IICA could support the implementation of measures.

In the *Andean Region*, IICA encouraged the use of the AGRO Matrix as a conceptual framework for designing, implementing and evaluating policies for agricultural and rural development in the region. Concepts were also developed and instruments and experiences disseminated with regard to the design and implementation of State policies for agricultural and rural development. Peru's agrarian policy included guidelines and priorities that resulted from a consensus-building process that IICA supported. Moreover, in Ecuador State policy guidelines for the agricultural sector were issued as part of a process in which the Institute played an active part.

IICA carried out a comparative analysis (at the regional level and of individual countries) of the policies being used to support the agrifood and agricultural production systems of the countries of the region. This analysis followed a similar methodology to the one employed by the CAS member countries and the CAC, in order to make comparisons between regions. The Institute also designed an online system that makes it possible to update and share information about policies for the region's agrifood sector.

The agricultural negotiators, the technical personnel who provide support in the negotiations and the representatives of the region's private sector shared a great deal of information about agricultural trade negotiation experiences and strategies

at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. Informational events, talks and workshops were held on the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) and the opportunities presented and challenges posed by the agreement within the framework of the WTO. Information was prepared and disseminated about agricultural negotiating experiences with the European Union (EU) and the implications for the countries of the Andean Community.

The Institute improved the capabilities of public and private sector institutions linked to agricultural and rural development in the region for forecasting and assessing the impact of changes in the environment (price volatility, food crisis, financial crisis, climate change, etc.) on income, food security and the well-being of rural populations. Studies were prepared and disseminated on the impact of volatile prices on farm income and the food supply in reference territories of the five countries of the Andean Region. IICA also developed, validated and disseminated concepts, methodologies and procedures for assessing the state of, and trends in, food security among small-scale producers and rural inhabitants.

To enable public officials and actors in the main agricultural production chains of LAC to engage with the international agricultural negotiations, IICA collaborated in the construction of databases and general equilibrium simulation models to gauge the possible impact of the Trade Promotion Agreement with the United States. The emphasis was placed on sensitive agricultural products and support and technical assistance was provided for internships in other LAC countries to evaluate policy management and the results of trade liberalization processes. Furthermore, the Institute helped prepare and disseminate a profile, for each country in the region, of the potential trade in agrifood products between the European Union and the Andean Region, in light of the possible signing



of an economic complementation agreement. IICA also prepared and disseminated a quantitative model to evaluate offers of access to markets and to determine the opportunities and threats for LAC agricultural trade if trade agreements were to be signed with the United States, the European Union and China.

The work in the *Southern Region* focused on giving direct support to the Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay with the design and implementation of the CAS and the setting up of a network of regional mechanisms to provide technical support to the CAS.

As the Technical Secretariat of the CAS, IICA provided permanent technical and logistical support to the Council and to the specialized regional working groups of REDPA: Information System and Matrix of Agricultural Policies (GT1), Market Information Systems (GT2), Risk Management and Agricultural Insurance (GT3), Public Policies in Biotechnology (GT5), Agroenergy (GT6) and Communications (INFOCAS). Furthermore, the Institute supported the establishment of information systems and the preparation of analytical documents on the issues entrusted to these groups by the CAS; contributed to the design and management of projects to secure external financing and complementary support for the work of REDPA; cooperated in the implementation of the websites of the CAS, REDPA and GINA Sur; supported the implementation of the virtual forums of ministers, directors and technical personnel; and supported the organization of 17 ministerial meetings.

Within the framework of REDPA, the Institute established a system of regional information and analysis of agricultural policies and a market information system, with mechanisms to afford the countries direct access to information. In addition,

IICA and the IDB successfully implemented a regional project, designed by the Institute, on information systems for the management of agricultural risk, in support of the work of REDPA.

During the period under review, 20 technical documents and publications were produced on agricultural policies and international negotiations. They were disseminated at the national, regional and global levels (WTO Ministerial Conference held in Hong Kong, NAAMIC workshops on agricultural policies carried out in the United States and Canada, and various international seminars on international negotiations and agricultural policies that took place in several countries in the hemisphere).

Furthermore, 400 officials of the ministries of foreign affairs of ALADI member countries were trained in trade policy and international agricultural negotiations, with cooperation from IICA, which was responsible for the agriculture module of seven courses on trade policy organized by the WTO in conjunction with ALADI, IICA, IDB/INTAL and the Government of Spain between 2002 and 2007, in Montevideo. In addition, 500 public officials and technical personnel from the private and academic sectors of the countries of the region were trained in agricultural policies and international negotiations through 20 national and regional courses and workshops held in various LAC countries. IICA was either directly responsible for them or implemented them in partnership with universities, the private sector, ministries of agriculture in the region or other international organizations.

In the *Caribbean Region*, in collaboration with FAO and the CARICOM Secretariat, IICA promoted the creation of a policy framework for regional agriculture (Jagdeo Initiative) aimed at making the sector more competitive. Furthermore, the



Caribbean Regional Agriculture Policy Network was developed (CaRAPN), aimed at implementing training activities and sharing information about agriculture policy issues.

IICA supported the repositioning of agriculture within CARICOM, assisting in the formation of the Caribbean Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu and facilitating the national and regional dialogue. The Institute prepared an inventory of agricultural policies and supported the preparation of various technical documents that were published in "Implementing a CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy: Issues, Options and Process." IICA also supported the process of the countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) aimed at formulating a subregional agriculture policy strategy.

The Institute also contributed to the preparation of studies on the situation and outlook for Caribbean agriculture, which were used as input for institutional documents and provided up-to-date information on conditions in the region. This was done at the request of national and regional entities linked to the agrifood sector.

Concerning the development of capabilities for trade policy and negotiations, IICA assisted the Caribbean Regional

Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) in facilitating and conducting studies to lay the technical groundwork for negotiations on issues related to agriculture, agricultural health, intellectual property and food safety. As part of the work with the CRNM, the countries received assistance to participate in the FTAA negotiations, the negotiations carried out under the aegis of the WTO and in the bilateral negotiations with the European Union.

Furthermore, articles were published weekly in national newspapers under the title, "What's Happening in the Negotiations"; and national seminars were held that gave the participants a better grasp of the international context of the negotiations and its impact on the competitiveness of regional agrifood products ("Negotiating Agriculture - Understanding What's at Stake").

IICA disseminated information about the negotiations with the European Union and facilitated contacts with regional trade experts; as a result, the countries enhanced their expertise in this area. The Institute carried out training activities for public officials and private sector actors in Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and other countries of the region. The information generated at those activities was compiled and disseminated throughout the region.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Organic Agriculture

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Organic Agriculture

Pedro Cussianovich¹

1. Introduction

Following is a summary of the main outcomes of the Hemispheric Program on Organic Agriculture (PHAO), created by IICA in 2006 at the request of member countries.

Many of the actions in this Program are planned for medium- or long-term implementation, and are therefore still in the beginning stages. Given the comprehensive nature of the projects, they include activities that fall under one or more areas of work.

2. The Hemispheric Program on Organic Agriculture (PHAO)

The objective of PHAO is to help establish the necessary conditions, in terms of institutions, legal framework, policies and information, to promote the development of organic agriculture and enable small and medium-scale farmers and society as a whole to have access to its benefits in the different countries and regions of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

The Program works in the following areas:

- Formulation of national strategies, policies, plans and programs to promote the comprehensive development of organic agriculture.
- Establishment and strengthening of the institutional structures required to promote and regulate organic agriculture.
- Capacity-building and support for decision-making processes through information and knowledge management.

3. Results Achieved

a. **Formulation of National Strategies, Policies, Plans and Programs to Promote the Comprehensive Development of Organic Agriculture**

IICA provided support to Nicaragua with the design of its national strategy for the promotion of organic production. This was done in a participatory process which evolved

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into a long-term public-private partnership that provided a guiding framework for promoting organic agriculture. With the contribution of IICA, a proposed law on the promotion of organic agriculture was drafted. Thanks to IICA's cooperation, stakeholders in organic agriculture were able to raise their public profile and organize the *Movimiento Orgánico Nicaragüense (MONICA)*, which works to gain the necessary political support to promote organic farming in that country. Through its executive board, *Mesa orgánica*, MONICA carried out a number of activities in different sectors. Also, for the first time, an analysis of organic farming in Nicaragua was developed which revealed that the area devoted to organic farming in that country was four times larger than originally thought. This finding helped raise the awareness of authorities to the importance and potential of organic agriculture. As a result, organic farming is now on the agenda of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR).

In El Salvador, IICA helped with the design of the organic agriculture policy coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) of that country. This policy was based on a study conducted by IICA, entitled *Diagnóstico de la situación de la producción orgánica en El Salvador y una propuesta para su fomento* (Diagnostic study of the situation of organic production in El Salvador and proposal for its development). The study, which was carried out in 2007 in a participatory process, proposes policies and actions for promoting the development of organic agriculture.

In the framework of consultations for this study, several regional workshops were held with organic farmers which helped draw attention to their issues. Following this, the organic agriculture movement was organized, in particular through the project on development of the organic sector in El Salvador that was carried out in conjunction with the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA),

the Foundation for Cooperation and Community Development of El Salvador (CORDES) and Horizonte 3000. The Program helped set up the *Movimiento de la Agricultura Orgánica de El Salvador (MAOES)*, which plays a key role in political processes relating to organic agriculture.

IICA also provided advisory services relating to a methodology for designing a draft national strategy and plan of action for the promotion of organic and agroecological production in Paraguay. The proposal was approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), and an allocation of US\$ 100,000 was provided to set up the institutional framework needed to coordinate implementation of the strategy. The proposal was drawn up with the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, IICA and the NGO *Altervida*, which has ample experience with organic and agroecological undertakings. This is the first proposal that takes into account the needs and potentialities of both of these subsectors. In the process of drafting the proposal, two parallel consultations and analyses were conducted, one for the organic sector and the other for the agroecological sector, with a view to finding common ground in technical, production and market-related areas.

b. Establishment and Strengthening of the Institutional Structures Required for the Development of Organic Agriculture

Establishment of the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture of the Americas.

IICA helped develop proposals, set up strategic partnerships and organize meetings in connection with the creation of the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in the Americas, designed to consolidate the work of those authorities in the countries.



The aforementioned competent authorities for organic agriculture are the agencies responsible for monitoring and regulating organic farming in each country. They are the only institutional agencies that have been formally set up for organic agriculture.

The Network has operated through an information and knowledge management system designed by IICA which is comprised by different geographic nodes (Southern, Andean, Central and Caribbean). Thanks to the efforts of the competent authorities, the needs for technical assistance and cooperation in those nodes have been identified.

The competent authorities also have a private electronic portal that enables them to harmonize their positions on issues such as the formulation of a proposal for developing organic agriculture in Latin America and the harmonization of regulations governing organic agriculture in Central America and the Dominican Republic.

The Network has been meeting once a year to set up their working agenda and adopt decisions which are then followed up by IICA.

Establishment of the Inter-American Commission on Organic Agriculture (CIAO). In 2008, the Executive Committee of IICA, by resolution IICA/CE Res. 484 (XXVIII-O/08), designated the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in the Americas to serve as the Inter-American Commission on Organic Agriculture (CIAO), entrusting it with responsibility for coordinating rules and procedures for promoting and regulating the production of and trade in organic foodstuffs in the hemisphere. The Commission will act as the technical body in charge of knowledge management for organic agriculture and as a

mechanism for consultation, liaison and mutual cooperation between the competent governmental agencies that promote and regulate organic farming in each country.

The transformation of the Network into the Inter-American Commission and its subsequent official recognition by the ministries of agriculture in the hemisphere were a result of proposals put forward by IICA. This new institutional structure will enable IICA to strengthen its efforts to promote the development and regulation of organic agriculture in the region.

Following up on this transformation, the first activity undertaken by CIAO was the launch of its Web portal, which is actually a reconfiguration of the portal formerly operated by the Network. The new portal will facilitate access to information and documents on organic agriculture that are currently available at the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service for the Americas (SIDALC), administered by IICA. With the support of the Argentine Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food ((SAGPyA), work was begun on creation of the Southern Node of CIAO, which will facilitate training in organic agriculture.

Thanks to the way it is designed and structured (at the national, regional and hemispheric levels), the new electronic portal of CIAO will surely become the main source of information on organic agriculture within and outside the region. The authorities who are members of CIAO will be responsible for adding pertinent information.

Harmonization of standards for organic agriculture. Thanks to the support of IICA, a proposal on harmonization of standards for organic agriculture was drawn up and presented to the Dominican Republic and the Central American countries.



The Inter-American Commission on Organic Agriculture, for which IICA serves as the Secretariat Pro Tempore, helped with the drafting of that proposal. Since its inception, one of the main objectives of CIAO has been to harmonize the standards applied by its member countries, but this had not been possible until the Secretariat Pro Tempore facilitated the process.

c. Capacity-Building and Support for Decision-Making Processes Through Information and Knowledge Management

Methodology for formulating proposed strategies and policies for the development of organic agriculture.

Through PHAO, the Institute designed a working methodology to enable countries to formulate proposals for strategies and policies to promote the development of organic agriculture. This participatory methodology can be implemented on a short-, medium- or long-term basis. It enables stakeholders in organic agriculture to raise their public profile in the context of consultation processes, to become established as organized movements, to appropriate the proposals resulting from the process and to translate them into working agendas.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agroenergy and Biofuels

*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agroenergy and Biofuels

Frederique Abreu¹

1. Introduction

The ministerial process within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process made it possible to adopt a long-term, shared agenda for the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the Americas, namely the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action. This plan identifies twelve strategic actions that are to be implemented and complemented by IICA's hemispheric technical cooperation agenda for its member countries. Two of the actions have a bearing on the promotion of a hemispheric agroenergy and biofuels program: *a) efforts to connect the links in production chains and make the chains more competitive: generating value-added and quality in the production of the agroenergy and biofuels chain, based on local raw material; b) efforts to promote an enabling environment for competitive agriculture: promoting policies that encourage the generation of energy from alternative sources, based on agricultural and agroindustrial activities, the sustainable use of renewable natural resources, and modern biotechnology.*

The core element of IICA's agroenergy and biofuels strategy is assistance for the member countries in developing the institutional capabilities needed to support commercial agroenergy activities that would generate sustainable ways of making a living and a healthy environment, especially for rural populations.

2. Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuels Program

After the Executive Committee issued its mandate, IICA set up a technical team at Headquarters to implement the Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuels Program. This led to the establishment of biofuel projects in Jamaica, training for producers in Belize and Saint Lucia in the construction and maintenance of biodigestors, and the holding of the Third Latin American and Caribbean Biofuels Seminar, in the Dominican Republic, in collaboration with the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

The Institute signed a letter of understanding with OLADE that establishes mechanisms for technical cooperation activities involving the two organizations. One of the goals of the agreement is the design and execution of a joint regional biofuels program.

The following results were achieved in IICA's Member States:

- In *Brazil*, the Institute participated in the International Conference on Biofuels, held in Sao Paulo. This permitted IICA to discuss the possibility of joint agroenergy activities with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC).

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- In *Colombia*, IICA held a seminar entitled “Agroenergy in the Andean Region and Central America: Current Situation and Sharing of Experiences,” with support from the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Technology Research and Transfer in the Andean Region (PROCIANDINO), the Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS), the Colombian Agricultural Research Corporation (CORPOICA) and the Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project. The activity provided an opportunity to share information about the latest developments in science and technology related to agroenergy. A workshop was held to reach a consensus on the best way for the research centers to operate three knowledge-sharing networks (*Jatropha*, *higuerilla* and sweet sorghums for the production of biofuels).
- In *Canada*, the Institute made a presentation at the Canadian Young Farmers Forum on ways of ensuring that agroenergy production does not adversely affect food production. This led to a collaboration agreement with the colleges aimed at disseminating experiences related to the use of waste to generate energy and produce biodiesel from algae.
- In *Costa Rica*, IICA made several presentations and gave a lecture on the potential of agroenergy and biofuels and the opportunities they offer for stimulating agriculture and raising producers’ incomes. These presentations were targeted at administrators and technical personnel of two ministries (Science and Technology and Environment, Energy and Telecommunications); professors at the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and EARTH University; officials from the Costa Rican Oil Refinery (RECOPE); and agro-industrialists and producers. This made it possible to contribute basic elements for the formulation of scenarios

in light of the potential and options identified for the development of biofuels in that country.

- In the *Caribbean Region*, a High-level Sustainable Energy Seminar was organized under the aegis of the Caribbean Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Bioenergy Action Program (CREBAP). Organized by IICA, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Organization of American States (OAS), the activity was used to identify measures for making the energy sector more sustainable and coping with the rising cost of energy products. During the event, the organizations pledged to assist the Caribbean countries with the development of efficient, renewable energy.

The Third Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas took place in Guayaquil, Ecuador, along with the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA). The IABA adopted Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.410(XIII-O/05) of September 1, 2005, *Proposed Hemispheric Program on Agroenergy*.

3. Results Achieved

IICA provided technical assistance to the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (SAGPyA) of Argentina in the use of the biodiesel as an alternative source of agroenergy. The work included a technical mission to Brazil to learn more about, and take advantage of, Brazil’s experience in producing biodiesel and ethanol. The Institute thus helped build capacities for devising and implementing biofuel policies in Argentina. IICA also worked with the SAGPyA to conduct a study on the outlook for biofuels in Argentina and Brazil,

which further enriched the experience acquired by the two countries.

In Brazil, the Institute organized a database of information on biofuels that has been used as input for transferring knowledge related to technologies and alternative energy sources to other countries in the hemisphere.

In 2006, at the request of the countries, IICA prepared a proposal for a Hemispheric Horizontal Technical Cooperation Program on Agroenergy and Biofuels. The core elements of the program were approved at the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee.

That same year, the Institute held the First Inter-American Meeting on Biofuels, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, involving the ministers of agriculture of IICA's 34 member countries. This seminar provided an opportunity to pass on Brazil's experience in the production and use of biofuels, especially ethanol and biodiesel.

In addition, the State of Florida, the Industrial Federation of the State of Sao Paulo and the IDB established the Inter-American Ethanol Commission,² to promote the biofuel's production and consumption in the hemisphere. IICA was invited to serve as the chair of its Research Committee and to compile information about the situation and outlook for agroenergy and biofuels in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Two results of that effort were as follows:

- During the High-level Caribbean Regional Sustainable Energy Seminar, carried out jointly by IICA, the IDB and the OAS, measures were identified for increasing the

sustainability of the energy sector and coping with the rising costs of energy products.

- A wide-ranging plan of investment projects and technical assistance programs was prepared, designed to help the Central American countries achieve their renewable energy goals in a sustainable way.

IICA also promoted the use of ethanol and other biofuels by disseminating technical and scientific research efforts and raising awareness of the advantages of the production and use of biofuels.

In the regions and the Member States, the following results were achieved:

In the *Caribbean Region* in 2006, IICA supported the implementation of a study on agroenergy opportunities in the Caribbean Region entitled "Strategy for the Development of an Agricultural Sector-Energy Program for the Caribbean Region."

In *Argentina*, the Institute produced the book "La agroenergía en la matriz energética," in which the authors analyzed the global energy situation and the current state of, and outlook for, agroenergy; and put forward ideas for public policies in this area. Presentations on agroenergy were also given at events organized by the University of Buenos Aires, the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food (SAGPyA), the National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA) and the Rural Society. These events provided an opportunity to disseminate knowledge and experiences related to the subject.

² The name of this commission was changed to the International Biofuels Commission.



In Chile, IICA and the Office for Studies and Agrarian Policies (ODEPA) organized and held a workshop on agroenergy and biofuels in which representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) took part. The activities focused on the experiences of Brazil and Argentina in that area. At the International Seminar on Agroenergy and Biofuels, organized by FAO and MINAGRI, presentations were given on technical subjects. All of this helped provide substantive contributions to the Advisory Commission on Biofuels in Chile.

In *Colombia*, the Institute held the First National Workshop on Agroenergy and Biofuels, during which it presented its proposal for the creation of a hemispheric horizontal cooperation platform on these topics. It also agreed to support the Government in formulating a national plan for research on agroenergy and biofuels.

In *Nicaragua*, the Institute facilitated the national dialogue on biofuels as an alternative for the agricultural sector, and analyzed investment plans for a project involving African palm for biofuel production that would include small and medium-sized producers.

In *Honduras*, IICA cooperated in the preparation of a report on the situation of biofuels in the country, including the activities carried out under the presidential mega-project to promote the production of oil palm for biofuel.

4. Sharing of Experiences and Evaluation of Alternatives

The Institute assumed responsibility for the Secretariat of the Technical Committee of the Inter-American Ethanol

Commission, a body in charge of promoting the production of ethanol from renewable sources while respecting and conserving the environment. The Secretariat published the “Atlas of agroenergy and biofuels in the Americas: I Ethanol,” a compilation and systematization of the information available in the countries of the Americas on the production of biomass-based ethanol, including state policies, the legal and regulatory framework and the tax incentives in place to promote ethanol production.

IICA gave presentations and lectures in various forums and seminars, including: the 31st Caribbean Basin Conference; the Second International Conference on Biofuels - ENERBIO 2007; a seminar held to find solutions to energy problems in isolated rural communities in Brazil; a high-level workshop on the increased opportunities for bioenergy in the Caribbean, carried out in Guyana; and the seminar “Agriculture for Food or for Biofuels?: A dilemma that has to be resolved in Costa Rica.” Taking part in these events allowed IICA to position the Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuels Program as a platform of support for the countries of the Americas for disseminating relevant knowledge, information and experiences.

IICA’s Standing Forum on Rural Development organized a series of discussions and forums on the subject of agroenergy and family agriculture that culminated in the implementation of a seminar on agroenergy and the development of isolated rural communities, organized with Brazil’s Ministry of Mines and Energy.

The joint work of IICA and the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE) culminated in the organization of the Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Biofuels, held in El Salvador with the participation of 30 countries. During this event, the speakers provided information about the standards governing biofuel exports to the North American market



(American Section of the International Association for Testing Materials - ASTM) and the European market (European Committee for Standardization - EN standards). Countries also presented their experiences and the lessons they have learned in producing and marketing agroenergy and biofuels.

The Institute also disseminated information in the countries about crops with potential for biofuel production, lessons learned in producing and marketing biofuels and good practices in agroenergy.

Some of the most important results in the countries were as follows:

- In *Uruguay*, at a seminar organized by IICA and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), senior IFAP officials discussed ways of strengthening agroenergy and biofuels. Moreover, the Institute increased the capacity to perform prospective analyses and strategic thinking exercises by means of the fourth in the series of lectures entitled "State policies: the agricultural sector in the years ahead." The participants in the activity discussed the strategic resources needed for sustainable development, specifically knowledge management, water resources and agroenergy.
- In *Argentina*, the SAGPyA and various national institutions delved further into the study, analysis, dissemination and discussion of the critical aspects, potential, constraints and outlook for agroenergy and biofuels.
- In *Guyana*, the High-level Seminar "Expanding Bio-energy Opportunities in the Caribbean" took place at the International Conference Center. The sponsors of the event were the Government of Guyana, the IDB, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), the OAS, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and IICA. Furthermore, the Institute and the OAS, the IDB and the Government of Guyana signed a memorandum of understanding for support for the Caribbean Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Bioenergy Action Program (CREBAP).
- In *Haiti*, IICA provided the Ministry of Agriculture with information on agroenergy and assistance for the implementation of renewable energy projects, including one aimed at producing biodiesel from *Jatropha curcas*. The Institute then assisted the Ministry in formulating a national biofuels strategy.
- In *El Salvador*, IICA participated in a forum on biodiesel coordinated by the Business Development Center (CEDES); it also carried out an assessment of the country's potential for ethanol production.
- In the *Dominican Republic*, with support from IICA and financing from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (SEESCYT), the Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology and Industry (IIBI) executed the Project for Producing Biodiesel from Microalgae, which identified microalgae with high levels of fat that have since been cultivated in 400 gallon tanks using a step-wise cropping system.

5. New Challenges

One of the latest challenges identified is the promotion of second-generation biofuels made from agricultural waste from harvests and other sources of biomass with a high lignocellulose and oil content, such as bagasse and algae.

IICA, OLADE, FAO and the Ministry of Mines and Energy of Colombia, with technical support from the Ministry of Energy and Mines of Brazil, organized the Fourth Latin American and Caribbean Seminar on Biofuels, which gave the LAC countries an opportunity to engage in dialogue and discussions and share experiences with respect to second-generation biofuels.

The results of this event, held in Cali, Colombia, were as follows:

- Generation of up-to-date knowledge about the new technologies used to produce biofuels and the status of projects that use alternative biomass.
- Analysis and discussion of strategies for the implementation of programs and projects involving the use of the new technologies.
- Promotion of the generation of new projects and strategic partnerships of public sector actors, research centers and the private sector for the development of new research projects and the implementation of second-generation technologies for biofuel production.

To tackle the challenge of preparing sustainability standards for the biofuels sector, IICA accepted an invitation from the

IDB to take part in the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB), in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, where the participants discussed the “Global Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Biofuels Production. Version Zero.”

IICA made its contribution to the RSB through the application of:

- The dimensions of food security issued by FAO: availability (production), access (income and prices), utilization (nutrition) and stability (price variations).
- The key topics issued by the members of the United Nations on sustainable bioenergy: human development, agroindustrial development, job creation, health and gender, structure of agriculture, food security, government budget, trade, energy security, biodiversity and natural resources, and climate change.
- The strategies established in the Hemispheric Platform of IICA’s agroenergy and biofuels program with regard to the dissemination of knowledge and experiences in agroenergy and horizontal technical cooperation.

The dissemination of knowledge, information and experiences related to the production of agroenergy and biofuels is another of the current challenges. The Institute took part in two events held simultaneously - *First Latin American Forum on Biofuels / 13th Regional Seminar on Sugarcane* (Mostra FENASUCRO Nordeste, Pernambuco, Brazil), which permitted the sectors linked to sugarcane growing to acquire cutting-edge knowledge and tap opportunities.

With regard to cutting-edge knowledge, the Institute addressed subjects related to the following aspects:



- Agricultural area: varieties and aspects of plant health, irrigation and addition of fertilizer to irrigation water, mechanization and transportation, performance of the sector and its interactions with the environment and food production.
- Industrial area: costs, quality and certification of sugar and optimization of alcoholic fermentation.

IICA also helped obtain 40 varieties of improved cane for introduction into Costa Rica by the Directorate for Sugarcane Research and Extension (DIECA).

The following are some of the other results that the Institute achieved in its Member States:

- In *Paraguay*, the Institute participated in a workshop with the private sector and the vice ministers of agriculture, energy and industry to discuss Paraguay's proposed Agroenergy Plan. At the end of the workshop, a document

was drafted entitled "Proposed Program to Promote Biofuels in Paraguay," which will be used as the basis for an agroenergy plan.

- In *Costa Rica*, IICA gave a presentation on sustainable agriculture and the challenges and opportunities for the energy sector in the 21st century at an event organized by the University of California Berkeley and UCB-CATIE, entitled "Biofuels in Latin America: Ongoing Research, Experiences and Potential for the Region." The presentation was a contribution to the IICA/UCB 2009 Collaboration Plan and the Institute's representatives were also able to interact with LAC academics and agribusiness and environmentalist organizations (USA, Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and Costa Rica).
- The Institute contributed to the preparation of the Strategic Plan of the Directorate for Sugarcane Research and Extension (DIECA) of Costa Rica with a paper entitled "Trends in biofuel production and future scenarios: ethanol."

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
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IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agrotourism

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agrotourism

Ena C. Harvey¹

1. Introduction

Since 2002, the IICA Office in Barbados has been the focal point for the Institute's actions in agrotourism. What began as a national pilot project quickly evolved into a regional program in the Caribbean by 2005, when the OAS and other donor agencies provided US\$444,000 in funding for regional projects.

In the Latin American countries, linkages between agriculture and tourism are through rural tourism, which gives focus to rural territories and the competitiveness of sustainable livelihood chains. Within the framework of sustainable rural development, rural tourism represents a strategy for generating income and promoting food security through the provision of tourism goods and services that add value to family agriculture and rural agroindustry.

The multisectoral, cross-thematic and holistic principles embodied in agrotourism and rural tourism are consistent with the New Agriculture, and with IICA's mandate to promote sustainable agriculture, food security and rural prosperity. Agrotourism has the potential to promote equality and social inclusion; the development of sustainable territories; economic cohesion and territorial identity; synergy between government

agencies and community-based organizations; and the valuing and responsible use of natural and cultural resources.

The rapidly increasing importance of tourism in the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), combined with the growing realization that agrotourism has the potential to dynamize rural economies, led IICA to take the decision to expand the Caribbean program into a hemispheric agrotourism initiative in 2008. At its Fourteenth Regular Meeting, the IABA authorized the Executive Committee to approve resources for the execution of a Hemispheric Strategy for the Promotion of Linkages between Agriculture and Tourism across IICA's 34 Member States.

2. Objective of the Agrotourism Program

The objective of the agrotourism program is promote sustainability and competitiveness in rural communities through the production of goods and services that link agricultural activities to tourism, in ways that foster food security, environmental sustainability and the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources, validate traditional knowledge and lead to the achievement of sustainable livelihoods.

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The expected results of the hemispheric program are threefold:

- LAC countries will have an operational, hemispheric agrotourism program, aimed at improving their technical and institutional capabilities to enable them to develop their own initiatives.
- LAC countries will have access to updated information and knowledge on agrotourism, designed to strengthen their capabilities in this field.
- LAC countries will be receiving assistance with the implementation of agrotourism initiatives.

This report presents the results achieved in the area of agrotourism from 2002 to 2008.

3. Results Achieved

a. Strengthening of the Policy and Institutional Framework for Agrotourism

Public sector support for agrotourism

In the Caribbean, seven countries have established and operate formal agrotourism linkage committees (task forces) under the OAS project, and multi-stakeholder committees have developed national strategies. Representation on these committees includes ministries of agriculture, tourism, culture, community development and environment, as well as CBOs, NGOs and farmers' organizations. Across the seven countries, over 500 stakeholders were involved in workshops and discussions.

Formal commitment of support for agrotourism is evidenced by the inclusion of several strategies related to agrotourism development in sector development plans for agriculture and tourism in seven countries. The OECS Secretariat also endorsed and supports IICA's role as the lead agency for agrotourism. In Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Linkages Committee prepared a draft cabinet paper for approval of the national strategy. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Ministry of Agriculture included agrotourism strategies in its new Transformation Plan for the Sector. Similarly, in St. Kitts the national agrotourism strategy developed under the OAS project is now being used as the blueprint for agrotourism development.

At the subregional and regional levels in the Caribbean, formal presentations on IICA's agrotourism proposals were made at the following meetings:

- Joint Ministerial of the Ministers of the Alliance for Agriculture and the Rural Milieu and the Committee on Trade and Economic Development (COTED) at the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) 2007. An agrotourism strategy was presented and subsequently endorsed by the meeting.
- Caribbean Connect: A High Level Symposium on the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), where IICA presented papers on agriculture, agro-processing, tourism linkages and the Jagdeo Initiative in a panel session on production sector integration. IICA's participation resulted in the inclusion of its proposals in the Draft Strategic Plan for Regional Development, and a contract to prepare the Technical Study on a Regional Agrotourism Strategy for the Strategic Plan for Regional Development (SPRD).

- Caribbean Heads of Government Meeting, Antigua, 2008. This recommended that the CARICOM Secretariat convene an Agrotourism Task Force, which would report to the respective heads responsible for tourism (Prime Minister of Bahamas) and agriculture (President Jagdeo).

Establishment of partnerships with key tourism players

In 2004, IICA was granted affiliate membership of the Board of Directors of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), and membership of the CTO Sustainable Tourism Technical Committee. In 2005, IICA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) and also became a member of the CHA Advocacy Committee. This consolidated the Institute's relationship with the key players in the public and private sector in tourism.

IICA is a member of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association and is a founding member of the Culinary Alliance of Barbados.

Collaboration was also established with several other key partners and donor agencies in the public and private sectors. These include the OAS, FAO, CARDI, EU, UNDP, UNIFEM, CDERA, OXFAM, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Culture and Community Development and the University of the West Indies. Under the OAS project, a regional interagency forum was held and a matrix developed with commitments from specific agencies, describing available portfolios of inputs for the promotion of agrotourism.

Within the context of IICA's commitment to the implementation of a rural tourism program under the PACA with the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), IICA also initiated

collaboration with the SITCA, which is responsible for tourism promotion in the seven countries of the Central American region. IICA and the Executive Secretariat of the CAC held a day of discussions with the Secretariat for the Integration of Tourism in Central America (SITCA) to share information on work programs in rural tourism and to identify possible areas for collaboration.

Improvement in the technical and institutional capabilities of IICA offices in implementation of agrotourism initiatives

■ **Caribbean**

In 2005, in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE), IICA hosted a workshop entitled "Agriculture and Tourism - Partners in Development," in St. Kitts and Nevis. Eighty-five participants from the English, Spanish, French and Dutch-speaking Caribbean attended, representing both the public and private tourism and agriculture sectors. The workshop made it possible to share and exchange best practices and success stories in agrotourism in the Caribbean, with a view to preparing a strategy and program for the development and promotion of agrotourism in the Region, which could be jointly supported by IICA, the CTA and CDE.

From 2005-2008, under the OAS-sponsored project "Strengthening the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean Region," 28 national workshops and meetings were held across seven Caribbean countries: Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad



and Tobago. Approximately 500 stakeholders benefited from these activities. The private- and public-sector participants included farmers, agriculture and tourism administrators, chefs, alternative medicine practitioners, artists and donors, tour operators and agrotourism entrepreneurs. Partnership workshops between farmers and buyers in the tourism sector involved at least 70 individuals. At least 150 people were trained in GAPs and in meeting the quality requirements of the tourism sector. In each of seven countries, a national strategy and action plan for the development of agrotourism were developed.

The completion of the three-year OAS-funded Agrotourism Linkages Project resulted in new business for farmers and hoteliers, investment opportunities for entrepreneurs and a clear strategy for repositioning the agricultural sector in the Caribbean by maximizing the integration of indigenous food, culture, wellness and the rural environment into sustainable tourism experiences.

In addition to these regional initiatives, individual countries in the Caribbean benefited as follows:

- **Barbados:** In 2003, the Office in Barbados coordinated a national stakeholders' workshop for the BBB sheep Industry. This meeting was held in collaboration with institutional partners, MAR, BADMC, BSFI, Cousin Hills Feedlot and the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport. The industry was represented by stakeholders comprising a cross-section of key players, including farmers, feedlot operators, butchers, processors, distributors, the hotel/restaurant sector and handicraft artisans.

IICA introduced stakeholders to the concept of the Commodity Chain Analysis and Action Oriented Dialogue

(CADIAC) approach. The participants, representing the entire spectrum of the industry, engaged in discussions to identify the critical issues affecting competitiveness and identified preliminary solutions for achieving sustainability. An Interim Chain Committee was appointed to represent the forum for dialogue and action for the sustainable development of the industry, and a strategic plan was developed for the industry.

- **Bahamas:** Technical assistance was provided to the Office in The Bahamas to develop an agrotourism project for funding by the IDB. The Office presented a successful bid for an "Adopt a Farmer" project worth US\$120,000. IICA also supported the promotion of agrotourism through presentations at the Grand Bahama Outlook Seminar and at a national seminar. A diagnostic mission was also undertaken to support agrotourism linkage projects in Exuma. This resulted in the establishment of agreements between three farmers and three hotel/villa operations, the expansion of farmers' markets and a project proposal for a territorial project in Exuma.
- **Jamaica:** The execution of the OAS project by the Office in Jamaica led to its positioning as a "partner of choice" in Jamaica for agrotourism, and to a successful bid for an EU-funded agrotourism project (500,000 Euros) in the Buff Bay River Valley.
- **Haiti:** A mission to Haiti resulted in the sensitization of more than 40 stakeholders in agrotourism, and in the inclusion of recommendations on a national agrotourism strategy within the Tourism Development Strategy.
- **Dominican Republic:** Facilitation of horizontal cooperation by the Office in Barbados with the UK Travel



Foundation led to the establishment of projects in the Dominican Republic with the local IICA Office. The projects involve the production of cassava bread and pancake mix for the tourism industry in three regions.

- **St. Kitts and Nevis:** In Nevis, Mansa's Last Stop Farm was provided with upscale promotional and packaging materials while in St. Kitts, after intense discussions, farmers now have contractual arrangements with the internationally renowned Marriott Hotel and with supermarkets. The St. Kitts Farmers' Cooperative was also able to procure a walk-in chiller.
- **Trinidad and Tobago:** In Trinidad, two top farmers were invited to discuss supply contracts over dinner at the Hyatt Hotel after the national workshop on agrotourism, and this developed into a lucrative business arrangement for Lopinot producers.
- **Suriname:** The execution of the OAS project led to an improved corporate profile of IICA in Suriname and recognition of the Office as the partner of choice for agrotourism.

■ **Latin America**

Missions were undertaken to assess agrotourism opportunities in Chalatenango, El Salvador and Belen Gualcho, Honduras. Meetings were held in El Salvador with ADIZAL (Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Altos de Chalatenango) and GAT (Grupo de Acción Territorial) - 20 members, including CLUSA, youth and farmers.

b. Generation of Knowledge Products on Agrotourism

Websites, portals and databases

A Caribbean agrotourism website was launched as part of the OAS Agrotourism Project. To date, seven countries - Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname - are represented on the website. A manager has been appointed to oversee the quality and uploading of information by national representatives. An interactive mapping program (MicroMaps) allowed interactive maps to be customized with points created for agrotourism sites and attractions. IICA also secured US\$15,000 from the World Bank to support the information gathering and development of the Caribbean portal on agrotourism.

Agroturismo en MesoAmerica is also featured on the Central American Portal (www.territorioscentroamericanos.org). An e-commerce platform (www.caribbean-agro-trade-network.com) was also developed. An Agrotourism Linkages Database was established on the basis of a demand study conducted with 24 Barbados hotels, using InfoTrade, a customized software system.

Videos on agrotourism

A 30-minute video entitled "Rural Dimensions of Tourism: A Showcase of Seven Caribbean Countries" was produced from 40 hours of video footage, derived from the activities of the OAS Agrotourism Project. Copies of this video were provided to all of IICA's offices in the Caribbean. This video was also digitized into four segments and is available on the Caribbean agrotourism website (www.caribbeanagrotourism.com).



A 12-minute video (in English and Spanish) entitled “Repositioning Agriculture through Agro-Tourism Linkages” was produced and disseminated throughout the region. The video was also shown on national television in Barbados. The video was critical to the approval of the IDB-sponsored “Adopt-A-Farmer” project in The Bahamas. It has also been used as resource material in several sensitization workshops on agrotourism linkages across the Caribbean Region.

Catalogue and manuals

Two manuals were developed under the OAS Agrotourism Project, entitled Establishing a Model for Agritourism Resource Centres in the Caribbean, and Farm to Table Partnerships. A Caribbean catalogue of products was also developed and published as a resource for Caribbean Hotels in their procurement of fresh foods, processed goods, craft and floricultural products.

Baseline studies and reports on agrotourism

■ **Caribbean**

- Seven inventory reports (Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname);
- Two market-demand studies on agrotourism;
- Seven community studies (Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname);
- Reports on 15 national workshops and 5 regional agrotourism workshops;
- National Strategy for the Promotion of Agrotourism Linkages in Barbados: Agro-Trade and Culinary Dimensions (funded by Commonwealth Secretariat).

■ **Latin America**

To date, ten studies have been developed for Latin America to establish the baseline for the development of strategies and programs for the promotion of rural tourism.

- *Central American Region:* Reports from El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras and Costa Rica;
- *Andean Region:* Reports from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru; and,
- *Southern Region:* Reports from Paraguay, Argentina and Chile.

The studies cover the following topics:

- Definitions used for the concept of rural tourism
- List of institutions that provide support to rural tourism and related topics
- List of policies, laws and regulations in support of tourism and rural tourism, and list of relevant source documents
- Network of public- and private-sector actors involved in rural tourism at the level of associations, community or local government
- List of cooperatives, NGOs and CBOs linked to rural tourism and mechanisms for representation with number of affiliates (if possible, with an estimation of the percentage of representation)
- Description of the forms of financing used for rural tourism (sources and mechanisms)
- Description of the modalities of commercialization of rural tourism, list of tour operators and existing statistics

- Three successful experiences of rural tourism (one profile for each)
- Analysis of the status of rural tourism and potential for development.

c. Creation of New Investment Opportunities in Agrotourism

Table 4: Investment Profiles were Developed for New Agrotourism Projects in the Caribbean.

Country	Investment Profiles
Jamaica	Tourism tours in the Maroon Community
St. Kitts and Nevis	Cades Bay Agrotourism Development
	Strengthening the St. Kitts Farmers Cooperative's Capacity to Deliver Direct Sales to the Tourism Sector
Dominica	Developing the Macoucherie experience and Agro-Heritage Tourism Opportunities in Dominica through product upgrading and certification for the (cruise) tourism industry
	Increasing the use of appropriate greenhouse technology for AgroTrade
Barbados	Sandy Hill EcoTours, Newcastle, St. John
	Clement Rock EcoTours and Cottages, St. Joseph
Trinidad and Tobago	Adventure Eco Villas, Tobago
	Lopinot Environment Action Foundation (LEAF)
Guyana	Establishment of a viable and vibrant agrotourism enterprise in the North West District based on the support for the transformation of traditional subsistence agricultural practices to vibrant and sustainable commercial agricultural activity with an organic bias
	Establishment of a Centre for Sustainable Agriculture and Agri-tourism at the St. Stanislaus College Farm
Suriname	Establishment of a focal point to promote the development of agrotourism business in Suriname
	Maroon Heritage festival

d. Human Resource Development for Agrotourism

In 2003 and 2004, an Agro-Eco Tourism course was developed and launched in collaboration with the Universite des Antilles et de la Guyane (UAG) in Guadeloupe. This course was subsequently made available on the OAS website as a distance learning course. In 2008, it was offered to 95 participants within IICA's Offices.

In Barbados, the Hemispheric Specialist gave annual guest lectures on agrotourism linkages to 400 students (2002-2009). In addition, guest speakers gave lectures to students of the tourism program of the University of the West Indies. In 2007, five master's program students undertook internships in agrotourism with the Office in Barbados.

■ Central America

The Hemispheric Specialist made three presentations at Matias University and one at the Universidad Tecnologica, in El Salvador, on the Caribbean countries' experience with agrotourism. The presentation was delivered to a mix of 30 postgraduate tourism students and faculty members

from tourism, investment and rural development at the Universidad Tecnológica de El Salvador. The presentation formed part of the university's promotion of a new course in sustainable tourism (Gerencia para el Turismo Sostenible). For the IICA Office in El Salvador, it marked the initiation of collaboration between the two institutions.

e. Facilitation of Market Access for Producers

Farmer-hotel partnerships

Under this joint MOU, signed with the CHA in 2005, and with funding provided by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Office in Barbados mounted a "Caribbean Village," showcasing the food, herbal and craft products of 20 Caribbean companies at the CHA Industry Conference (CHIC 2006) in Miami.

Branding of signature products - Barbados

A national logo was developed for the Barbados Blackbelly Sheep in Barbados. The logo was provided to the Barbados Sheep Farmers Inc., who will receive revenues derived from the use of the logo on food and non-food products based on the signature Barbadian product.

Farmer-hotel partnerships and culinary tourism

The Office in Barbados provides a major opportunity annually for farmers to link with chefs from the top hotels through the Best Big Bajan BBQ hosted by the Culinary Alliance at the Taste of Barbados culinary festival. Seven farmers were partnered with chef teams from seven leading hotels in the competition in 2007. The Office in Barbados also hosts an annual "Plantation Breakfast" at the national agricultural Fair, Agrofest. A Caribbean breakfast, comprising the cuisine of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Barbados, is offered

to patrons of Agrofest. The breakfast has been a standard feature of the fair for the past five years.

Access to souvenir/gift markets through heritage tourism

A weeklong agricultural art and craft exhibition, entitled "Home Grown and Hand Made," was mounted at the Frank Collymore Hall. IICA hosted the exhibit in conjunction with the Arts and Crafts Councils of Barbados and the National Cultural Foundation (NCF). Commercial opportunities were provided for 60 producers of authentic craft items and souvenirs, based on agricultural and rural raw materials and themes.

f. Advocacy and Promotion of Agrotourism

National, regional and international policy makers, institutional partners and private-sector stakeholders were sensitized; and IICA's program promoted the development of agrotourism in LAC by delivering numerous guest presentations at meetings, workshops and conferences. These included:

- UN SIDS Day, New York
- IICA Day at the OAS, Washington
- CTO Inaugural Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit, Washington
- Transforming the Caribbean Economy, Lancaster House, London, UK
- Wilton Park Conference, Sussex, UK
- CHIC Conference, Puerto Rico
- Grand Bahama Outlook, Bahamas
- Sixth Meeting of OECS Ministers of Tourism, Montserrat
- Second Meeting of Ministers of Tourism of the Greater Caribbean, Colombia
- Caribbean Week of Agriculture, Jamaica and The Bahamas.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Biotechnology and Biosafety

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Biotechnology and Biosafety

Ramón Lastra¹, Bryan Muñoz² and Xinia Quirós³

1. Introduction

The countries of the Americas are faced with the challenge of fostering competitive agricultural and agribusiness development in a manner compatible with the conservation and effective management of natural resources, and with the aim of reducing hunger and poverty in both urban and rural areas. The challenge includes the search for foods that are of better quality, safer, and of higher nutritional value. The global scientific community agrees that conventional technologies alone will not be able to increase or diversify food production in the amounts and quality necessary to feed a population that will practically double over the next 50 years. This will have a direct bearing on food security, especially in the developing countries where the demand for food will be greater.

To address that challenge, the countries of the Americas will have to more actively take advantage of the latest scientific and technological breakthroughs. The fact is that agricultural performance and, consequently, the food trade, are increasingly linked to scientific advancement, such the agricultural biotechnologies which, in addition to increasing productivity, are providing alternative uses for crops, for example in the pharmaceutical industry and to produce bioenergy and biofuels.

The use of agricultural biotechnologies has led to increased agricultural productivity, reduced costs, improved preservation and management of the environment, and production of more wholesome foods. At the same time, however, the trade of goods produced with those new technologies, such as genetically modified living organisms (GMLO), has given rise to concerns related not only to production, but also to biosafety, regulation, risk analysis and management, intellectual property, and capacity development and strengthening. Therefore, scientifically based international regulatory frameworks have been developed to regulate all aspects related to agro-biotechnology. Some of the most important are the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (PCB), which went into force in September 2003; the agreements reached within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO), such as the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (AMSF) and the Agreement on Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS); standards issued under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC); and the principles and guidelines being developed through *Codex Alimentarius*.

Aware of the marked differences in levels of development in the hemisphere, the challenges and opportunities associated with the new agricultural biotechnologies, and the importance of strengthening national capabilities in this

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field, IICA's member countries identified the need to establish a hemispheric program on biotechnology to integrate efforts, tap opportunities, improve access to available technologies, seek joint solutions to common problems, and strengthen national capacities. This was set out in Resolution 386 of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (November 2003), which entrusted IICA with appointing a team of professionals, from the Member States and the Institute itself, to formulate a plan on agro-biotechnology and biosafety in the hemisphere.

As a result, the Hemispheric Program on Biotechnology and Biosafety was approved by IICA's Executive Committee in 2006. It was designed taking into account the guidelines and recommendations from the first meeting of a task force comprising experts from 14 countries of the Americas and IICA, who met in 2005 in Cancun, Mexico to discuss the topic. The group met for a second time in San Jose, Costa Rica in 2006. On that occasion the program was designed and adopted by consensus. The Biotechnology Group of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) participated in the working group. Based on the recommendations and the consultation carried out with all parties, the document of the Hemispheric Program of Biotechnology and Biosafety was prepared and now serves as the frame of reference for IICA's activities in this important area.

2. The Hemispheric Program on Biotechnology and Biosafety (HPBB)

In order to implement the HPBB, IICA conducted a consultation at the national and regional levels to determine what specific activities should be addressed. This exercise led to the creation

of so-called "multisectoral," regional, or national "groups" in biotechnology and biosafety, to which IICA provided advisory services and support.

3. Results Achieved

Development, implementation, and dissemination of regional policies and strategies. Since 2004, the Institute has promoted policy design in the field of biotechnology. To this end, regional strategies were formulated on agro-biotechnology, which were then consulted with the countries. The first consultations were carried out in 2004 in the Central and Caribbean regions, and a task force established the terms and commitments for a hemispheric plan on biotechnology. The occasion was used to strengthen national capabilities in technical aspects of biosafety, through reciprocal cooperation among countries.

In 2006, the Executive Committee of IICA approved the HPBB and agreed to prioritize it among the topics addressed by the Institute. It was also decided that the strategic regional projects would be used as starting points to initiate technical cooperation activities arrived at by consensus. The regional needs identified in 2004 were reviewed and the decision was made to extend the model to the Andean and Southern regions, as well as to Mexico, Ecuador, and Paraguay, with the aim being to ultimately cover the entire hemisphere.

In 2007 "multisectoral groups" were created and consolidated in the Andean and Central regions, and in Paraguay and Ecuador, with the purpose of monitoring the regional and national strategies. A consultation was held in the Northern Region through the North America Biotechnology Initiative (NABI) and, since a regional model of technical cooperation



already existed on this topic in the Southern Region, the CAS was requested to identify strategic projects and needs.

IICA moved forward to design strategies for the Andean, Central, Caribbean, and Southern Regions, as well as to formulate regional projects for developing and making appropriate use of biotechnology and biosafety. A determination was made of the countries' status in this area, and foundations laid to share experiences and information on advances in biosafety and the use of biotechnologies. Food security was a priority topic. In addition, a project to diversify the food supply for the vulnerable populations of the Andean Region, through the use of biotechnological tools widely applicable to foods of cultural value in that region, was designed and discussed.

During a workshop to identify needs in the Andean Region, held in 2007 in Quito, Ecuador, IICA consolidated a document that reflected the results of surveys and the needs expressed by national delegates, which served as a basis for promoting agro-biotechnology in that country. However, in 2008 Ecuador declared itself, by law, a country free of transgenic crops and seeds, adding that they could only be introduced into the country in cases of national interest. It also prohibited the use of experimental or hazardous biotechnologies.

In the Central Region, IICA promoted efforts to include the regional strategy on biotechnology in the agenda of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), and in 2007-2008, it promoted various initiatives to address needs in the areas of biotechnology and biosafety identified in the Central Region.

In Paraguay, in addition to supporting needs identification and creating a multisectoral group, IICA provided technical cooperation for defining the basic elements of a national policy

on biotechnology and biosafety and for establish policy guidelines on intellectual property.

In the Caribbean Region, IICA held workshops to determine priority needs in biotechnology and to define two strategic projects, one to improve technical and scientific capacities and the other to promote the marketing of biotechnological products.

In Mexico, IICA held a workshop in 2007 to determine the status of agro-biotechnology and biosafety in that country, and to identify strengths that could be shared with other countries of the Americas through horizontal technical cooperation.

Promotion of information on agro-biotechnology and development of technical and scientific capabilities. Biotechnology has had positive effects on some crops and in some regions. In fact, the area planted to GMLO crops grew from 30 million hectares in 1998 to 125 million hectares in 2008 in 25 countries throughout the world: a 400% increase. Of these 25 countries, nine are in Latin America and they account for almost 33% of the world area planted with GMLO; furthermore, six are mega-producers. For our region this represents greater economic and technological development.

Given the importance of agro-biotechnology on the political agendas of the region, IICA has taken on the task of promoting the dissemination of up-to-date information so that the countries can address the technological change and governments can make informed decisions based on scientific facts.

Through the HPBB, IICA has been working since 2004 to strengthen institutional capacities through forums, documents, meetings, establishment of practice communities as well as other instruments that enable it to reach the widest audience possible.

Starting in 2006, the Institute, in partnership with the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA) and with the collaboration of the World Bank's Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) and IICA's own Distance Learning Center (CECADI), offered annual video conferences on the progress of agro-biotechnology in the world. The activity reached an estimated audience of two million people in the Andean, Central, Southern, and Caribbean Regions. IICA also strengthened its Scientific Information System on Biotechnology and Biosafety (SIBB), which publishes the Infoagro/Biotechnology Newsletter,

which has 1300 subscribers in the public, private, and academic sectors. The bulletin includes information on the progress of biotechnology and on events of possible interest to subscribers.

In the field of biotechnology and biosafety, IICA has published a series of technical documents on the state and impact of biotechnology in the hemisphere, policies that have been implemented, the opportunities afforded by biotechnology, associated risks, and the implications of international agreements, among other topics (See table 5).

Table 5: Publications of the Biotechnology and Biosafety Area.

Year	Publication
2005	Alarcón, E.; Artunduaga, R. Latin America and the Caribbean. The new agro-biotechnologies: Challenges, trends and institutional considerations. <i>ComunIICA Technical Journal</i> , 1(2) April.
2006	Hemispheric Program on Biotechnology and Biosafety. San Jose, CR, IICA, Directorate of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management. ISBN13: 978-92-9039-798-4.
	Tewelde, A. Biotechnology and biosafety. Instruments for achieving agricultural competitiveness. <i>ComunIICA Technical Journal</i> , 2(7). July-December. ISSN 1992-4801.
	Jones, W; Tewelde, A. Current status of research in animal biotechnology: A global Outlook. <i>WAAP Animal Production and Animal Science Worldwide</i> . ISBN 978-90-8686034-0.
2007	IICA. Liability and Redress within the context of the Biodiversity Convention and the Biosafety Protocol. San Jose, CR. ISBN 13: 978-92-9039-800-4.
	Tewelde, A.; Chavarría, A; Rojas, E. Agrobiotechnology in the Americas: Global challenges for food production. <i>ComunIICA Technical Journal</i> , 3(1). January-April. ISSN 1992-4801.
2008	IICA. Marcos regulatorios de bioseguridad y situación de las aprobaciones comerciales de organismos genéticamente modificados en los países del Consejo Agropecuario del Sur. CAS/IICA. Santiago, IICA, CAS, REDPA. ISBN 13 978-92-9039-950-6.
	IICA. Agro-biotechnology in the Americas: economic benefits, capacity and policy options. San Jose, CR. ISBN 13: 978-92-9039-974-2 (also in Spanish).
	IICA. Agrobiotecnología en América Latina y el Caribe: estado actual de su desarrollo y adopción. San Jose, CR. ISBN 13: 978-92-9039-967-4.
2009	IICA. La agrobiotecnología en las Américas: una mirada a la situación actual y a las tendencias futuras. Eduardo J. Trigo, Federico Villareal. San Jose, CR. ISBN 13: 978-92-9248-030-1.

Source: Prepared by the author.

The use of agro-biotechnological breakthroughs in accordance with appropriate regulatory and biosafety frameworks has boosted competitiveness and therefore brought benefits to producers. However, public perception continues to challenge the development and adoption of this new technology, particularly in developing countries.

Therefore, IICA formulated a regional communications strategy for biotechnology aiming to improve the public's perception

of same, promote its development, and publicize its benefits. At the same time, it is also necessary to improve technical and scientific capabilities and have sufficient investments for doing so. To address this challenge, IICA conducted a series of activities to upgrade technical capabilities and foster better coordination among institutions working in this field in the region. The activities were geared both to decision makers and to specialists (See table 6).

Table 6: Activities to Promote Inter-Institutional Coordination, and Training Offered by the Biotechnology and Biosafety Area.

Official title of the event	Date	Place
CAC Meeting. Presentation of: a. Proposed regulatory framework for MLOs used in agriculture b. Regional strategy on agro-biotechnology c. Proposal to strengthen national biosafety capabilities	2003	Belize
Fifth International Meeting of the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO). Presentation of study on the institutional situation of biotechnologies applied to agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean	2005	Panama
Second Meeting of the Hemispheric Task Force on Biotechnology and Biosafety	2006	San Jose, Costa Rica
First Workshop to Identify Needs in Agro-biotechnology and Biosafety in the Andean Region	2006	Puembo, Ecuador

Source: Prepared by the author.

Official title of the event	Date	Place
Workshop to Create the Multisectoral Group on Biotechnology and Biosafety in Paraguay	2006	Asuncion, Paraguay
Seminar on the Impact of Intellectual Property on Agriculture	2007	Buenos Aires, Argentina
Second Meeting of the Hemispheric Task Force on Biotechnology and Biosafety	2007	San Jose, Costa Rica
Workshop to Identify Needs and Opportunities in Agro-biotechnology and Biosafety	2007	Mexico City
Course on Risk Analysis and Management of LMOs, held at the Tropical Agriculture Research and Training Center (CATIE)	2007	Turrialba, Costa Rica
Second Workshop to Identify Needs and Opportunities in Agro-biotechnology in Ecuador	2007	Quevedo, Ecuador

4. Support for Trade Negotiations Related to Agro-Biotechnology and Biosafety

The advancement of biotechnological products and GMLOs gave rise to the need for rules and standards on biosafety which, in turn, led to the signing of an international agreement known as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (PCB). Stemming from the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, it seeks to implement standardized specifications on cross-border movements and the release, deliberate or not, of GMLOs into the environment. Twenty-six countries of the hemisphere have signed the PCB.

Since 2006, IICA has held a series of technical meetings to support the countries and prepare their delegates for international negotiations on the PCB. The meetings served as a forum for the exchange of information and clarification of doubts on issues related to the Protocol, and its interference in national policy. So far, the meetings have focused on examining Articles 15, 16, 18, 23, 26, 27, 30, 33 and 35. Of these, Article 27 (civil liability and redress) has been the most controversial because of its implications for international trade and for national legal systems.

In addition, the countries of the Americas received technical support from IICA so they could be better prepared to attend the meetings of FAO's *Codex Alimentarius* Commission, which regulates the security and safety of biotechnology-derived foods. Information was exchanged on the status of

Table 7. Coordination meetings on international agreements in which the HPBB participated.

Official title of the event	Date	Place
Sixth Meeting of the Group of Special Intergovernmental Action on Food Obtained by Biotechnological Means	2006	Chiba, Japan
Hemispheric Technical Meeting on Liability and Redress	2007	Fortaleza, Brazil
Meeting of the Task Force on the Adventitious Presence of Recombinant DNA in Plant Materials. <i>Codex Alimentarius</i>	2007	Washington DC, U.S.
Third Meeting of the Hemispheric Working Group on Biotechnology and Biosafety	2007	San Jose, Costa Rica
Technical Monitoring Workshop on Liability and Redress related to Article 27 of the PCB	2007	Mexico City
Seventh Meeting of the Group of Special Intergovernmental Action on Food Obtained by Biotechnological Means	2007	Chiba, Japan
Hemispheric Technical Meeting Precedent to the Meeting of the Parties to the PCB (COP/MOP 4)	2008	Bohn, Germany
Preparatory Technical Meeting of the Task Force on Article 27 of the PCB	2008	San Jose, Costa Rica
First Meeting of the Friends of the Co-Chair to Discuss Article 27 of the PCB on Liability and Redress	2009	Mexico City
Fifth Coordination Meeting for Governments that Implement or Finance Biosafety Training Activities / Sixth Meeting of the PCB Liaison Group	2009	San Jose, Costa Rica
First Latin American Dialogue on the Compact, a Contractual Redress Mechanism	2009	San Jose, Costa Rica

Source: Prepared by the author.



biotechnological products, with a view to developing a position to be used in formulating guidelines for evaluating the safety of foods obtained from plants with recombinant DNA. IICA supported the countries in international negotiations and helped them develop strategies and policies that were aligned with the agreements and would ensure a positive influence of agriculture on rural life in the Americas.

The regional strategies on biotechnology and the development of capabilities (both human resources and infrastructure) are key

actions that need to be incorporated into national development agendas. The goal of IICA's Biotechnology and Biosafety Area for the next ten years is to become an international reference center in the topic, and to carry out activities that provide reliable, scientifically proven information so that the countries of the region can make sovereign decisions. In the current world food situation, any action to achieve food security that also promotes sustainability and the production of safe and nourishing food, such as the application of biotechnologies, it is a viable option.

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IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agricultural Insurance

*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agricultural Insurance

François Dagenais¹ y David Hatch²

1. Introduction

At its Thirteenth Regular Meeting, the Inter-American Board of Agriculture adopted resolution IICA/JIA/Res.411 (XIII-O/05), in which it: (i) asked the Director General of IICA to promote and facilitate horizontal cooperation among the Member States, and the systematization and dissemination of successful experiences in the area of agricultural insurance and guarantee funds; (ii) urged the Member States to contribute to the exchange of information and experts; and, (iii) asked the General Directorate to establish partnerships with public and private financial institutions and financial organizations, with a view to coordinating, and complementing efforts to develop and strengthen the agricultural insurance market.

IICA will also be promoting agricultural insurance as an important tool for improving competitiveness, stabilizing the income flows of producers and preventing their decapitalization, and giving small producers viable access to insurance. The aim will be to build public-private partnerships. To achieve that, the public sector will have to promote the development and consolidation of agricultural insurance systems in which the market of private insurers participates openly. In addition to regulating and controlling the system, it is recommended that

the public sector carry out, or participate in actions related to, the area of public goods - for example, to help mitigate or delete the asymmetries in information. Differentiated intervention strategies will also be implemented, tailored to the specific characteristics of each region, as well as cross-thematic action within and outside IICA.

2. Results Achieved

To implement Resolution 411 of the IABA, IICA set up an ad hoc group on agricultural insurance and prepared a document entitled "Business plan: technical cooperation in agricultural insurance," to make its actions more strategic, operational and flexible. The plan became a roadmap for managing a portfolio of 12 projects costing an estimated US\$5.5 million. This portfolio will be used to establish the first contacts with partners and/or donors. As they express interest and agree to grant resources, the negotiations will continue and more detailed projects will be designed.

The plan includes the following: (i) the frame of reference, which contains background information, an analysis of the situation in the countries of the Americas, the lessons

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learned and the recommendations on how the actors could participate in insurance systems successfully; (ii) Resolution 411 of the IABA; (iii) the business plan, which includes the conceptualization, the strategic areas of action and horizontal cooperation; and, (iv) the portfolio of hemispheric, regional and national projects.

During the years 2005-2006 and 2007, the ad hoc group on agricultural insurance operated thanks to the assistance of Institute professionals and with financial contributions from IICA's Regular Budget. It then secured special funds (approved at the Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee) to allow it to systematize and disseminate experiences related to agricultural insurance in the biennium 2008-2009.

Central Region

At the request of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and with support from the Ministry of Production of Costa Rica and IICA, a seminar was organized entitled "Agricultural Insurance and Risk Management: International Trends and Experiences." The activity was used to disseminate the experiences of Spain's National Agricultural Insurance Company, two Mexican companies (Munchener Ruck and PROAGRO), Chile's Agricultural Insurance Committee and the National Insurance Institute of Costa Rica. This event, the proceedings of which were published, was sponsored by the Republic of China, the RUTA program, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the National Insurance Institute (INS) of Costa Rica.

Caribbean Region

In Jamaica, there was a regional seminar on agricultural risk management; the Ministry of Agriculture of Haiti received support in drafting a document for an agricultural insurance and agricultural credit project; and in Trinidad and Tobago, the document "A framework for agricultural insurance" was prepared.

Southern Region

IICA collaborated with the Agricultural Policy Coordination Network (REDPA) in preparing and publishing the book "El mercado sobre seguros en el sector agropecuario del MERCOSUR Ampliado, 2003/2004." It also cooperated with the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) in the analysis of the situation regarding agricultural risk policies in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. A regional seminar on agricultural insurance was also organized in Uruguay, where the book "Seguros agropecuarios: situación y perspectivas en América Latina" was presented.

Andean Region

Two important actions were carried out in this region: the workshop "Endeavoring to Promote Agricultural Insurance" and the publication of the book "El seguro agropecuario en los países de la Región Andina."



Hemispheric Level

With regard to hemispheric outputs, IICA produced the document “Strategic business plan 2008-2010 for the development and expansion of agricultural risk management and insurance-IABA Mandate.” It also created a forum on the Intranet for dialogue and the sharing of information about agricultural insurance, which contains important, up-to-date information on documents and activities related to the issue.

3. Relations with Strategic Partners

The Institute consolidated its relations with Spanish institutions, including the Entidad Estatal de Seguros Agrarios (ENESA) of the Ministry of the Environment and Rural and Marine Resources and the company Agroseguros y Seguros MAPFRE. In Mexico, IICA established links with AGROASEMEX and a general cooperation agreement was signed with the Inter-American Federation of Insurance Companies (FIDES). The Institute also received support from the *Financiere Agricole de Quebec and Developpement International Desjardins* (DID) for the formulation of the Haiti-Fides project. It also signed a general cooperation agreement with FIDES under which three workshops on agricultural insurance have been held in the Caribbean, Central and Southern Regions, with contributions from FIDES experts.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
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IICA's Contribution to the Development of Rural Agroindustry

*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Rural Agroindustry

Hernando Riveros Serrato¹

1. Introduction

Following is a summary of the main outcomes of actions in the field of rural agroindustry during the period 2002-2008. These activities were carried out at the hemispheric, regional and national levels in fulfillment of the Medium-term Plan 2006-2010.

The program activities carried out during this period were aimed at contributing to the specific objective of the Area of Concentration on Development of competitive agribusinesses under the strategic priority on Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses. The specific objective is defined in the Medium-term Plan 2006-2010 as: "To improve the performance and competitiveness of agribusinesses by promoting capacity building, the introduction of technological innovations, business principles, the use of information systems and the development of linkages with other sectors of the economy." The activities were carried out in the framework of the technical cooperation agendas of the countries and regions concerned.

2. Results Achieved

Development and Strengthening of Business Management Skills

In Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia and Argentina, assistance was provided for small agricultural and agroindustrial undertakings to improve their business skills for the management of agribusinesses in rural associative enterprises. The emphasis was on agroproduction chains and systems, rural agroindustry, rural agribusiness clusters, associative enterprises, and knowledge of markets, post-harvest operations and quality management. In the Andean Region, capacity building was provided to 100 producer organizations in connection with management of agribusinesses of rural associative enterprises, enabling them to improve their competitiveness and their opportunities for gaining and retaining access to markets. In Mexico, capacity building was provided to microenterprises in the Selva Lacandona region in business organization and administration, technology management and marketing.

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Strengthening of Public and Private Institutions for the Development of Agribusinesses

The PRODAR community, which provides linkages for the exchange of information through the PRODARNET, AGROTUR and SIALNET mail-lists, was expanded. This community is made up of 4000 technicians, teachers, entrepreneurs, researchers and students from 20 countries of the Americas and Europe.

Information on factors of success and critical issues involved in the implementation of policies and initiatives for improving market access for small-farmer organizations was made available to technicians, researchers, civil servants, teachers and students in the Americas. They were also provided with information on management of national, regional and hemispheric projects in this area. Access to information was facilitated through the PRODAR Website, the family agroindustry page of the Territorios Centroamericanos portal and the rural agroindustry section of Infoagro.net.

In Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia and Argentina, capacity building was provided for business organizations of small-scale agricultural and agroindustrial producers on the management of rural associative enterprises, with emphasis on agroproduction chains and systems, rural agroindustry, rural agribusiness clusters, associative enterprises, and knowledge of markets, post-harvest operations and quality management.

The program also collaborated with national and local authorities in charge of geographical indications and designations of origin and with civil society organizations in different Latin American countries. The activities were designed to improve their knowledge in these areas and thus contribute to local

development by enhancing the recognition and protection of agricultural products that have special qualities associated with the territory where they are produced, to encourage the exchange of experiences, to identify institutional limitations hindering their development and to promote agreement on the implementation of a FAO-funded hemispheric project on the strengthening of public and private institutions working in those areas.

Thanks to the support of IICA, officials from government agencies, technicians from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and teachers and students in the Americas were able to participate in an international Master's degree program in rural agroindustry, territorial development and agrotourism offered by the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UNAEM), in conjunction with the Toulouse Institute for Political Studies and the GIS SIAL Network.

In addition, support was provided to enable 1000 researchers, technicians, agricultural leaders, teachers and students to participate in international events on food, rural agroindustry and territories, as well as PRODAR activities, to improve their knowledge of concepts and procedures relating to rural agroindustry, rural agribusiness clusters and localized agrifood systems (SIAL).

The SIAL-Latin America Network was developed to bring together researchers and teachers interested in SIAL issues and to serve as liaison with the SIAL-Europe Network. The program also cooperated with the Alianza Andina para el Diálogo y la Reactivación de la Agricultura, to enable it to serve as a multidisciplinary and interinstitutional space for reflection and proposals for stakeholders in the public and private sectors and in civil society who are concerned with agriculture and rural life in the Andean countries.



Stakeholders in the Central American countries were provided with more information on the situation, potentialities and limitations of rural agroindustry in Central America.

In Colombia, IICA provided support to enable officials of government entities, NGO technicians, teachers, researchers, students, agrarian leaders, producers and small entrepreneurs from more than 15 departments in the country to improve their knowledge of subjects relating to the promotion and organization of agroproduction chains, business management for rural associative enterprises and management of economic development with a territorial approach.

In Ecuador, a policy and a plan for agroindustrial development were drawn up with the participation of the ministries of agriculture and industry and representatives of the private sector.

In Mexico, support was provided for the establishment of the Alianza de Agroindustrias Rurales de la Selva Lacandona, which carried out a plan of action developed with the consensus of public and private institutions in the state of Chiapas. The Alianza has cooperated and signed agreements with the entities that provide services in support of its activities. IICA also helped the Government of the state of Chiapas and the agencies providing technical services in the Selva Lacandona region to improve their skills and information so as to enable them to fulfill requests for service from microenterprises and rural agroindustries in the zone. The program also cooperated with the Directorate of Marketing of the Field Secretariat of the state of Chiapas, which was able to improve its skills and receive technical and financial information with which to reach a decision on the creation of a quality seal to promote products from the Chiapas jungle.

In Nicaragua, the program collaborated with the Rural Development Institute in formulating a proposed policy for the development of rural agroindustry in the country. In Panama, the program collaborated with the Rural Agroindustry Network (REDAR), which operates under the leadership of private sector representatives, so as to enable it to become a decision-making tool for the Agroindustry Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture (MIDA) and a means for promoting competitiveness of micro- and small agroindustries.

In Peru, IICA collaborated in the preparing of a law that was enacted to support the development of organizations of agroproduction chains. Support was provided to encourage public and private actors to sign competitiveness agreements relating to the yellow maize-poultry-swine and cacao-chocolate chains, and strategic plans were drawn up for the implementation of those agreements. In that connection, the Alianza de Aprendizaje sobre Cadenas Productivas was consolidated as a space for public and private initiatives to meet and exchange experiences on the subject of associativity. The idea is that the Alianza should serve as the national point of reference in this area and as a policy-making mechanism. Capacity-building was provided for the teaching staff at the Antenor Borrego Private University (UPAO) in connection with courses on management of rural businesses, bearing in mind the territorial approach and the concept of agroproduction chains.

In Venezuela, the Yacambú-Quibor water system was provided with technical, economic and financial information to support decision making in connection with implementation of the project on integrated management of water resources. In addition, government officials and agricultural leaders in



Portuguesa state received training to improve their skills in connection with the development of agribusiness organizations for dairy chains and the agrotourism sector.

Strengthening of IICA's Technical Capability to Cooperate in the Development of Competitive Agribusinesses

In Colombia, the program helped strengthen the conceptual, programmatic and attitudinal skills of IICA's young professionals in Colombia in areas such as organization of agroproduction chains, development of rural agroindustries and microenterprises, promotion of agroindustrial innovation, competitiveness of rural businesses and management of horizontal cooperation. Young IICA professionals in Colombia were able to improve their knowledge of tools for developing agribusinesses, such as competitive funds, platforms for linking the supply of and the demand for technical support services to microenterprises and rural agroindustries, designations of origin, and management and performance indicators for agroproduction chains and for assessing the impact of agroindustrial innovations.

In Ecuador, courses were offered to strengthen the conceptual, programmatic and attitudinal skills of IICA's young professionals in that country in areas such as development of rural agroindustries and microenterprises, management of agribusinesses by rural associative enterprises, promotion of products with territorial identity and design of policies to support the development of agroindustry. In addition, young IICA professionals in Ecuador were able to improve their knowledge of tools for developing agribusinesses, such as competitive funds, export platforms, collective brands and designations of origin.

In Peru, courses were offered to strengthen the conceptual, programmatic and attitudinal skills of IICA's young professionals in Peru in areas such as organization of agroproduction chains, development of rural agroindustries and microenterprises and competitiveness of rural businesses in the context of a territorial approach to development. Peruvian professionals at IICA were able to improve their knowledge of means for supporting the development of agribusinesses, such as linkages between small producers and markets, promotion and organization of agroproduction chains and development of trading partnerships and designations of origin.

Accomplishments in the Provision of Technical
Cooperation Services: Implementation of the
2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans

**IICA's Contribution to
Distance Learning Education**

IICA's Contribution to Distance Learning Education

José Ramírez Alfaro¹

1. Introduction

The Distance Education Center (CECADI) is the technical unit that supports training on subjects of strategic importance to IICA as a means of facilitating technical cooperation services.

During 2002-2008, the work of CECADI focused on consolidating the management of information and knowledge as fundamental components of the Institute's technical cooperation model. The Center also supported the development and upgrading of staff technical capacities and leadership skills.

The CECADI plan of action reflects the priorities of the Institute's 2006-2010 Medium Term Plan, one of the most important of which is to develop the abilities of people in the rural milieu.

2. The New CECADI

CECADI understands that the mastery of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) is critical to the development of agriculture and the rural milieu. To this end,

it maintains regular contact with private and government institutions, producer organizations, academic institutions and, in general, professionals, technical specialists and farmers connected to the broad network of organizations working with IICA.

IICA created CECADI in consideration of progress achieved in telecommunications and the fact that distance learning, on a platform of innovative technology, is an essential tool for making agriculture and rural areas more competitive.

The work was initially done with compact discs, multimedia techniques and videoconferencing combined with classroom sessions, all oriented toward training and providing a service for the benefit of the agri-food and rural sector of the Member States.

CECADI also focused on defining and designing its own teaching and learning programs and identifying and disseminating materials and programs prepared by strategic partners that could be used to meet training needs identified in the different countries.

CECADI evaluation and planning processes culminated in a "forum for institutional consultation" with potential users. This forum provided valuable input for building a shared vision, clarifying strategic objectives and defining lines of action for the CECADI Strategic Plan.

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The resulting reorientation was based on the conviction that models for distance education and training are an extremely useful tool for teaching new skills to people in agriculture and the rural milieu. Another important consideration was the high demand for training expressed in national agendas. Moreover, information and telecommunication technologies have continued to evolve and today can be used to build virtual teaching platforms.

All these considerations were taken into account in setting CECADI strategic objectives: a) to encourage the use of telecommunications in Institute management and technical cooperation; b) to support the strategic areas of technical cooperation by developing materials and holding online training activities, and c) to help management and technical cooperation teams develop better skills in the use of multimedia and telecommunication technology and in the area of online learning.

3. Results Achieved

a. Interactive CD-ROM Courses

A most successful project under the heading of multimedia materials and online training was production of 20 interactive CD-ROM course proposals. Another was a course on environmental management with an emphasis on water resources, oriented toward designing environmental management plans for Costa Rica's ASADAs, or rural aqueduct management associations. The course proved highly valuable. It led to the preparation and later implementation of an environmental management plan for the ASADA in

Quebradilla de Cartago, which improved the environment at the source of the water and provided better protection for the headwaters of the aqueduct. The Costa Rican Water and Drainage Bureau (AyA) declared it the most significant project for water sources in the Quebradilla region.

Another important activity was the international course on developing and implementing Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans for the food industry, which provided widespread training for employees in the agri-food industry. Participants were exposed to the seven basic principles of HACCP, a system whose purpose is to maintain high standards of hygiene and food safety in order to safeguard the most critical value of the agri-food industry: the health of final consumers.

Another successful course provided training for social leaders. It was taught by teleconference in coordination with Technology Institute of Monterrey, Mexico. Most of the students were community leaders, and this was their first opportunity ever to learn about tools and methodologies reflecting the vision of a highly competitive world.

b. Online Learning

In order to facilitate processes of training and technical cooperation, IICA developed and is using the "Virtual interactive learning environment for agriculture" (e-ViDA). The purpose of this platform is to build new skills. It has been used to design and impart training courses on agriculture and other subjects and to provide a forum for interaction among professionals, Institute specialists, strategic partners and producers in the 34 member countries of IICA. With this platform, participants from all over Latin America and the

Caribbean were able to improve their skills in such subjects as resource mobilization for development, digital libraries, information strategies for development, management of electronic documents, use of good agricultural practices and management of agro-ecotourism projects.

In order to build up the methodological skills of education professionals on subjects associated with agriculture, IICA prepared a course about online learning media and the use of videoconferencing as a tool to support education. The course starts with the conceptual fundamentals of distance learning and education, then enters into practical considerations of managing the e-ViDA learning platform.

With this introduction, the Institute and its strategic partners can then offer distance education using interactive compact discs, the e-ViDA platform and videoconferencing, all based on a very high-quality technical foundation.

c. Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing was the second line of action in CECADI, especially with the global dialogues that took place in partnership with the World Bank Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), whose main objective is to disseminate know-how throughout LAC. IICA made a critical contribution to opening up discussion forums that were formerly inaccessible because of the prohibitively high cost of face-to-face activities. It addressed many issues, including competitiveness, micro-enterprise, environment, gender, SMEs and sustainable development.

One of the most interesting in the series of videoconferences was “Global Dialogues: Virtual Central America-United States Trade

Negotiating Group,” an initiative undertaken in conjunction with the El Salvador-based Center for Promotion of Micro and Small Enterprise in Central America (CENPROMYPE). These dialogues attracted participation by business people in the United States and Central America interested in discussing market liberalization and the possibility of placing products on international markets.

In 2007-2008, IICA strengthened its videoconferencing system with the use of Internet protocols. This proved highly useful for courses on such topics as animal health standards in the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). These courses received 200 participants from all the member states. On three different occasions, IICA offered a videoconference course offering the latest information on developments in agrobiotechnology. This popular course attracted the participation of subject specialists as well as communicators from all five IICA regions.

To strengthen online learning processes and the videoconferencing system, IICA focused its efforts on training the CECADI team and investing in equipment and computer programs. The Center acquired equipment and programs for video production, *Polycom* units for video and audio conferences, a videoconference bridge to improve the international connection, and licensed *Presenter Plus* programs for producing video presentations.

d. Strategic Alliances

A significant achievement was the establishment of strategic alliances with the Tropical Agricultural Research and



Higher Education Center (CATIE) to prepare multimedia courses in high-priority areas, especially agroforestry with annual and perennial crops, and an introduction to agroforestry systems.

IICA joined the American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC). One of the most important results of this network was a proposal to create an alliance that will promote the development and use of distance education in Latin America to strengthen innovation in agriculture, competitiveness and sustainable development.

IICA and the Organization of American States (OAS) created a partnership to develop, promote and offer a course on professional development in agro-ecotourism and make it available throughout LAC by means of the virtual classroom found on the Educational Portal of the Americas. One hundred professionals, technical people and entrepreneurs from

agro-ecotourism businesses in the member countries of IICA took the course.

The partnership with the Cornell University Transnational Learning Program proved extremely useful over the past two years for training IICA staff to manage video presentations with *Presenter Plus*. The Center also strengthened its videoconferencing system with the acquisition of a connection bridge that significantly improved the capacity for international connection.

During this period, both Institute personnel and strategic partners improved their skills in the use of Internet and other information technology. Ultimately, these new skills clearly benefited management and technical cooperation processes. In addition, most of the IICA offices strove to acquire new computer and telecommunications equipment to improve connectivity among the countries and with Headquarters.

Strengthening and Consolidating **Strategic Partnerships**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Strengthening and Consolidating Strategic Partnerships

Christopher Hansen¹ and David C. Hatch²

1. Introduction

As an international intergovernmental organization, and mindful of the complexity of the challenges facing its Member States, IICA is called upon to work with and maintain close collaborative links with other actors of the international community, particularly the organizations of the Inter-American System and the United Nations System, as well as universities, research centers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations of the production sector.

The importance of strengthening strategic partnerships to promote the development of agriculture and rural communities was expressed in Resolution 1728, adopted by the Thirtieth General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2000, which entrusted IICA with the task of developing and strengthening cooperation links and exchange mechanisms with other organizations and bodies of the Inter-American System, in order to plan, coordinate and execute policies and programs for the improvement of agriculture and rural life.

Given that the OAS is the leading body of the Inter-American System of which IICA forms part, a systematic effort was made to reposition the Institute to meet the challenges of

the 21st century, based on a set of guiding principles, including the promotion of a new global dimension and a new institutional image.

Although the Institute will continue to maintain its core relationships with other organizations of the Inter-American System, it must also go further in order to obtain technologies, information and experiences that will enrich the development of agriculture in its Member States. IICA must therefore strengthen its strategic partnerships with European, Asian and African institutions that provide and produce technical services for agriculture, with a view to applying these experiences and technologies to address the problems of agricultural development in the hemisphere.

Accordingly, in 2002, at the start of Dr. Chelston W.D. Brathwaite's administration, IICA established the Directorate for Strategic Partnerships (DSP), based in Washington, D.C., United States, for the purpose of promoting closer links between the Institute and other leading international organizations associated with agriculture and rural development.

This chapter aims to provide a brief outline of the Institute's efforts to advance and strengthen its strategic partnerships between 2002 and 2008, and describes the most important results achieved in this area of institutional work. In terms of

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content, this chapter synthesizes some of the main initiatives implemented with strategic partners, as well as their impact on improving agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere, and offers some thoughts regarding the challenges faced and new lines of work for enhancing these strategic alliances.

The achievements described in this report cannot be attributed solely to the actions of the DSP, which is a facilitating unit. Rather, they are the outcome of the DSP's joint efforts with the IICA Offices in the member countries, the technical directorates, the Directorate of External Financing and Investment Projects, the Office of the Deputy Director General, the Office of the Director General and the Directorate of Operations Regional and Integration. In this sense, the achievements and results should be seen as an institutional product, and not as the action of one particular body or unit. As a complement to this analysis, the results of the Institute's strategic partnerships in the national and regional spheres are discussed in greater detail in the chapters concerning the Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration and the IICA Country Offices.

2. Results Achieved with Strategic Partners in 2002-2008

With the establishment of the DSP in 2002, the Institute sought to strengthen its collaborative actions with strategic partners in order to improve the efficiency and expand the coverage of its cooperation services, thereby enhancing the impact of its contributions in the Member States.

The DSP is responsible for guiding institutional efforts to foster strategic partnerships that contribute to rural prosperity,

food security and sustainable development in the Americas. One of its main tasks is to negotiate and develop cooperative agreements and mutually beneficial partnerships with international and regional technical and financial cooperation organizations, and to help leverage financial resources for development projects and cooperation actions.

In the context of the Inter-American System, IICA participated in and promoted frequent dialogues with the Permanent Council of the OAS. It also participated in the Summit of the Americas process as an institutional partner, supporting the OAS Secretariat for the Summit Process in the implementation and follow-up of the mandates linked to agriculture and rural life. Together with other institutional partners of the Summit process, namely the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Institute for Connectivity in the Americas (ICA), the World Bank (WB), the International Organization for Migrations (IOM) and the International Labor Organization (ILO), IICA participates in the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) and supports efforts by its Member States to fulfill the commitments and mandates stemming from the agreements reached by the Heads of State and Government.

With regard to joint initiatives with organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the IDB, the Institute's new approach to strategic partnerships has produced important results. These include: the establishment of a joint distance learning network specializing in agriculture, coordinated and administered by IICA, in association with the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), and with the technological and financial



backing of the WB; the updating of the trade negotiations information and monitoring system, in its role as the Technical Secretariat of the Informal Group of Agricultural Negotiators (IGAN), and in coordination with FAO; and the implementation, in partnership with FAO, of a hemispheric initiative to promote greater use of agricultural research as a regional and global public good, in the context of the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO).

In 2002, IICA joined forces with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada (HC) to support efforts by the Caribbean countries to improve their agricultural health and public health services, specifically with regard to Codex food safety standards and food labeling regulations. Other efforts by IICA to consolidate its relations with strategic partners facilitated the following initiatives:

- A new agreement was signed with PAHO to improve public health, focusing on food safety and animal and plant health programs in the Member States.
- In the context of the RUTA IV inter-institutional cooperation program, IICA, in collaboration with the WB, the Central American ministries of agriculture, IDB, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), FAO and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID) designed and implemented projects.
- IICA continued working with IFAD on the second phase of the Program to Support Rural Micro-enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean (PROMER).
- IICA carried out studies for the Fruit Fly Free Areas Program executed in the Central American countries and also for the evaluation of the Binational Chile-Peru/IICA Program for the Control and the Eradication of the Fruit Fly, in coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

- New varieties of high-yield Arabica coffee resistant to leaf rust disease were developed in collaboration with the French Agricultural Research Center for International Development (CIRAD), in the context of the Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation (PROMECAFE) in Central America, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica.
- Together with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), IICA provided technical assistance for the design of a legal framework for organic agriculture in Belize, and for indigo and cacao production in El Salvador.

The creation of the DSP has greatly enhanced IICA's capacity to work with new strategic partners at the national, regional and hemispheric levels - including producers' associations, chambers of agriculture, foundations, private-sector groups, networks, forums, universities and other non-governmental and civil society organizations. IICA has provided assistance in areas such as training, the coordination of actions to promote dialogue, the dissemination of information, institution building and operational strengthening.

It is also important to mention IICA's work with academic organizations, such as the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA-USA), various associations of universities and higher agricultural education centers in Latin America and the Caribbean (ALEAS, AMEAS, ABEAS, ACEAS and CACHE) and several North American universities. As a result of these efforts, new opportunities for cooperation have been identified and new approaches to work have been developed.

In 2003, IICA consolidated its links with other international institutions that form part of the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development Group, such as the IDB, IFAD, World Bank,



FAO, ECLAC, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and GTZ, and participated in various initiatives with other strategic partners outside Washington D.C. In its efforts to continue expanding its strategic partnerships, the Institute supported the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), in collaboration with the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) the Grocery Manufacturers of America and other business associations. At the same time, it worked to strengthen the links between USAID and the IICA Offices in Nicaragua, Honduras and Colombia. As a result, the joint initiatives already under way were consolidated and some existing projects were extended.

In addition, IICA forged partnerships with international organizations that operate outside the sphere of agriculture. For example, an agreement was signed with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to promote rural development processes, equal rights between rural and urban areas, social peace and democracy. Together with PAHO, IICA was responsible for coordinating the Thirteenth Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and Health. With a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, IICA supported the implementation of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System of the Americas (SIDALC), comprising 265 databases (with 2,155,266 entries and more than 88,000 digital texts), which together make up Agri2000, one of the world's largest mega databases on agricultural topics.

With the consolidation of the DSP, and in line with its broader approach to strategic partnerships, the Institute saw the need to strengthen its relations with the cooperation agencies of developed countries and consolidate its presence in Europe.

As regards joint initiatives with the cooperation agencies of developed countries, including USAID, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Spanish

Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and the GTZ, the Institute identified several priority areas of work, such as improving agricultural competitiveness in its Member States and efforts to mitigate the poverty affecting large segments of the rural population. In the context of various agreements and letters of understanding IICA – in partnership with PAHO, FAO, the OAS, World Bank, IDB and CABEL, and various governmental bodies and private organizations in the United States and Canada -coordinated an effective interagency response to the threat posed by avian influenza (IA) in the Americas, with each organization working in its specific field of action in each of the priority work areas.

This joint response encompassed actions ranging from the design and implementation of a joint communications strategy on the risk of AI, to capacity building and preparing the institutional, labor and business sectors to deal with a possible outbreak of this transboundary disease. In addition, social and economic assessments were conducted to determine the potential impact of AI in various regions and countries of the hemisphere.

At the same time, IICA continued to support the Monterrey Bridge initiative, an important contact group that works to promote the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals. As a partner and active member of the Executive Committee of FONTAGRO, IICA also supported a hemispheric initiative aimed at improving the management and use of agricultural technologies considered as public goods in the regional and global spheres.

Through its Permanent Office for Europe, based in Spain, the Institute promoted several initiatives between European and Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries, including development programs for small businesses, education and

training, rural poverty reduction, as well as scientific and technological development projects for agriculture. More specifically, it forged partnerships with the European Union (EU) and with bilateral agencies of the European governments. In the area of agricultural health and food safety, the second phase of the Initiative for the Americas in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures was implemented, resulting in a nearly 100% increase in the presence of LAC countries in the World Trade Organization's Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CSPS) and a more active participation. In partnership with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), IICA designed the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) tool, which was used to assess the operations of the national veterinary, plant health and biosafety services and determine the appropriate strategies and actions required to strengthen these.

In 2004, the Coordinating Committee for Strategic Partnerships was created as an advisory body to the General Directorate, with the aim of coordinating initiatives with strategic partners within the Institute. This body was entrusted with the task of defining an institutional approach to the development of effective strategic alliances and facilitating internal coordination. Since then, the Committee meets regularly to define institutional policy on this matter.

During 2005, IICA established new partnerships with organizations such as CROPLIFE, the World Food Prize Foundation and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The following efforts also deserve mention:

- In partnership with USAID, the efficiency of the IICA Offices in some Member States was improved through new institutional arrangements to help maximize the available technical, financial and political resources.

- The joint activities carried out with the IDB were expanded.
- An agreement to establish a joint work plan was signed with the OAS Rural Development Unit.
- A cooperative agreement was negotiated with the University of Florida and the Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies/Caribbean Area (FAVA/CA).
- Strong ties were established with the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), a key body of the World Bank Group.

IICA also intensified its collaborative efforts with FAO, the OAS, PAHO, ECLAC, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (COSUDE), the OIE, the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA) initiative, the US Grain Council, the International University of Florida, the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) and *American Agri Women*.

At the same time, the Institute worked closely with the OIE and FAO to respond in a coordinated manner to countries' efforts to prevent the spread of pests and other transboundary diseases and zoonoses in the Americas and strengthen the measures for controlling and/or eradicating these. One example was the Global Frontiers – Transboundary Animal Diseases (GFTAD) initiative, which also involved other international organizations and agencies, such as the International Regional Agricultural Health Organization (OIRSA), PAHO and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

In 2006, IICA and the IDB worked together on the design and implementation of the following projects:

- Project to support the Central American Integration System (SICA);



- Project to strengthen the CAS' communications and coordination mechanisms;
- Capacity building project in the area of agricultural education for the Caribbean region;
- Project to promote the denomination of origin seal for Central American coffee through PROMECAFE; and,
- Project for the development of biodiversity resources in the Amazon.

The Institute also worked to strengthen hemispheric capacities in the area of biotechnology and biosafety and to promote the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. This effort was possible thanks to funding from the USDA and from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

In 2007, IICA strengthened and expanded its strategic partnership with Spain's central government and developed new alliances with that country's regional governments, under a new strategy for working with Spanish cooperation agencies. As a result, during 2007, project profiles were prepared on 20 topics of interest to AECID and MAPA (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain) in ten countries, working closely with local agricultural authorities. Also in Spain, MOUs were signed with the Institute of Agricultural Research and Technology of Catalunya (IRTA), a leading agricultural research and technology institution, and with the ARCA Consortium, a private company specializing in the type of aid provided by Europe. Through these agreements, IICA has strengthened its links with technical agencies in Spain and the EU.

Through its partnership with Florida International University (FIU), IICA implemented the seminar "CAFTA-RD: Opportunities for agribusiness in Florida", the first of the

Hemispheric Agribusiness Seminars (HAS). Also, in support of El Salvador's National Fruit Production Program (FRUTALES), IICA coordinated and imparted the "Markets and marketing" course of the Diploma Program in fruit growing offered by the University of El Salvador.

In 2007, the second annual "IICA Day" was celebrated at the OAS, based on the theme "Realizing the Inter-American dream of 1942". This event culminated in an OAS Permanent Council resolution recognizing IICA's contribution to agriculture and rural development in the Americas.

In the area of technology and innovation, it is important to emphasize the partnerships forged with national institutions involved in hemispheric initiatives in the context of the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), of which IICA is the Technical Secretariat, including the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) of Uruguay and the Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP). These and the rest of LAC's national research institutions also participate in cooperative agricultural research and technology transfer programs (PROCI), the Central American Agricultural Technology System (SICTA) and PROMECAFE – initiatives with which IICA is "associated" to promote reciprocal cooperation among countries in the area of research.

In partnership with the World Bank, IICA works through specific agreements to:

- Coordinate the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) for Latin America and the Caribbean.



- Assess the impact of climate change on agriculture, through the Cooperative Program for the Technological Agricultural Development of the Southern Cone (PROCISUR).
- Conserve and use native and cultivated plant genetic resources in Central America.

In general, these actions enabled IICA to share knowledge and experiences, mobilize human and financial resources (nearly US\$10,000,000 between 2002-2008, including contributions to hemispheric and regional projects and contributions from countries and external partners of the PROCIs) and secure political support for science and technology.

In 2008, the Institute facilitated the signing of an Agreement between IDB and the Caribbean Council for Higher Education (CACHE). The US\$400,000 grant from the IDB's Regional Public Goods Program (PGP) aims to enhance the capacity of the Caribbean labor force to improve the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.

Similarly, IICA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of California and has delegated a number of intentions with the College of Natural Resources to promote two-way learning, scientific exchange and innovation in the fields of sustainable agriculture, rural development, environmental management and collaborative leadership. The Institute will also be collaborating with Cornell University and the University of California at Berkeley in the preparation of case studies in agriculture, as part of the "Agriculture Bridge" Program financed by the USDA.

IICA has also signed an agreement with the World Food Program (WFP) with the aim of promoting important initiatives that will contribute to food security in the hemisphere. Particular progress was achieved in the design of the Purchase

for Progress (P4P) project to be executed in Central America. This involves using the WFP's purchasing power to acquire food produced by small-scale producers and to link them to markets, giving them the necessary security to invest in technologies and practices that will help them increase their production, productivity, quality and incomes. The goal is to create sustainable markets for small-scale farmers as a strategy for combating hunger and poverty.

In Nicaragua, IICA's partnerships with the governments of Finland, United States, Austria, Japan (Japanese Agency for International Cooperation, JICA) and Switzerland (COSUDE) resulted in actions by various inter-institutional commissions, including:

- Execution of the Productive Rural Development Program (PRORURAL), through which IICA promoted the institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) and the Rural Development Institute.
- Formulation of policies to promote the production and use of biofuels, organic livestock production and agriculture.
- Enhancing the technical capacity of the institutions responsible for agricultural health and food safety.
- Strengthening the Seed Commission.
- Implementation of the Network of Producers of Improved Bean Seed in Boaco, Cardenas and Cuatro Santos in Chinandega.

At the same time, IICA agreed to carry out a number of joint initiatives with the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes and Oxfam Quebec, which imply



challenges and new approaches in its relations with strategic partners.

To summarize, we may conclude that during the Brathwaite Administration (2002-2008), IICA achieved significant progress in consolidating its strategic partnerships:

- i. An institutional mechanism for coordinating this area of work was created and implemented.
- ii. The Institute strengthened its traditional strategic partnerships (with other organizations of the Inter-American System and the United Nations System) and forged alliances with new strategic partners (universities, cooperation agencies, private organizations).
- iii. IICA strengthened its institutional image in the different technical bodies and in regional, hemispheric and global political forums.

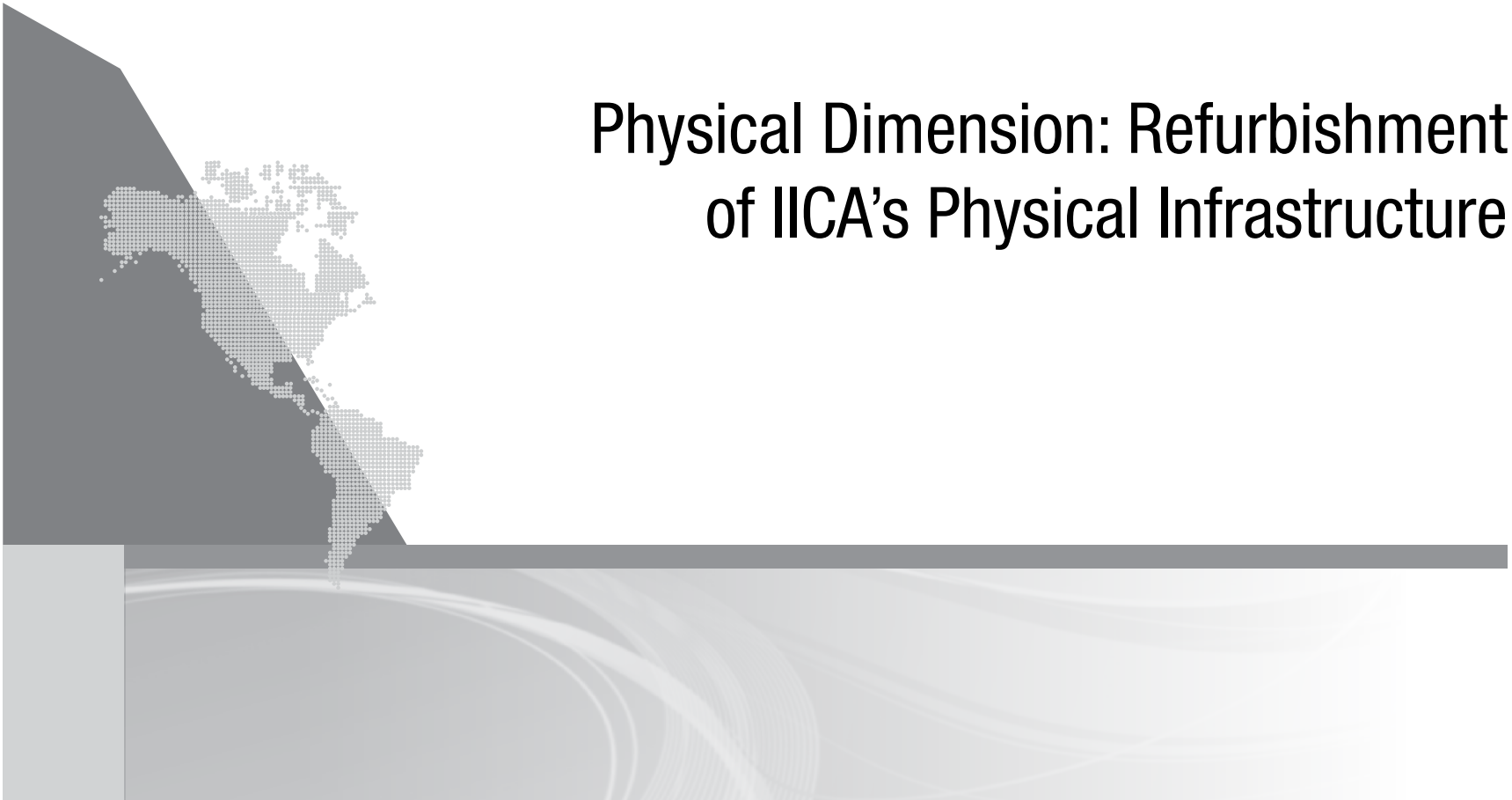
Institutional Modernization



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Institutional Modernization

Physical Dimension: Refurbishment of IICA's Physical Infrastructure



Physical Dimension: Refurbishment of IICA's Physical Infrastructure

Francisco Barea¹, Alberto Muñoz² and Wilberth Alfaro³

1. Introduction

During the period from 2002-2008, priority was given to renovating and refurbishing the Institute's physical structure in response to the new technological requirements and the institutional modernization process. This task entailed a total investment of US\$1,830,000, distributed between IICA Headquarters (US\$1,464,000) and the Offices in the Member States (US\$366,000).

This Report contains a summary of the improvements made during this period, both at IICA Headquarters and in the IICA Offices in the Member States.

2. Improvements in the Installations at IICA Headquarters

Several essential infrastructure components at IICA Headquarters were renovated or upgraded, including the electrical system, the offices, the toilet facilities, the main dining room and the roof and floors of the buildings. The main objective was to repair the natural wear-and-tear produced by

the daily use of the premises for more than 30 years, thereby substantially reducing the risks to the Institute's operations. Below is a detailed description of the work carried out and the investments made in the various refurbishing projects.

Modernization of the Electrical System

The electrical network was renovated in all the buildings, in a process consisting of four stages:

- First stage: Purchase and installation of the main switchboard, secondary switchboards, transformers and ducts for the electricity network, with an outlay of US\$146,110.
- Second stage: Purchase and installation of a 273 Kw. electric generator, battery charger and automatic transfer switch, at a cost of US\$67,253.
- Third stage: Supply and installation of materials, equipment and accessories for the renovation of the internal distribution network in the buildings, based on the switchboards installed. The feeder system for the Print Shop and the Informatics Unit was changed to provide those units with an electrical backup system. The total cost was US\$617,301.

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- Fourth stage: Purchase and installation of eight isolation transformers or harmonic filters, with their respective switchboards, and the installation of power outlet systems for sensitive computer equipment, at a total cost of US\$13,643.

Remodeling and Refurbishment of the Office Buildings and other Works

Some of the offices occupied by the Internal Audit, the Directorate of Rural Development, the Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation, the Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration, the Division of Finance, the Division of Budget and Control, the Division of Human Resources, the Official Events Unit and the IICA Office in Costa Rica were remodeled and/or refurbished. In addition, 12 anti-panic doors were installed in key places to evacuate the buildings in the event of an emergency and two signs identifying the Institute were installed. The total investment made was US\$156,567.

Refurbishment of Toilet and Washroom Facilities

The 71 toilet and washroom facilities located in the various buildings at IICA Headquarters were refurbished. The floors and ceilings were replaced, together with some of the lighting, the mirrors, shelves and sanitary fittings and accessories. The total cost was US\$150,419.

Construction of a Recreational/Fitness Center and Gymnasium

A two-storey building with an area of 204 square meters was built and basic fitness equipment was purchased to establish

a gym for use by Institute staff. The total investment was US\$75,817.

Replacement of the Roof

Some 8,650 square meters of deteriorated structural ridge beams and roof panels were replaced, at a cost of US\$63,534.

Installation of Ceramic Floors

New ceramic flooring was installed in the Americas Room, the main lobby, the corridor on the ground floor of Building A, the Office of the Director General, the office of the Internal Audit, and in the offices of the Divisions of Human Resources Development, Budget and Control, Finance and Services. The total area remodeled was 2,659 square meters at a cost of US\$52,277.

Improvements to the Staff Dining Room/ “Ranchito”

An area of 930 square meters of zinc roofing was replaced and 220 acoustic ceiling tiles were installed. In addition 54 roof beams and 22 roof flashing units were replaced. The main gutter system was changed and 11 pedestals were built at the front of the building. The cost of these improvements was US\$20,118.

The passageway leading from Building A to the dining room was also remodeled. Polycarbonate roofing sheets were used to cover the passageway and ceramic floor tiles were installed along the corridor and in the access area to the dining room; a drainage grating was built for rainwater, along with a pedestrian ramp and another for disabled people; also, the gutters on the front of the building were replaced. These improvements cost US\$11,883.

In addition, 26 of the building's internal columns were replaced and 26 bases or plates were built for those columns; steel braces and plates were placed to ensure the proper transmission of loads between the different parts and to reinforce the joints. The cost of these improvements was US\$11,366.

Refurbishing the Inner Courtyard of Building A

The garden of the inner courtyard of Building A was remodeled. This involved removing 70 cubic meters of concrete, changing the underground electric cable system, replacing potable water pipes, sewage pipes and rainwater drains, as well as planting grass and ornamental plants in an area of 550 square meters. The cost of this work was US\$28,323.

Installation of a Historical Gallery

The Historical Gallery of the Institute was installed in the main lobby at a cost of US\$10,230.

Construction of an Enclosure for the Air Conditioning Equipment

An enclosure measuring 36 square meters was built to protect the air conditioning equipment in the Canada and United States Rooms, at a cost of US\$9,688.

Retrofitting the Drinking Water Plant

The Institute purchased and installed an activated carbon filter, two washable and reusable filters/cartridges and a pressure gauge to remove impurities from the potable water system at IICA Headquarters. The submergible pump of the drinking water distribution system was also replaced. The total investment was US\$8,916.

Construction of a Storeroom and Installation of a Water Storage Tank

A storeroom with an area of 50 square meters was built and a water storage tank with a 2,500 liter-capacity was installed at a cost of US\$4,769.

Construction of a Parking Ramp

A cement ramp measuring 6 meters wide by 15 meters long was built to provide access to the football pitch and for use as a parking area when necessary, at a cost of US\$4,417.

Public Address P/A System

A "P/A system" that covers all the buildings was installed at a cost of US\$3,271.

Construction of a Metal Grating

A metal grating was installed at one of the main gates to the Institute to facilitate access by heavy vehicles that deliver merchandise and ensure better drainage of rainwater. Its cost was US\$3,243.

Painting of the Premises

An area of 14,685 square meters of internal and external walls of the IICA buildings were repainted at a cost of US\$2,844.

Construction of a Mezzanine for Maintenance

A storage area measuring 12 square meters was built for storing implements, tools and items used daily by the Maintenance Unit. The total investment was US\$1,980.

3. Improvements in the IICA Offices in the Member States

During the period covered by this Report, the Institute carried out various refurbishment projects and repairs to the premises of 14 Offices in the Member States, in the Andean (2), Caribbean (7), Central (4) and Southern (1) regions, with a total investment of US\$366,350.

Andean Region

In Bolivia an access path to the IICA Office was built and the walls were painted at a cost of US\$1,000. In Colombia, the Office floors were replaced with 600 square meters of laminate flooring and 253 square meters of wood flooring, at a total cost of US\$48,500.

Caribbean Region

In the Bahamas, the information center of the IICA Office was remodeled and a conference room was built, with an investment of US\$12,800. In Guyana the damage caused to the Office by a hurricane was repaired, at a cost of US\$22,000. In Haiti, the Office dining room and cafeteria were remodeled and five air-conditioning units were installed, at a total cost of US\$9,200.

In Jamaica, the Office purchased an electrical generator and the damage caused by a hurricane - both in the parking area and inside the building - was repaired, at a cost of US\$52,700.

In the Offices of Antigua and Barbuda and of St. Kitts and Nevis, the floors were changed, the electrical system was repaired, the interior was repainted and cubicles were built for the staff. In the Grenada Office the damage caused by Hurricane Ivan was repaired. The total sum invested was US\$24,500.

In Suriname, the wooden ceilings and inner walls of the Office were replaced at a total cost of US\$29,000. Finally, in Trinidad & Tobago the interior of the Office building was refurbished, with an investment of US\$40,000.

Central Region

In Belize, the interior of the Office was painted at a cost of US\$1,900. In Costa Rica the cubicles assigned to the secretarial staff were refurbished and 220 square meters of flooring was replaced at a cost of US\$28,950. In the Office in El Salvador repairs were made on the ground floor of the building and 253 square meters of the second storey were refurbished, with an investment of US\$43,000. Finally, the Office in Honduras moved to new premises and some remodeling work was carried out to adapt it to the needs of the staff. The work cost US\$6,000.

Southern Region

In Chile, some modifications and repairs were made to the inside of the Office building and a 150 square-meter extension was built on the second storey. The cost of this work was US\$46,800.

Institutional Modernization

Human Dimension: New Human Resources Policies



Human Dimension: New Human Resources Policies

Lynda Landry¹

1. Introduction

In 2002, IICA initiated a process of reform designed to modernize the institution to enable it to serve its Members States better, focusing on the place of technical excellence and leadership in the agricultural community of the Americas. The reform process was intended to promote better human resources management. The organization is convinced that “the success of IICA as an institution will depend on the quality and dedication of its leadership and the level of commitment, application and competence of its staff.” This section describes what was accomplished in terms of human resources management and presents the results achieved by IICA in the area of human resources (HR).

In order to implement its vision, the Institute first needed to create the appropriate structural mechanism that would support its efforts. To that end, a new Human Resources Development Division (HRMD) was created, incorporating a Staff Orientation and Development Unit, new staff and the distribution of work by geographical, rather than technical, area. This new structure allowed a better understanding of the needs of Offices in each region and made it possible to provide better-integrated, personalized HR services that placed emphasis on the importance of staff development.


2. An Improved Human Resource Management Framework

Key changes were introduced to the Institute’s Staff Rules to allow for the revamping and/or creation of new HR programs. Over time, the Executive Committee approved rule changes aimed at:

- simplifying human resources consultation mechanisms as well as the annual declaration process for International Professional Personnel (IPP),
- laying the foundations of the new Performance Evaluation System as well as the basis for the Institute’s Professional Development Program,
- introducing the possibility of renewing the classification and compensation system for all categories of personnel, and,
- modernizing the management of the Institute’s Associate Personnel Category.

A Code of Ethics was developed, taking into account the Institute’s standards as set out in the Rules of Procedure of

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the General Directorate, the Staff Rules and the Financial Rules. The purpose of the Code was to build an ethical system that recognized the value of the individual and diversity, to foster an environment characterized by high moral integrity that would enable staff members to realize the full range of their potential. The Code promotes the Institute values of impartiality, integrity, professionalism, flexibility, discretion, loyalty, prudence and responsibility. In addition, competency-based management was introduced and core competencies were defined for all employees. Both of these components served as the basis for new HR policies and programs.

Modern policies on employee orientation, learning, internships, professional development, individual performance evaluation, early retirement, early repatriation for IPPs in case of retirement and acting status for Representative positions were introduced to regulate the implementation of programs and/or situations. Three Executive Orders were also published - on consultants, the hiring of personnel with external resources and associate personnel - to normalize the handling of these issues.

Some International Professional Personnel allowances were modernized in terms of the calculation methodology and level, bringing them closer to the United Nations Benefits System. These included the Post Adjustment, Housing Allowance and Hardship Post benefits.

IICA developed a more expedite accreditation process for new IPPs in Costa Rica, as well as a Guide on Privileges and Immunities for these employees.

3. Organizational Analysis to Improve Classification and Compensation

In line with the Institute's rules, IICA renewed the classification and compensation system. This was done in order to enhance the capacity for change and to adapt more rapidly to fluctuating labor markets. The criteria and methodology of the classification process were redesigned to ensure clearer relativity between the level of positions and the level of authority and responsibility assigned to the various positions. Classification factors were also modified to de-emphasize seniority and reinforce experience as a criterion for defining level, as is the case in most organizations today. A proposed points-based classification system was developed and is available for implementation. Over 70% of the Institute's positions have job descriptions that have been updated within the past two years.

In 2002, a process was implemented to streamline and reduce the roster of Local Personnel at Headquarters. The number of International Professional Personnel was reduced 12%, from 104 in 2001 to 92 in 2009. "D" positions represented 30% of the category in 2001 but now account for only 24% (down from 31 positions to 22 in 2009).

To support the strengthening of the Institute's technical capacity, two new databases on technical job profiles and consultants were developed. The database on consultants makes it possible to register and evaluate all consultants used at Headquarters and in country Offices. The database on technical job profiles does not only include the job descriptions and competency profiles required for the positions, but also the profile of incumbents, thus allowing for better recruitment processes and easy training gap identification.

A clear compensation philosophy was developed for the Institute after a thorough evaluation of both internal and external factors. Internally, importance is placed on equity in relation to others in similar jobs. Externally, relevant international and country labor markets are monitored to determine market movement, keeping in mind its effect on employees and their respective pay.

Based on this compensation philosophy, a methodology was developed and implemented for analyzing the salary scales of local employees. More than 166 salary scale analyses have been carried out over the past eight years. Through the years, the methodology was refined.

In 2007, a new policy was instituted: salaries in all country Offices and at Headquarters would be reviewed at least once a year to determine their validity. It was also decided that the analysis would be integral, reviewing all salary scales at the same time. These mechanisms have proven to be very effective in insuring financial management prudence and better equity in the decision-making process.

In 2008, because of the food crisis, a one-time food security bonus scheme was designed and given to IICA's lowest-paid employees. This one-time bonus, equivalent to the minimum monthly salary in the country where the employee was based, was provided to all IICA employees earning less than twice the respective minimum monthly salary.

Major office restructuring exercises, including process redesign, structure analysis, classification and compensation review and downsizing, were carried out in nine key Offices. The process undertaken in the Brazil Office served as a model and was used to identify best administrative practices to be used throughout the Institute.

4. Strengthening of the Recruitment Process

Thirteen national professionals were promoted to international positions, representing 15% of the group of international professionals. The number of women international professionals, including those in management positions, also increased by 8%. They now account for 18% of all International Professional Personnel. The average age of those who left the Institute during the period was 57 and the average age of those recruited to replace them was 50.

Given the large number of IPP staff members who would be retiring during the Director General's second mandate, a succession plan was developed for the following five years and used regularly by the Director General for decision making. This plan was eventually converted into a Human Resource Plan, capturing all forecasted IPP movements.

The recruitment processes for both international professionals and local employees were strengthened based on principles of transparency, equity, professionalism and collegial decision making. The Institute has modified the profiles for key positions using a generic work description approach, particularly for the position of Representatives, administrators or country Office managers and regional experts. Competencies such as teamwork, service orientation, leadership and communication skills combined with technical expertise are now part of the renewed profile of the ideal candidate suitable for the Institute.

In addition, the following measures were adopted for members of the International Professional Personnel:



- Other sources of recruitment advertising, such as the Economist, were sought and used in the case of Representative positions, to create an inventory of potential candidates.
- For Regional Specialist positions and other IPP positions, the selection process was systematized. Three phases of review of the candidates' competencies are integrated into the process prior to final selection by the Director General.
- An Information Kit on the terms and conditions of employment as a member of the Institute's IPP staff was prepared and is provided to successful candidates to serve as the basis for negotiation for their entry in the organization.

For local personnel, the measures included:

- The introduction of modern recruitment practices; interviews based on competencies, redesign of interview formats, redesign of application form, increased involvement of the respective Unit or Office in the selection, and diversification of publication techniques, such as Employment Fair.
- For local professionals in the Offices, the introduction of selection committees involving Offices and Headquarters, operational and technical components of the organization.

The process of renewing IPP contracts was also systematized, in terms of information provided, recommendation of supervisor and correct timing.

A policy on internship was designed and every year around eight to ten students receive an internship at Headquarters. Several internships also took place in our Offices, including in our Miami Office.

5. Performance Evaluation and Excellence as an Institutional Culture

A single Individual Performance Evaluation System (IPES), applicable to all employees regardless of category, was developed and implemented in 2003. The system has two major objectives: individual accountability for results contributing to the execution of the Institute's mandate, and the personal development of employees of the organization. The IPES includes the evaluation of results achieved versus planned results (Individual Work Plan or IWP), level of core competencies demonstrated, qualitative assessment and rating, learning needs and evaluation of potential. Since the system's implementation, 100% of appraisals have been received every year.

In 2004, after a year of trials, the IWP was replaced by a concept entitled the Individual Contribution Plan (ICP), linking directly the individual results of employees with the Annual Action Plan of the Office/Unit. The preparation of the Individual Contribution Plan has become the last phase of the Institute's annual planning process. Because the ICP is the basis for the Individual Performance Evaluation, it allows for a complete alignment of the IPES with the Institute's planning system. Both the ICP and the IPES were computerized

and are now modules of the Institute's Online Integrated Management System.

In order to promote financial prudence, and with the changes to the Staff Rules approved by the Executive Committee, a bonus scheme to recognize performance was introduced to replace the biannual step increase as an integral part of the Individual Performance Evaluation System.

"One of the basic pillars of the new IICA model is the search for excellence at all levels. IICA's model takes into account the fact that recognition is an instrument to strengthen motivation and contribute to attaining the Institute's strategic goals. In this regard, the Institute has created the Director General's Award for Excellence Program aimed at developing an internal culture of recognition of creativity, outstanding performance, leadership and teamwork."

The Director General's Awards for Excellence Program was created in 2003 and 66 awards have been given over the last five years. More than 276 staff members from Offices and Headquarters have received this recognition, including 46 individual awards and the members of 27 teams that were recognized (230 employees). The experience acquired with the program between 2003 and 2008 was invaluable and many lessons were learned. As a result, adjustments were made and the composition of the program is now as described below.

The program includes two categories of awards:

- The Director General's Award for Excellence for Individual Contributions,² and the
- Director General's Award for Excellence in Teamwork³

In the category of the Director General's Award for Excellence for Individual Contributions, recipients also receive up to US\$1,000, to be used to fund participation in a training and/or professional development activity linked to the recipient's duties and responsibilities at the Institute, or to purchase equipment to facilitate performance. In the case of the category of General Services Personnel, the employee receives US\$1,000 in cash.

In the category of the Director General's Award for Excellence in Teamwork, each winning team receives up to US\$1,000, to be used to organize a recognition ceremony or event.

The Selection Committee is made of professionals of recognized experience from outside the Institute. The committee makes recommendations to the Director General, who makes the ultimate decision on who will receive the awards. Each year, winners are formally recognized during a special ceremony held during the annual meeting of all Representatives and international specialists at Headquarters in San Jose,

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- 2 This award is granted to individual staff members in any category of employees in the IICA Offices in the countries and at Headquarters. The staff member must have demonstrated qualities of leadership, initiative, teamwork and creativity, and exemplified the six values promoted within the Institute: flexibility, accountability, commitment, efficiency, tolerance and service orientation. The staff members nominated must also have received an overall performance rating of "Superior" or "Exceptional."
 - 3 This prize is awarded in recognition of outstanding work by a team of employees, in which each member has received an overall rating of at least "fully satisfactory" in his/her performance evaluation and who as a group has made a significant contribution to the Institute.

Costa Rica. A video of the ceremony is produced and a bulletin on the year's winners is published and distributed throughout the Institute.

6. Building Stronger Competencies: Training and Development

The Institute is a knowledge-based organization, for which the key factor is its own human resources. IICA has been very clear about the importance of continuous training for its employees.

In 2002, an Orientation Program was created to facilitate the integration of new employees. Specialized programs were developed, particularly for new Representatives, Office managers and regional and other specialists. In 2007, a committee including representatives of all components of the organization was created to review the program based on lessons learned and to derive the policy framework required. More than 275 staff members have taken part in the Orientation Program since 2002. The orientation not only includes elements associated with the work the specific employee will perform but also includes basic information about the Institute, its mandate, goals and operations, as well as human and financial management parameters.

The orientation for new IPPs also includes assistance to facilitate their personal integration, with their family, into the country where they are assigned to work. This support can cover aspects such as information about the country and living

in the given city, selection of living space, purchasing of a car, transport of pets, etc. Orientation sessions were also offered in seven country Offices following restructuring exercises. At the beginning of the Director General's second term of office, sessions on the new Medium Term Plan were offered to employees at Headquarters and in the Offices with presentation material, and the staff were encouraged to provide the same type of sessions in their respective countries.

The Institute has always been committed to providing financial support to employees who are interested in furthering their education. During the Brathwaite Administration, more than 437 requests for financial support were authorized and a new database developed to record and facilitate the management and monitoring of those requests.

Learning activities and initiatives focused on four types of requirements:

Leadership and Management Skills: in collaboration with INCAE Business School, two seminars on leadership, change management and institutional transformation were offered to 97 IICA executives and specialists. The subsequent evaluation suggested that 97% of the participants believed the program was useful to them. Stephen Covey presented sessions on leadership for new leaders, the seven habits of highly effective people and trust-based leadership to local employees. Twenty-six employees took part in a session on horizontal leadership.

With the Institute's collaboration, INCAE prepared a case study documenting the process of institutional transformation undertaken during this administration. The case study will be used in courses offered by INCAE. This unit provided support to the Center for Leadership in Agriculture for the definition of participant selection criteria, exercise facilitation

and development of the forum evaluation tool, as part of the development and implementation of the Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture.

Skills Enhancement to Increase Productivity/Personal Development: workshops were held on client service orientation, the use of security equipment, software, Internet use and telephone answering techniques and etiquette. In collaboration with ASEIICA, sessions on personnel finance management, stress management and self-esteem were very well received, particularly by General Services employees.

Language Training: a new language enhancement program was developed to improve employees' language capabilities, particularly English. The program takes into account position requirements and encourages employees to acquire other language skills for career purposes. Formal English language courses have been provided to over 100 employees at Headquarters and in the Costa Rica Office since 2007. Since the program's inception, 25 employees have received the First Certificate in English from the University of Cambridge. At least 12 of IICA's Offices also offer language-training courses.

Professional Development Program: based on the growing demand from Member States for the Institute's technical expertise, a Professional Development Program was launched in 2008 to serve as a catalyst for the upgrading and enhancement of the technical and leadership skills of professional staff, using both short-term professional development activities⁴ and sabbatical leave.⁵

7. Benefiting our Employees: IICA Initiatives

IICA was convinced that, if the blueprint for the reform of the Institute was to be successful, it was important to create a caring environment that promotes the professional growth of the staff.

Therefore, the following programs or actions were implemented to promote such an environment:

Emergency Assistance Program Fund: emergencies are unforeseeable and it is therefore imperative that we have the means to counter their effects. Mindful of this situation, IICA created the Emergency Assistance Program in February 2005. Since that time, 30 cases have been reviewed and 23 applicants have received financial assistance, either to cover medical expenses or to reconstruct their houses (the total amount involved is US\$40,479). Under this program, which has proven to be effective and efficient, financial assistance was provided to staff members from various countries of the hemisphere - Costa Rica, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Chile, Dominican Republic, Argentina, Peru and Nicaragua.

Revamping of the Insurance Program: in collaboration with the Institute's broker (Rutherford Inc.) and insurance company (AIG), IICA's insurance policy was updated and modernized. Benefits associated with preventive health care were increased - e.g., the reimbursement of annual breast and prostate exams

4 "Short-term professional development activities" means any training or developmental activity of less than one month's duration. They could involve technical seminars and workshops, long-distance training, courses offered by key recognized institutions, etc.

5 Sabbatical leave, with an allowance or without pay, may be granted for a period of up to six months. The Institute can provide financial support up to the equivalent of 50% of the base salary when the purpose of the leave is of clear benefit to the Institute. In the case of short-term professional development activities, once approved by the appropriate authorities, the Institute will assume the financial cost of the activity.



for staff members aged 50 and over. Personalized membership cards were distributed among international personnel and those employees now have access to the AIG Medical World Network. The Institute also recognized the special situation of employees working in the United States, who now receive distinct benefits. Automobile premiums for both the official fleet and employees' vehicles were reduced by more than 50% and 42%, respectively.

The internal administration of the program was strengthened through aspects such as the elimination of arrears; the payment of premiums from ex-employees, moving from a negative balance of US\$200,000 to a positive balance; the reduction of claims processing time from a week to three days; the computerization of insurance forms for easier access by members; and the production of information documentation for present and new members.

Occupational Health and Safety Program: the productivity of employees increases significantly if they live a healthy lifestyle and work in an environment where they feel safe. The Institute is therefore committed to promoting such a lifestyle for its employees and to creating a secure work environment.

Starting in 2005, major efforts were undertaken via the committees on occupational health and safety. Volunteers were sought at Headquarters and in the Offices to create the appropriate network to implement actions. These volunteers were trained in first aid and in the use of safety equipment to respond to emergencies. An Emergency Plan was designed for Headquarters and guidelines on how to deal with emergencies were produced and distributed to all Offices and the Units at Headquarters.

Since 2006, annual health campaigns involving Headquarters and the Offices have been launched, addressing subjects like smoking, breast cancer, ergonomics and audio and visual risks. The third week of November was declared Occupational Health Week. Every year, an emergency evacuation simulation is carried out at Headquarters with the assistance of local authorities.

Major renovations were made to Headquarters facilities to improve the physical environment, including the construction of a gymnasium. Courses and individual programs are offered at midday and after working hours. At least 35 employees use these facilities on a daily basis.

Communication improved by means of monthly meetings: to improve the possibility of dialogue between the Administration and staff, early on in the first Administration, regular monthly meetings were instituted involving the staff of Headquarters and the Office in Costa Rica and the Director General. The objectives of these meetings were threefold: to keep staff abreast of activities and development taking place within the Institute, to promote teamwork and to support social interactions among all components of the organization to facilitate their integration into the accomplishments of tasks. On several occasions, as technology improved within the Institute, all the country Offices were able to watch these monthly meetings and listen to the presentations made by the Director General on the Institute's activities.

Efficiency Improvement Assessment: one of the key elements of the organizational change process is knowledge of the level of efficiency of staff members, the level of integration of the changes introduced since 2002 and the leadership profile



within the organization. It was for that reason that in 2007 the Institute asked the Franklin Covey Group to apply its xQ Questionnaire to all Institute employees, both those stationed in the regions and at Headquarters. As many as 97% of the employees completed the survey, clearly demonstrating the staff's commitment to the organization.

Overall, 87% believed that the organization had improved over the previous five years and 74% of respondents said that IICA adheres completely to the principles of financial prudence, transparency and accountability.

Needs for improvement were identified in the communication of the key goals, the identification of concrete measures to track achievements, the increase of trust and candid communication among team members and increase in the provision of feedback. Based on these results, Directors of Regional Operations and Directors and Chiefs at Headquarters were asked to work with their country Offices and/or Units to define and implement appropriate measures to continue the process of modernizing the Institute.

Institutional Modernization

Financial Dimension: Strengthening the Financial Base of the Institute

Financial Dimension: Strengthening the Financial Base of the Institute

Karen Kleinheinz¹

1. Introduction

IICA's operations are financed and carried out with four types of resources: quota resources and miscellaneous income, used to finance the Institute's Program Budget for operations and actions under its technical cooperation agendas and programs agreed with the Member States; external resources, obtained under agreements signed with counterparts for specific activities and projects of interest to the Member States; and funds generated by charging the Institutional Net Rate (INR) for the management of external resources, used to finance additional costs of managing those resources and pre-investment activities.

The Institute's basic financing for its operations in each of its 34 Member States is provided by those Member States through annual quota contributions. In 2002, the Institute faced substantial quota arrearages, and a history of recurring shortfalls in the payment of these quotas, hindering its ability to maintain its Offices and personnel and effectively carry out the work programs established by the Member States.

2. Results Achieved

a. The Collection of Quotas

IICA's actions to collect overdue quotas and the positive response from its Member States contributed to a greatly improved financial position. Over the last five years, the Institute has seen its best quota collection results in 25 years, both in terms of number of Member States contributing to the Institute's budget and the percentage of agreed upon amounts received. This allowed the organization to more effectively execute cooperation actions and continue implementing work programs in its priority areas, as well as attend to emerging issues of interest to the Member States.

At the beginning of 2002, quota arrearages stood at US\$12.6 million, and only 22 of the Institute's 34 Member States were making regular quota payments. In its report on the Institute's financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2003, the Audit Review Committee questioned the economic viability of the Institute.

In this environment, in 2002 and 2003 the Institute presented the quota payment situation to its governing bodies and requested the support of the Member States in determining

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the actions the Institute should take in order to operate under these conditions.

These concerns - the serious financial situation IICA faces when Member States do not pay quotas as agreed - were addressed by the Executive Committee and the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), supported by the revisions of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues. The result was Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.392(XII-O/03) "Proposal for the Collection of Quota Contributions Owed to the Institute," approved in Panama, in November 2003. Member States' status with respect to payment of quotas was defined, payment and due dates were clarified, guidelines for payment plans were established, and rights and benefits of Member States based on their status with respect to payment of quotas were set out. Progress in collection of quotas was closely monitored by the Institute and reported to Member States, and this resolution was later revised and perfected to facilitate its application, under IICA/JIA/Res.414(XIII-O/05) "Revised Measures for Collecting Quotas owed to the Institute."

As an integral part of the process of securing payment of quota contributions, the Institute focused its actions on ensuring Member States received expected services and had relevant information on the Institute's work. These actions included the delivery of annual reports on activities carried out by the Institute in each country, the preparation of national agendas, in coordination with each Member State, for greater participation of the Member States in IICA actions at the national level, reporting on the status of fulfillment of annual quota commitments, and ongoing conversations with high-level officials in the Member States, and with their representatives on the Executive Committee and the IABA.

As of yearend 2008, the quota arrearages had been reduced to US\$2.3 million, from a high of US\$17.5 million in 2003.

The improved results achieved year by year allowed the Institute to take steps to recover from the effects of shortfalls of previous years, meet its financial obligations necessary for executing the Program Budgets approved by the IABA, and with the additional funds provided from the recovery of past due amounts, execute Special Budgets.

These Special Budgets were approved for institutional modernization, investments and repairs in infrastructure and technology, and additional technical cooperation in priority and emerging areas. Results include upgrading of the electrical system at Headquarters to comply with modern standards, the establishment of an Institute-wide VPN and implementation of the SAP management system. Additional technical priorities advanced include biotechnology and biosafety, leadership in agriculture, agricultural insurance, ongoing professional development, promotion of agrotourism linkages and agricultural health and food safety activities, especially development of SPS capabilities.

b. Institutionalization and Use of Resources for Technical Cooperation

In addition to the efforts undertaken with Member States to ensure that the annual budgets and work programs are effectively financed through quota contributions, changes were made to strengthen management of other financial resources funding the Institute's actions, and growth was achieved in these resources. The use of resources was focused on the delivery of direct technical cooperation services.

In 2003, the IABA adopted Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.393(XII-O/03) "Measures approved by the IABA for Restructuring the Finances of the Institute," in which it instructed that INR resources were to be assigned

institutionally, in accordance with defined priorities. The measures adopted also approved the gradual abandonment of the practice of administering external resources without technical responsibility.

This gave the Institute the ability to program INR resources based on work plans, and the flexibility needed to better allow the Institute to respond to demands for its services in its Member States. For externally funded projects, the Institute gradually replaced projects oriented towards administrative services, concentrating on projects with technical components.

The external resources entrusted to IICA from member governments and international financing organizations through financing of projects and activities increased 62% during the period, from US\$127 million in 2002 to US\$206 million for the year 2008. These agreements and resources constituted a sizeable portion of the Institute's actions, and allowed the Institute to provide cooperation to its Member States in accordance with their interests, complementing the Institute's own programs.

Miscellaneous income also increased throughout the period. IABA Resolution IICA/JIA/Res.400(XII-O/03) "Modifications of the Financial Rules and the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate on Miscellaneous Income" created the Miscellaneous Income Fund to finance immediate financial needs and priorities of the Institute. Since then the miscellaneous income generated, after financing a portion of the Regular Budget as established in the Program Budget, has been used to establish this fund. As of December 31, 2008, the fund totaled US\$10.8 million. The majority of miscellaneous income generated is interest income, and the success in building the fund was in great part due to the improved financial position achieved through collection of overdue quotas.


c. **Accountability and Focus on Quality**

Modernization and increased use of technology were also achieved throughout areas of financial operations, contributing to better services, improved control and information capture, and more reliable reporting. This allowed the Institute to be more effective in implementation of its regular budget, in spite of a frozen quota budget throughout the period, and also positioned the Institute for the increase in external funds under its management. In 2003, the Institute achieved a clean opinion on its financial statements, for the first time since 1996. The Institute has maintained an unqualified opinion from its external auditors on its financial statements in every year since.

This recognition was achieved through a process of improved financial oversight and continual reviews of the financial information produced throughout the hemisphere. Communication and feedback were provided to the Offices, to ensure adherence to norms and application of accounting procedures, and improve the preparation and timely monitoring of financial and accounting information.

All Offices and personnel were asked to ensure prudence and efficiency in the use of resources, and all units were held accountable for their financial results. Centralization of resources and control of liquidity allowed the Institute to ensure resources were available and could be moved to meet its financial obligations throughout the hemisphere.

Procedures were updated to take advantage of improvements in technology and to streamline operations. Treasury reform and simplification included increasing the use of online banking capabilities. At Headquarters, electronic payments



accounted for less than 50% of transactions in 2002, while in 2008 almost 70% were processed electronically. Bank accounts managed by the Institute were halved from 326 in 2002 to 161 now, simplifying administration, reducing costs, and allowing for more effective control. Through the implementation of a payroll module, international personnel payments were integrated with the Human Resources System, providing increased controls. Pay stubs were changed from paper delivery to secure electronic delivery, more easily accessible to personnel at reduced cost.

More effective cash planning was implemented through procedures for monthly review and preparation of cash flows by all Offices. Continual follow-up is provided by the Division of Finance in Headquarters to ensure that action is taken in the event of quota shortfalls. As a result, the Institute is able to meet its financial commitments and that updated information is provided for Institutional use of the amounts available from quota, miscellaneous and INR resources, in accordance with work plans and the program budget.

To ensure quality in the management of externally funded projects, reviews and analyses of proposed agreements were established to ensure that the Institute's obligations are clearly set out and in compliance with norms, and that all financial issues are clearly outlined. Procedures for requesting feedback from counterparts on all financial reporting throughout the life of the project were established, and procedures for closing out agreements were strengthened, for review and sign-off by the counterpart to ensure that the Institute fully complies with its obligations.

To improve institutional capacity, standardized training was developed for accounting personnel, and the Division of Finance provided support to Offices in hiring accounting personnel.

At Headquarters, special attention was given to reducing employee turnover and training and professionalization of the accounting staff.

d. Systems Modernization

Recognizing the need for appropriate tools for effectively managing the increasing complexity and growth of financial resources in IICA, the Institute proposed modernizing its accounting system and implementing a management information system. In 2003, the governing bodies approved the institutional modernization. A multi-disciplinary team was formed to review processes and systems to determine the needs of the Institute. The objective was to move to an integrated management system to replace the various different accounting systems being used by the Offices.

As progress in quota collections advanced to ensure funding, a competitive bid process was carried out to determine the system which best fit the needs of the Institute, with the SAP management information system selected. In 2006, an implementation team was formed and preparation was begun to determine the design of the system, including the modules and functionality to be implemented in IICA, review of procedures, and definition of user roles. Headquarters and the Office in Costa Rica implemented the SAP system in 2007. In 2008, the Institute's two largest-volume Offices began using it, as the rollout of the system to the Offices began. As of 2008, over 50% of the Institute's resources are managed in the new system.

The system provides a single database, accessed online, integrated procedures from request for goods and services through payment, increased capacity for providing the fund accounting for each of the external funds under management by

the Institute, automation of various processes and elimination of re-keying of data, especially for reporting purposes, thus ensuring greater security in transactions and greater reliability of information.

In summary, the main challenge faced by IICA in 2002, of obtaining the financing to continue providing expected services to its Member States, has been achieved, and the Institute has significantly strengthened its financial base.

The Institute has established and grown the miscellaneous income fund. It has reduced quota arrearages from 65% of the annual budget in 2003 to less than 10% in 2008, and used the arrearages collected to ensure sufficient liquidity in the event of quota shortfalls and to meet its obligations, to modernize the Institute's technology, infrastructure and systems, and to finance new and priority areas of technical cooperation of interest to Member States. Institute personnel are keenly aware of the need to ensure the most effective delivery of services possible. External funds entrusted to the Institute for cooperation services have increased 62%.

Key indicators highlighting changes from 2002 to 2008 are shown below.

Table 8: Improvements in the Financial Situation.

	2002	2008
Member States making regular payments	22	34
Overdue Quota amounts - (in millions US\$)	\$12.6	\$2.3
External funds managed - (in millions US\$)	\$127	\$206

Source: IICA.

The significant advances in providing a stronger financial base include both increased resources and increased review and monitoring of the financing of the Institute. Clearer guidelines for the use of resources, increased communication with the Member States and continual monitoring of the quota and overall financial situation have resulted in not only increased liquidity, but also increased capacity to respond to the changing financial situation.

Institutional Modernization

Technological Dimension: New Technological Infrastructure



Technological Dimension: New Technological Infrastructure

Emmanuel Picado Mata¹

1. Introduction

During the 2002-2008 period, the efforts of the Informatics and Information Systems Unit were based on the following five pillars, which serve as a framework for presenting the results for this report:

- Support the entire Institute through the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to develop a common vision of the information society.
- Support and promote the formulation and application of ICT policies and strategies at IICA Headquarters and in the Offices in the member countries.
- Provide technical support on the use of ICT to IICA Headquarters and the country Offices.
- Keep the Institute abreast of modern technological developments to facilitate the provision of timely and efficient technical cooperation services at the hemispheric level.
- Establish, oversee and maintain informatics security.

2. Results Achieved

Operation of a Private Virtual Network at the Hemispheric Level

A private virtual network was established on the Internet for the purpose of linking the IICA Offices, facilitating the exchange of information and knowledge and collaborative work.

Via its private virtual network, IICA enhanced the use of IP telephony to facilitate calls between staff members at the different IICA Offices and Headquarters at no cost, and with the security required by international standards.

The communications equipment in all the IICA Offices was standardized, providing the Institute with improved security and better quality of service.

Firewall equipment was installed in all the country Offices to ensure the protection of IICA's information and knowledge.

Updating of the Nortel Telephone Exchange

The telephone system received regular maintenance and additional equipment was installed to update the telephone exchange's communications capacity via IP.

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A conference platform allowing a maximum of 32 participants was installed; additionally, individual passwords were provided to the administration for each conference programmed on the agenda.

A new, unified messaging mechanism was made available to IICA staff, which allows them to send and receive faxes through their voice mailboxes.

Installation of an Alternate Datacenter in Florida, USA

An alternate communications site was established that will continue to provide IT services (e-mail, web, intranet, VPN, telephonic IP) in the event of a system failure at IICA Headquarters.

Strengthening of Firewalls

A new, additional firewall mechanism was developed to enhance the availability of technological services provided to IICA.

Strengthened Redundancy in the CORE Switches at IICA Headquarters

IICA has a more stable communications network with redundancy at the “CORE” level to ensure continuity of operations in the event of a failure in the main equipment. Implementation of this network enables the Institute to carry out preventive and corrective maintenance on IICA’s equipment without having to interrupt online services, thereby avoiding equipment collapse over the medium or long term. Furthermore, this configuration enables the technicians

to carry out preventive and corrective maintenance on the equipment without “crashing” the network.

Improved Electrical Backup System for the Datacenter at IICA Headquarters

The electrical system for the Institute’s communications equipment and servers was improved with the purchase of an electrical generator, which provides continued service when there are power cuts.

IP Telephone Operation

IP telephony was implemented at IICA to give staff members greater mobility and better service when they are away from the Institute’s premises. This technology resulted in improved interaction and cooperation among the IICA country Offices, since calls between the Offices do not incur any costs.

IICA has a backup system in Miami that enhances the telephone service between the IICA Offices in the member countries.

In several offices, conventional telephone services are now integrated with IP telephony, making this technology available to more users.

Continuous Updating of the External Domain Name System (DNS)

IICA’s external DNS is automatically updated every time a change is made to the principal domain. To guarantee a better service, the DNS servers are located in different sites in order to reduce the operation times of IICA’s other services, such as e-mail and web sites.

Implementation of an Anti-spam and Anti-virus/ Anti-Spyware System

IICA has implemented a spam filtering system to help reduce the number of unwanted e-mails entering in-boxes by 95%; this provides security for IICA staff members when they access their e-mail.

McAfee antivirus/antispyware has been installed to secure the servers and equipment of IICA staff. There has not been a single major threat during this administration. There is also a firewall and an intrusion detection program to protect the Institute's technological platform.

Standardization of the Technological Platform

The equipment and the software used throughout the Institute has been standardized in order to provide staff with good equipment and tools for carrying out their work and to offer better support. The standardization process has also led to a 95% reduction in the use of unauthorized software and systems at IICA, ensuring optimal use of the institution's technological platform.

Implementation of Storage Area Network (SAN) Equipment

IICA installed Storage Area Network equipment, which allows staff members to store documents, photos, audio, video and other types of information in a secure and reliable way. All Institute personnel data is stored in this device.

Server Renovation

The Institute has maintained an infrastructure of modern and highly reliable servers, which provide an effective base for IICA's informatics services.

Unification of IP Networks at the Hemispheric Level

The IP router for the IICA Offices was configured so as to avoid duplication or repetition of local configurations, thereby making better use of computer resources.

Updating the Backup System

As part of the efforts to protect the information administered by the Institute, the backup system was updated with the installation of new software and the acquisition of a new tape library. This allows all the information on the servers to be stored on magnetic tape, which is kept in an external location. This means that information can be retrieved using other computers in the event of major damage to the Institute's infrastructure.

Increasing the Physical Security of the Technological Infrastructure

In order to protect the Institute's technological infrastructure, the obsolete access and fire protection systems in the Informatics Unit were changed. A combined card-and-code access system was installed for the server room and eleven smoke detectors and two manual stations were installed, each with audible and visual alarms.



Installation of New Printing Systems

A network of Print Centers was installed at IICA Headquarters in order to modernize the printing platform. This helps to minimize the use of paper and significantly reduces printing costs.

Implementation of the Exchange Server

A new e-mail service was implemented. The Institute currently has an Exchange 2008 server, as part of its agreement with Microsoft. This has led to major financial savings and provides IICA's staff with new tools and facilities for carrying out their work, such as shared agendas and the integration of the telephone exchange and voice mailboxes with the institutional e-mail service.

Implementation of the Help Desk System

This new tool enables IICA staff members to obtain real time information regarding the status of a request for technical support services (time transpired since the service was requested, technician responsible and progress made) over the Intranet or by e-mail; in other words, this tool measures the quality of service provided by the Informatics Unit.

Disseminating IICA's most Important Activities Via the Web

A new system for transmitting events via the institutional web portal was implemented, enhancing dissemination of the Institute's official events. Audio and video for more than 90% of the technical forums held at the Institute was transmitted

via the web portal, improving the sharing of institutional information and knowledge. In addition, more than 80% of the Director General's meetings at IICA Headquarters were transmitted to the entire Institute via this mechanism.

Redesign of IICA's Web Portal

In order to improve its management of technical knowledge, IICA designed a new web portal that standardizes and integrates the different web pages of the Offices and IICA Headquarters in a single technical platform. This new portal makes it possible to disseminate and share more information than the old one. The site also has an improved, user-friendly graphic design, geared to the Institute's technical content.

Redesign of the Institutional Intranet

The institutional Intranet was redesigned to provide staff members a tool for sharing and accessing all institutional information and systems, both technical and administrative. This tool also enables staff to interact and use specific web pages for posting and sharing information related to the Institute's different thematic areas.

Operation of the Web Conference System

IICA implemented a new videoconferencing system that enables staff members to communicate with each other via audio and video in real time. The use of this system does not require extensive technological knowledge, which facilitates and encourages its use. The Institute used this system to hold a number of virtual meetings, such as the regional planning meetings, which also led to substantial savings on transportation and per diem expenses.

Design and Incorporation of Country Web Pages

With the implementation of the new web portal, all the web pages of the IICA country Offices were incorporated into a single integrated platform. To accomplish this task, the personnel in charge of the web pages in the IICA Offices received personal and online training. To date, 31 of the 34 Institute Offices have been incorporated into the platform. This new tool is being used to promote the exchange and dissemination of the technical content of the different web pages of the IICA Offices.

Consolidation of a Unified Institutional Image

IICA's Office of Public Information and Institutional Image prepared an integrated graphic design for the different IICA systems: web portal, Intranet and InfoAgro.net, etc.

Creation of Communities of Practice

The Institute has implemented a mechanism to support the development of virtual communities of practice (CoP), a technological tool that facilitates interaction and social networking among IICA personnel. This enables staff members to discuss topics on-line, create virtual forums, blogs and wikis, conduct surveys, share and update the knowledge base, keep a record of all the information and knowledge exchanged through participation in the different communities of practice and compile the lessons learned.

Design of Web Portals

Several web portals were developed to support the different units at IICA, including graphic and technological components,

and each web portal manager received training. Web portals were designed for the Market Information Organization of the Americas-MIOA, AIBDA, the Southern Rural Development Network, CERAGRO, Ed-Rural, Organic Agriculture and Central American Territories.

Participation in the E-Agriculture Group

As part of the IICA-FAO strategic alliance, the Informatics and Information Systems Unit participated in the Executive Committee of the E-agriculture Initiative, whose main objective is to highlight the importance of sustainable agricultural development and food security in the global setting through better use of ICT and other related technologies.

Information Systems Implemented

- **Financial Information System (SAP):** In conjunction with the Directorate of Administration and Finance, the SAP financial system was implemented at IICA Headquarters and in the IICA Offices in Costa Rica, Mexico and Colombia. This system is a modern, real-time, flexible tool that standardizes the entire administrative-financial process.
- **Integrated Management System (IMS):** The IMS was implemented in order to automate the Institute's planning processes. The system is used to prepare the Annual Action Plan (AAP) and, based on this, each staff member can develop his/her Individual Contribution Plan (ICP), submit a Report on the Completion of the Action Annual Plan (IS) and the Individual Performance Evaluation Form (IPES). The entire process is automated to ensure that IICA's institutional memory is preserved.



- **Management System for the Institutional Organizational Chart:** This system provides IICA with an up-to-date hierarchical catalogue of all the Institute's personnel and departments (units, offices and regions). This application generates information flows or documents between supervisors and their staff. It also forms part of the group of systems that comprise the Integrated Management System, the Vacations System, the Projects System, the Permit Management System, the Office Improvement Plan System and the Language Services System.
- **Agricultural and Trade Statistics System:** This mechanism enables IICA staff to conduct searches for statistics on products and trade in the context of agriculture and the rural milieu. The application uses search criteria to select statistics, generate reports, etc.
- **Vacations System:** This application enables staff members to electronically submit a leave authorization form via the system, send it to their immediate supervisor for review and easily verify the status of their requests and their vacation balances. Similarly, supervisors can consult personnel vacation balances on-line before approving a request.
- **Projects System:** This system enables users to access information on hemispheric, regional and country-level projects implemented by IICA with external funding, and to conduct searches by geographic region, operational unit, strategic area and counterpart institutions; a summary (technical sheet) is displayed for each project. This information can also be converted into an Excel program format. Users can access all institutional records related to projects carried out by the Institute throughout its history, given that each new project to be implemented by IICA is included in this system.
- **System for Recording National Actions:** This application forms part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Information System of the 2003-2015 Agro Plan. Using this tool, the respective country reports can be entered, and other documents can be prepared on actions, challenges, performance indicators and the expectations of agricultural leaders.
- **On-Line Registration System for IICA Meetings:** This registration system enables IICA to enter all the data related to the different meetings held at the Institute and the information about the participants in those meetings, via a module for the management of meeting logistics. The system also has a module for Reports, in order to obtain information from the participants at each meeting.
- **Language Services System:** This system administers the main services offered by the Language Services Unit: editing, translation and interpretation. Several forms are available for users to submit requests for each of the services offered. The system also allows for follow-up on each service request, since it is possible to see the status of these requests.
- **Office Improvement Plan System:** Through this system, the Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration administers the information and findings resulting from the different missions that carry out support, review, evaluation and auditing tasks approved by the Ad Hoc Committee.
- **Audit System:** This system contains important information about the aspects assessed by the Auditing team during its missions to the IICA Offices. It also has the task of evaluating the issues identified during internal audit missions.



- **Agreement Control System:** This system contains information on the minutes, activities and responsibilities of the different management committees of the General Directorate, the Administration and Finance Committee and the Programming Committee, among others. Information about each resolution issued by these committees is incorporated into the system so that its fulfillment can be monitored: person in charge, date of completion, and other aspects.

- **Local Personnel System:** This application is designed to record and monitor the actions taken by local professional personnel (LPP) and general services personnel (GSP). Through this system, information related to salary, position, or placement at IICA or regarding budget allocations can be entered and edited on “Personnel action” forms.

- **Insurance System:** This application was implemented to record, calculate and monitor the premium payments on insurance policies held by the Institute. It is also used to administer the payments on additional policies acquired by staff members. This application manages relevant information about staff members and their dependents and/or vehicles and about former staff members who still enjoy insurance privileges.

Institutional Modernization

Communications Dimension: A New Institutional Image



Communications Dimension: A New Institutional Image

Patricia León Coto¹

1. Introduction

At the beginning of 2002, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) decided to establish the Office of Public Information and Institutional Image in an effort to enhance its area of communications.

Communications were considered vital for an organization that not only needed to prepare to meet the challenges of a new millennium, but whose mandates were of such scope that they almost changed its essence. Whereas IICA had once been a technical cooperation institution, it was now called upon to transcend this role and become actively engaged in the hemispheric debate on agriculture and rural development, sectors which had been undervalued and unrecognized for decades.

Communications were considered vital for an organization seeking a new type of relationship with its member countries, and also seeking to change the traditional way of delivering technical cooperation. IICA did not wish to define its national agendas based on a top-down approach, but rather preferred to be guided by demand, bearing in mind the countries' needs and consulting the main governmental actors and other key players of the agricultural sector: entrepreneurs, producers' associations, academic centers and civil society organizations.

Communications were considered vital for an organization that was working to strengthen its strategic partnerships and forge new alliances with international financial organizations, develop its human resources and actively involve its staff members in the institutional modernization process.

Therefore, since its inception, the Office of Public Information and Institutional Image has directed its efforts at building a corporate communications system to accompany - in the broadest sense of the word - the Institute's modernization process and, in particular, its new technical cooperation model.

In the area of communications, the most important achievements of the period 2002-2008 have been the establishment of the Public Information and Institutional Image Office and the consolidation of its human team, for the advancement of agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

2. The Objectives of Institutional Projection

Throughout these years, IICA has worked to accomplish the objectives established in its two Medium Term Plans (2002-2006 and 2006 -2010). When IICA projects its own image,

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it is also projecting the image of agriculture and rural life. The Office of Public Information and Institutional Image has worked to ensure that IICA is recognized in the hemisphere, and throughout the world, as an organization of excellence. However, it has also sought to ensure that the strategic importance of agriculture (in its broadest sense and not simply as the primary sector) is recognized at the political level, in terms of its contribution to the economy, to employment, to exports, to democratic stability, to governance and to the balance between urban and rural areas.

In his introduction to the “General Guidelines for Projecting the Institutional Image”, the Director General, Chelston Brathwaite, states:

“We are successful to the extent that, as an organization, we carry out our activities in a field that is recognized as being of strategic importance. When IICA promotes its image in different areas and before different target audiences, rural life and agriculture are also better positioned in the priorities of public and private decision-makers”.

The main and the specific objectives of institutional projection are as follows:

Main Objective

To promote the image of the Institute as an international development agency that is recognized and respected as a reliable and strategic partner that can make a significant contribution to the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in the Americas.

Specific Objectives

- For IICA to be recognized as an organization that promotes major goals for the hemisphere, such as the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and the prosperity of rural communities in the Americas.
- For IICA to be recognized as an institution of excellence that supports the efforts of its Member States to achieve progress and prosperity in the hemisphere.
- To strengthen the Institute’s ties with its Member States, so that they are familiar with and use the services we offer, and play an active part in the new role of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the principal forum for discussing and reaching agreement on strategic policies and priorities aimed at improving agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere (Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Rural Life).
- To promote new strategic alliances and strengthen relations with our strategic partners. To position IICA as an effective partner for financial institutions, cooperation agencies and agribusiness organizations which, at different levels and in different thematic or geographic areas, share the same objectives for the advancement of rural communities.

3. Results Achieved

a. Consolidating the Communications Team

The communications team, which currently comprises 13 people, has gradually grown as the Institute's communications needs have increased. The Print Shop, which was attached to the Office of Public Information at the end of 2003, was originally staffed by five people; subsequently, two graphic designers were added. In addition to the Print Shop personnel, a coordinator, an administrative assistant, an audiovisual technician, an editor and two journalists also form part of the Office of Public Information and Institutional Image.

The team has demonstrated its capacity and commitment to achieving high levels of excellence. On three different occasions, it has received the Director General's Awards for Excellence, significantly in the category of Teamwork.

In the course of nearly eight years, the team has accumulated sufficient experience to carry out any task in the area of communications. It has developed an understanding of the great challenges facing an organization like IICA and a sector as complex as agriculture and is capable of translating key concepts into strong, clear and differentiated messages for our different interlocutors. It has also developed sensitivity to the needs of rural men and women and carries their voices to much of our continent. The team has injected passion and commitment into this task.

b. Implementing a Communications Strategy

Just as the 20th century was the age of the mass media, the 21st century is the era of the Internet. While in the last

century a public information office would have focused on producing press releases, in this new century it must generate electronic products for immediate global distribution, tailored to the needs of each target audience. Furthermore, the mass media—press, radio and television—are increasingly difficult to penetrate. The larger the media organization is, the harder it is to get them to convey our message.

However, we have not neglected our relations with press and media organizations. On the contrary, we have monitored these on a daily basis, and the IICA Representatives and Offices have been encouraged to maintain a permanent flow of information to the media. In fact, a survey carried out in 2008 shows that the Institute's presence in the hemisphere's printed media has increased by 160%, when compared with the figures from 2003.

The Internet has become an essential vehicle for IICA's communications strategy. It serves as a platform for all our products – from information transmitted in real time, to electronic newsletters for specific audiences, radio and audiovisual productions – these all make use of our website www.iica.int.

The new information technologies have enabled IICA to design products directed at different groups with specific characteristics and information needs.

It is important to emphasize that the various communications products generated by the Office of Public Information also contain the Institute's history during these eight years. There is practically no important event that has not been recorded in a press release or a news report. Like a country's media, we have become - if not historians – at least notaries of IICA's work.



c. Specific Target Audiences

In order to support the Institute's technical and management units in the task of implementing the new cooperation model, IICA defined a number of target audiences with a view to directing its communications efforts toward these groups.

These target audiences are the same public, private and non-governmental stakeholders that participate in the design of the national technical cooperation agendas. IICA is committed to full transparency toward these groups and, each year, we report on our actions through the accountability seminars that take place in each of our Member States.

The target audiences of IICA's efforts to project the institutional image are:

- Senior government officials (Presidents, Ministries of Agriculture, Trade, Rural Development, Foreign Relations, Planning, Economy and Finance, Health, Tourism and Environment).
- Decision-makers of national, regional and international cooperation, financial and research institutions; regional and international non-governmental organizations and foundations.
- Leaders of producers' and agribusiness organizations.
- Decision-makers in academia (chancellors, deans, directors of university schools and faculties).
- Non-governmental opinion leaders (editorial writers, columnists, think tanks associated with companies and organizations, people who, in different ways, shape public opinion).

d. Developing Institutional Communications Products

IICA now has an external media network for specific audiences throughout the hemisphere. Its task is to report on the actions of these groups and promote greater awareness of the strategic importance of agriculture and rural life of the Americas.

Each product has a subscriber base that is administered and updated by each Country Office, with support from IICA's Unit of Informatics and Information Systems.

The website

The Institute's website (<http://www.iica.int/>) is the most important vehicle for institutional communication. It includes the web pages of each of the IICA Offices in the 34 Member States, as well as the pages of the technical departments, the General Directorate and many other units. For this reason, all the Institute's communications products are designed in web format and for digital distribution.

The "Web Committee," a body that sets general guidelines for managing the site, has been strengthened with the addition of a team of journalists. The site's Homepage and the Press Room section have been effectively managed and updated to provide users with access to timely institutional information. The Office of Public Information and Institutional Image also provided assistance for the design and updating of other pages, such as the Director General's page and the page of the Center for Leadership in Agriculture.

IICA's journalists produced content for practically all the website's technical pages, with support from the graphic design team.

Press releases

The Institute issued more than 60 press releases annually with news about its activities, agreements, projects and other actions. These were distributed in two languages (English and Spanish) among Representatives of IICA's 34 Member States, for redistribution to the media in their respective countries. Press releases were also sent out from IICA Headquarters to different media organizations and international press agencies based in Costa Rica.

IICAConnection

IICAConnection is a bilingual (English-Spanish) monthly electronic newsletter, which keeps national and international readers informed of the Institute's activities both at Headquarters and in the 34 Member States. Launched in 2003, it is mainly directed at decision-makers of the public, private, academic and technical sectors and others who are interested in the Institute's work for the advancement of agriculture and rural life in the Americas. At present, *IICAConnection* has around 7,000 subscribers.

Infoletter

Nearly 1,400 of the most senior decision-makers in the Americas (Presidents and Heads of State, Ministers of Agriculture, Economy, Finance, and Foreign Relations) receive this newsletter from the Director General. It was launched in 2007 and is published monthly in English and Spanish. Its aim is to offer a summary of key institutional issues, ministerial changes, news about agriculture in the countries and regions of the hemisphere and the Institute's activities

AgroEnlace

AgroEnlace is a 15-minute Spanish language radio magazine program, broadcast every two weeks and designed to meet the needs of small- and medium-scale agricultural entrepreneurs in the Americas. It is one of several institutional products prepared for the beneficiaries of our technical cooperation. We have received reports that audiences in many countries of the Americas tune in to this program, and have had positive feedback on the topics covered and the quality of the production.

The radio program examines agribusiness from various angles, and encourages small and medium-sized producers to become involved in national and international markets. It also documents interesting experiences in rural development with the participation of IICA experts, *campesinos* and farmers who discuss and share their experiences during the 15-minute program.

AgroEnlace was launched in 2005 and one month later began broadcasting via the Radio Nederland satellite, making it available to more than 700 broadcasters in the hemisphere and confirming that the prestigious Netherlands radio recognizes the quality of IICA's productions. *AgroEnlace* reaches almost 4,000 subscribers, many of whom are radio broadcasters or trainers in the hemisphere.

IICA's technicians have assessed *AgroEnlace* as a good training tool, based on a survey conducted in 2008 among subscribers of the radio-magazine. The program was broadcast regularly in 11 of the 19 Spanish-speaking countries in the hemisphere. In Costa Rica it was broadcast by network of small rural broadcasters and on the University of Costa Rica's FM radio.



Antena Agropecuaria

This radio program consists of short “news capsules” broadcast in Spanish, which provide a brief summary of agricultural developments in the Americas and of IICA’s activities. This material has been sent to media contacts in Costa Rica and in the Institute’s other Member States.

COMUNIICA

The Institute’s technical magazine, *COMUNIICA* was launched during the Administration of Carlos Aquino (1994-2002), but its format and appearance have been redesigned. *COMUNIICA* disseminates the technical knowledge generated by the Institute in the field of agriculture and rural life of the Americas and is aimed at decision-makers and opinion leaders. It is published three times a year, in Spanish and English, with abstracts in four languages (Spanish, English, French and Portuguese). In addition to the online version, launched in 2005, a printed version is distributed to all the IICA Offices.

Other products and special efforts

Through its Office of Public Information, IICA has developed additional communication tools, which, unlike those listed above, are not regular publications. It has also developed or contributed to the development of various specific products, including:

- The “**Handbook for Ministers**”. This guide for new Ministers of Agriculture contains useful information about IICA, its governing bodies and the role of the new Minister. It explains how the Institute is financed, the quotas that are paid by each country, and describes the process for setting a national technical cooperation agenda. It was produced in response to a practical need: as in other government departments, there is a high turnover of Ministers of Agriculture and, as their countries’ most senior agricultural officials, they need to be rapidly informed about the Institute and its activities.
- During the first year of the Brathwaite Administration, the Institute celebrated its 60th anniversary and for this occasion, an information center was set up. What began as a fairly modest endeavor was gradually improved, until the main lobby at IICA Headquarters was converted into a veritable information center. Several units have contributed to its maintenance and development.
- A series of radio programs produced by IICA many years ago were digitalized. As a result, a large number of excellent radio programs that had been produced using obsolete technologies were retrieved. These are now stored in the institutional repository administered by the Venezuela Library.
- During the 2002-2008 period, several audiovisual materials were produced, including two institutional videos to accompany each of the last two MTPs. In addition, IICA documented numerous special events, such as the Director General’s Report to the Permanent Council of the OAS, the visit by the President of Chile, the presentation of the Director General’s Awards for Excellence and the inauguration of the Center for Leadership in Agriculture. A video on agriculture and rural life was also produced for the Summit of the Americas process. A number of videos on technical subjects are also available, for example a video on the fruit growing project implemented in El Salvador, or on biosafety standards for avian influenza.

- More than 15,000 photographs were taken, documenting the main activities carried out at IICA Headquarters during the period covered by this Report.

A Unified IICA

During the past eight years, efforts have been made to create a uniform graphic identity for the Institute. This standardization process has been especially important as regards the cover design for the Institute's Annual Report and the annual reports of each IICA Office (in which the IICA Representatives report on the activities carried out in their respective countries). A specific color was assigned to each region, which is used for all the Country Reports within that region, while "IICA Blue" (Pantone Blue) was maintained for the Hemispheric Report.

Throughout this period, the Office of Public Information and Institutional Image supported several units in the design of their graphic identity, including the Area of Horizontal Cooperation. It also provided support in designing the logotype and color palette of the Center for Leadership in Agriculture, which are used in various promotional tools, such as banners, brochures, web page, a printed magazine, etc.

In addition to producing high-quality printed materials and publications, our Office produced two documents as part of a systematic effort to create a single, unified IICA:

General guidelines for projecting a new institutional image at IICA

This document was first published and distributed in 2003, and provides the basis for a new institutional image. It contains guidelines to help the IICA Offices establish

national communications strategies, according to the specific characteristics of each Member State.

Graphic identity guide

This guide provides a uniform design for IICA's graphic materials. It regulates the use of the institutional logo, typefaces and colors and is an essential resource for the design of the Institute's printed and electronic publications, both at IICA Headquarters and in the IICA Offices in the Member States. At the end of 2008, it was promulgated as a directive of the Director General.

Supporting Technical Cooperation

The Office of Public Information and Institutional Image has tried to provide continuous support to the Institute's technical directorates. Some of the actions in this regard are as follows:

- Preparing press releases, special coverage of events and media management.
- Radio programs produced exclusively on technical topics, with assistance from the technical staff of the hemispheric programs, aimed at promoting agribusiness and sustainable rural development.
- During the last five years, the Office has worked closely with the Area of Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) on the issue of risk communication in response to transboundary diseases and the prevention of avian influenza (AI). It has also represented the Institute in interagency cooperation efforts on this issue and worked with AHFS technicians to produce a video and a radio series on AI, which has received international acclaim.



- The Office supported other IICA units in the design of communications strategies and prepared an information management plan directed at decision-makers in agricultural research centers.

The Print Shop

The Print Shop operates as a self-financing unit. In other words, it sells services to pay for its workers' salaries and cover its operating costs (inputs, water, electricity). The industrial plant of the Print Shop was inspected and a logical line of production was designed, which made it necessary to remodel this plant.

The plant has been refurbished and reorganized and environmental, safety and labor standards have been implemented. Transparent procedures were also introduced for processing quotes, controlling costs and other actions. The Print Shop provides stable employment and has created a sense of trust and security among the staff.

During the last six years, the Print Shop has demonstrated that it can provide a quality service at a good price and is capable of

responding to the Institute's needs in a timely manner. It has received recognition for the high standard of its publications, both within and outside the Institute, which is a source of great satisfaction.

Internal Communications

The Office of Public Information and Institutional Image has worked closely with the Director General and the Directorate of Human Resources to improve internal communications. For the first time, an internal magazine was published, *IICA in the Americas*, directed at all IICA staff throughout the hemisphere. It is published twice a year, with printed and electronic versions in four languages.

The magazine aims to consolidate an institutional culture based on the Institute's values and principles. It contains human interest stories, articles on institutional matters, texts that generate a sense of pride in belonging to the Institute and articles about its people, its activities and its organizational decisions, all of which serves to strengthen the IICA community.

Institutional Modernization

Operational Dimension: Operational Efficiency and Accountability

Operational Dimension: Operational Efficiency and Accountability

Francisco Barea¹ and Yanko Goic²

1. Introduction

The 2002-2006 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) includes a series of guidelines to increase institutional operating efficiency, which were endorsed in the 2006-2010 Plan, to consolidate the achievements of the previous period. These measures are as follows:

- a. Establish support mechanisms to ensure better interaction among IICA professionals on thematic issues, and to implement improved teamwork methods.
- b. Promote changes in management and administrative methods and procedures.
- c. Efficiently manage resources and minimize costs, in strict compliance with established rules and procedures.
- d. Constantly upgrade and update the capacities of its administrative and financial procedures and systems, to include technological advances and improvements to systems.
- e. Accelerate efforts to adopt new technologies to facilitate greater efficiency and effectiveness in management and administration processes and reduction of costs.

These strategic guidelines have been implemented in the following three key areas: establishing and updating management or operating mechanisms, rules and procedures; implementation of new data processing tools for management; and, improvement of communication and information procedures.

The major results achieved in each of these areas are presented below. Emphasis is placed on their contribution to strengthening institutional capacity to improve operational efficiency.

2. Establishment and Updating of Management or Operating Mechanisms, and Institutional Procedures and Rules

Representatives' Week

"Representatives' Week" was established as a strategic planning forum comprising the management team of the Institute's Office of Director General, including the participation of representatives of IICA's office member states, regional

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specialists, and directors from headquarters. This mechanism has provided an opportunity for greater socialization, familiarization with and review of the Institute's strategic guidelines, alignment of the plans of action of the Offices, Regions, and Headquarters, and the integration, commitment, and strategic action of the various units working to achieve common objectives.

New Organizational Structure of the Offices in Member States

A new technical and administrative structure was introduced in IICA Offices in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Peru, to enable them to respond adequately to current and future requests for technical cooperation, using a procedure that consists in the following steps:

- a. Identifying critical agricultural issues and national priorities;
- b. Defining the priorities on the Office's technical cooperation agenda, especially in terms of items and strategic partners to be considered;
- c. Determining the possible amount of external resources needed for implementation in the medium term;
- d. Analyzing institutional capacity and identifying shortcomings in the Office's technical and administrative capacity to meet requirements; and,
- e. Defining the new organizational structure to be implemented, as well as its requirements in terms of technical, human, physical, and financial resources.

Plan for Improvement of the Offices in Member States

With a view to promoting a comprehensive view for assessing, making decisions, and implementing action to improve IICA in member states, in 2005 work began on designing Office Improvement Plans. The Plans were based on recommendations emanating from consensual, participatory processes carried out by support missions at Headquarters, internal audit review and evaluation missions, and recommendations to improve performance made by the Offices themselves. The Plans cover the critical issues identified, such as obstacles, opportunities, potentials, limiting factors, or requirements, as well as action to be taken to address or make better use of the critical issue in question, the expected results or outcome, the responsible parties and their assistants, and the beginning and completion dates of the action programmed.

Twenty-three Office Improvement Plans were designed for 22 offices in Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, Honduras, Haiti, Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Chile, Suriname, Bahamas, Guyana, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia. As a result of implementation of these plans, over 90% of the expected results were achieved.

Programming System

Further improvements were made to the programming system, that comprises preparation of biennial program-budgets and annual plans of action, and approval of legal and cooperation instruments financed with external resources.

The following improvements were made: i) for each operational unit, definition of priority activities, the role of

IICA, expected results, and performance indicators, both for technical cooperation and for management of cooperation; ii) allocation of IICA resources (quotas, miscellaneous, and INR), according to the strategic priorities of the MTP, the mandates of government agencies, and the needs of the Institute's different operating units; iii) preparation by each employee of an individual contribution plan, that includes expected results and performance indicators, and shows how each employee contributes to the results of the operating unit; iv) introduction of a programming committee and national programming support groups, with the participation of staff from Headquarters, with a view to conducting an exhaustive analysis of proposed legal and cooperation instruments to be financed using external resources; and v) gradual elimination of operations exclusively involving management of external resources, by concentrating efforts on programs and projects financed with the type of resources that supplement the Institute's activities in different areas, and on areas where there is a value added of technical cooperation.

Corporate Procurement System

A new corporate procurement system was designed and implemented, comprising a series of up-to-date procedures, policies, and norms based on institutional requirements, which were approved by the Director General. A procurement manual was prepared. The system included creation of a procurement committee, responsible for analyzing bids to purchase goods and services financed using the Institute's own resources. It has analyzed 21 bids for a total amount of US\$1.8 million, to ensure adequate implementation of competitive methods as required under institutional regulations, and selection of the most appropriate bids for the Institute in terms of price and quality of the goods and services acquired. In addition, a savings of US\$251,500 was realized in comparison with the bids originally submitted by selected suppliers, as a result

of the final negotiations conducted with them, following adjudication of the bids.

Control Systems

In strict compliance with the Institute's legal system, policies, rules, and procedures to eliminate overdrafts in budget implementation were put into practice. As a result, in the first years of the administration, overdrafts were completely eliminated from budget execution. The procedures used for this purpose included monthly budget execution reports with execution projections and recommendations issued on corrective and preventive measures for each of the Institute's operational units.

Official Travel

Measures to minimize international travel were established: stricter requirements were imposed on justification for such travel, an annual limit was placed on the maximum number of working days permitted for travel, and technological instruments were made available to personnel to facilitate virtual meetings. In addition, the daily subsistence allowance policy was modified by introducing a specific scale for the Institute designed to compute the subsistence allowance needed for cities where it has Offices, instead of using the subsistence allowance scale defined by the United Nations International Civil Service Commission. This change resulted in savings of 15% in payment of subsistence allowances for travel to cities where the Institute has Offices.

Rules and Procedures

The entire internal policy framework of the Office of the Director General was reviewed: changes were made in

manuals, and executive orders and directives were issued by the Director General, in an effort to put into practice the principles of transparency, austerity, and accountability.

The following norms were updated or created:

- **Regulations:** Financial regulations, staff regulations, and the salary determination system.
- **Manuals:** Code of ethics, staff manual, internal audit manual, and manual on procurement procedures and on contracting operational services.
- **Executive orders:** Preparation of national agendas for technical cooperation; official entertainment and social activities; official travel; Institute's web portal; developing a results-based management culture in IICA; recovery of taxes; preparation, approval, implementation, and follow-up of office improvement plans in member states; contracting professional consultant services; use of institutional vehicles; control of movable electronic assets; protocol for transfer of responsibilities in IICA Offices; the Institute's legal organization; special cooperation missions to member states; annual national and regional meetings for rendering accounts; hiring of personnel under legal instruments; liquidation of legal instruments (conventions or letters of understanding); institutional electronic mail; and, policies and procedures on external fund raising by IICA.
- **Directives of the Director General:** Guide on institutional publications; preparation of technical cooperation projects; INR (institutional net rate) policy; recording income generated by INR; miscellaneous resource

management policy; approval of legal instruments and technical cooperation instruments; Separata: preparation of the Annual Plan of Action, Initial Operation and Additional Operations; Preparation of the 2009 Annual Plan of Action: Offices, Regions, and Headquarters; Budget codification, budget transfers; Preparation of the 2010 Program Budget; Activities of the Regions, Offices, Directorate Units, and Technical Support and Technical Units; Preparation of cooperation instruments; correspondence manual; Director General rewards for excellence; Report on compliance with the annual plan of action; Projection of a new institutional image for IICA – general guidelines for projecting the institutional image; Collective insurance plan – description – category VII, local professionals; Collective insurance plan – Description – category V, consultants; Collective insurance plan – description – category VIII – retired international professionals; Procedural guide for control of execution of resources at headquarters; guide for management of IICA Offices in member states; Guide on “Privileges and Immunities for International Professional Staff of IICA Headquarters and the Costa Rican Office”; Directives of the Director General: additional management practices; and, Graph identity guide.

All the Institute's policy and legal instruments, listed according to their hierarchy, are available on the Intranet for the use of all IICA staff. They include the IICA Convention, regulations, manuals, executive orders, and directives of the Director General.

Moreover, institutional processes are defined, improvements are made to them, and specific processes and procedures are implemented in the Institute's Offices in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico.

Favorable Opinion of the External Auditors

In 2003, the independent report of the external auditors issued an unqualified opinion for the first time since 1996, and indicated that the financial statements reasonably presented the Institute's financial situation in all important aspects. This recognition was achieved by a continuous review of financial information, which entailed constant communication and feedback to the Offices in member states, to ensure implementation of the Institute's accounting rules and improve preparation and timely follow-up of information. This favorable opinion of the external auditors was an important endorsement of the process of accountability for the Institute's financial resources and helped to enhance the confidence and support of member states.

3. Application of New Information Tools for Institutional Management

Financial Information System

With a view to modernizing the Institute's financial system, the Institute engaged in a competitive bidding process to acquire a management resource planning information system from the SAP company. This system was implemented at headquarters and at the Offices in Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico. It is operating satisfactorily, in accordance with institutional requirements, along with a "help desk" service to provide continuous technical support. The benefits that this financial information system has brought to the Institute include the following: online implementation in real time of financial and accounting operations; standardization, automation,

and better control of the processes in question, based on best international practices; achievement of greater security and control in management of information; and, production of standardized reports of interest to the Institution and consolidation of a data base on financial statements.

Information Systems on Planning, Rendering of Accounts, and Human Resource Management

Seven new information systems were designed and put into operation for management of various processes involved in the Integrated Institutional Management System. These systems have made it possible to automate and streamline these processes by working online and in real time, and to realize important savings in delivery and reproduction of documents, since they facilitate teamwork and provide constant information on the performance of the Institute and all the actors involved. This type of coordinated work helped to integrate and better align planning, implementation, and account reporting processes with institutional guidelines. The information systems designed and implemented are those for the Annual Plan of Action, the Individual Contribution Plan, the Compliance Reports pertaining to the Annual Plan of Action, Official Travel, and the Projects, Vacations, and Insurance Systems.

The system referring to the Annual Plan of Action has made it possible to prepare, analyze, approve, store in a data base, and subsequently retrieve and consult the plans of action of all of the Institute's units, by direct online access by all unit heads, and by all the staff responsible for managing them at Headquarters.

The system for the Individual Contribution Plan operates in the same way as the Annual Plan of Action, for the work

plans of each of the Institute's employees, since it ensures that their activities are in line with the action plans of their organizational units and provides a basis for the corresponding performance evaluation.

The system for Reports on Compliance with the Annual Action Plan facilitates preparation and online submission of the biannual reports of the different units on progress in implementing their activities and on programmed results, and their subsequent storage and consultation on a data base, as well as analysis and feedback by the entities responsible for those functions.

The Official Travel System allows for preparation, submission, and approval online of travel reports that Institute employees must prepare. It stores information on these reports, that can be consulted by other employees authorized to enter the system's data base.

The Projects System contains an executive summary of all external resource agreements concluded by the Institute since 1994. Thus, this system makes an important contribution to the institutional memory, and at the same time provides relevant information on the daily work of the organization in managing external resources; this information is used as an input in preparing and negotiating new external financing proposals.

As for the Vacation System, it makes it possible to process vacation requests and consult the leave balances of staff. By using this tool, costs associated with time and paper use are reduced. It has also improved and streamlined the service provided to employees, and follow-up and control of use of leave by the staff.

The Insurance System consists of a digital file that facilitates location of documents, which can reduce the physical space required for records. Other advantages of the system include streamlining the time for response to questions of insured parties and reducing the expenses involved in paper purchases. Moreover, electronic delivery of information on the explanation of benefits (EOB) of claims has been implemented, resulting in a reduction of mailing costs and the customer delivery time. Also, a new short-term insurance data base was developed, and can be consulted online. A new data base for personal and vehicle insurance is also being developed, and is expected to be in operation by July 2009.

4. Improving Procedures for Institutional Information and Communication

Private Virtual Network

Using the Internet, a private virtual network between IICA Offices was created, to facilitate the exchange of information and knowledge, and teamwork. This network fosters the use of IP telephony, so that telephone calls can be made between the Offices at no cost, and with the security required by international standards, which is guaranteed by a firewall.

Institutional Web Portal

The institutional web portal was redesigned to improve management of information, by standardizing and concentrating the different web pages of IICA Offices in



member states and Headquarters on an integrated technical platform. This made it possible to exchange, become familiar with, and update information on the Institute and its technical knowledge, and also made them more accessible for member states.

Accountability

IICA delivered its Annual Report to the Organization of American States and its governing organs in a timely fashion. Moreover, the Offices and Regional Operational Departments prepared their reports and delivered them to the corresponding authorities.

Legal Framework for Institutional Publications

The institutional legal framework governing production and preservation of the specific knowledge of the Institute was revised. A Publications Committee was established, responsible for recommending institutional decisions on the subject. The processes established made it possible to improve the publication production process (coordination of publishing, stylistic review, technical review, diagramming, printing, etc.), as well as the recovery and organization of these publications, around 200 of which are produced annually.

Improving the Services of IICA Libraries

The services of the two IICA libraries, i.e., the one located at Headquarters, and the library on the campus of the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Turrialba, Costa Rica, were revamped. As a result, our

professionals will now have access to up-to-date information and literature.

The following are some of the specialized data bases of the organization: TEEAL (Cornell University), *CAB Abstracts*, *World Development Indicators*, and COMTRADE, among others. Alliances were also established with international information sources, such as the Agricultural Network Information Center (AGNIC) and the National Agricultural Library, both in the United States. These sources are supplemented with the strengthening and institutionalization of the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC), in which over 150 institutions in 23 countries of the Hemisphere participate.

The Directorate of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management reactivated publication of the magazine "COMUNIICA," a technical resource to disseminate the Institute's experiences, with articles on agricultural and rural issues of interest to decision-makers in countries.

Institutional Memory

Finally, on the subject of preserving the institutional memory, mention should be made of the efforts to improve access to all technical knowledge generated by IICA since it was founded. By establishing an alliance with the company "Google," around 24,000 documents were digitalized, and are available through Google's search engine, on the institutional website and in the Institute's Digital Library. A specific example of this effort was the complete digitalization of the "Turrialba" Journal, a technical publication of IICA that was one of the most renowned in the field of tropical agriculture.

Institutional Modernization

Best Institutional Practices



Best Institutional Practices

Dowlat Budhram¹

1. Introduction

During the last eight years, IICA has implemented actions to modernize the Institute by changing several processes and systems of operations so as to achieve higher levels of performance through greater efficiency and effectiveness. For this purpose, it adopted a new style of technical cooperation (TC) that emphasizes operational efficiency, financial prudence, human resources development and a new relationship with its Member States based on participation, transparency, accountability and mobilization of resources through strategic partnerships.

This document identifies several practices within the Institute that are integral to and contribute to the institutional modernization process and the realization of the new style of technical cooperation. The practices are considered within the broad context of best institutional practices (BIP) - a set of practices that contribute positively to the achievement of IICA's vision and goals. They are on observations and lessons learned, largely from missions of review and evaluation and internal audit, from IICA's operations at Headquarters and in the countries and from new institutional procedures and norms implemented. The document also provides a discussion on the concept of best practices based on the experiences of

other organizations and identifies some criteria for categorizing various institutional practices. It also identifies 15 practices within IICA that are categorized as best and good practices, based on criteria related to the Institute's mandate, goals and objectives, and its guiding principles and institutional values.

2. Concept and Usefulness of Best Practices

There is no single, universal definition for "best practice." The terms "best practice" and "lessons learned" are often used alternatively in the literature, as well as by institutions. Both best practices and lessons learned have a situational and institutional context and they reflect organizational maturity, performance and uniqueness. The lessons and experiences may or may not be replicable in other institutions and circumstances. Lessons learned are often based on the experiences of a particular program or project, or a process that may not be universal or institution-wide in its use.

A simple definition of a best practice is a process or procedure in an institution that consistently produces better or superior results. In this regard, best practices incorporate managerial and operational aspects of efficiency

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and effectiveness in relation to the goals and objectives or results to be achieved. The UNFPA defines best practices as operational practices of planning that have been proven to be “right” in particular circumstances and which are used to show what works and what does not in diverse situations and contexts; and to accumulate knowledge.² UNESCO describes best practices as having four common characteristics: they are innovative; they make a difference to the institution; they have a sustainable effect; and they have the potential for replication and serve as models for initiatives elsewhere. Four other aspects are worth mentioning:

- i. Best practices comprise a package of methods, experiences, strategies, practices and actions that provides information on what works better within a given situation, and/or examples of what should be avoided. They include elements of the application of institutional regulations and norms, measuring performance, identifying areas for improvement and taking appropriate actions, learning from an organization’s own experiences and those of others, as well as having the potential of responding and adapting to different situations over time. They are applied to every aspect of an organization’s performance, from organizational strategy and process reengineering to staff recruitment and technology use.
- ii. Best practices help to define an organization’s character and they touch on the essentials of good standards that reflect institutional integrity and achievements. The achievements are change-oriented, client-focused

and future-directed, aspects that are critical to create long-lasting added value to the organization’s clients and partners.

- iii. A necessary (or pre-requisite) practice in every organization is the development of a set of criteria/ indicators and benchmarks that facilitates the analysis and identification of BIP. The indicators and benchmarks serve as a reference base that meet certain criteria: they are specific; they are measurable (qualitative or quantitative) and are observable over time in their application to indicate superior performance, achievements or results attained; and they facilitate comparisons with similar practices of other institutions. Benchmarking facilitates an institution to identify performance gaps and to adopt higher standards and improve its practices.
- iv. In the context of IICA, best practices provide good building blocks of the operations of an international governmental organization that strives to achieve higher standards of performance and provide greater transparency and accountability in the use of resources. They do not only compare the Institute with similar organizations, but also how it functions with higher levels of success given its economic, political and cultural context and challenges. They contribute to IICA being a value-based organization. They reflect some critical success factors that drive the organization’s operations and culture, define its character and role and its maturity in its field or business.

² UNFPA and IPPF Evaluation: Synthesis Report 2004

3. Identifying Best Practices in IICA

Like most organizations, IICA has a large number of diverse practices, many of which have improved over time and contributed to increasing the efficiency of its operations and performance. However, information on the indicators and benchmarks of these practices are limited and this restricts the identification of the range of best practices across the Institute.

The methodology that was used identified certain attributes and criteria related to several practices that are specific to the organization. These include:

- consistency and alignment of the practices with IICA's mission, goals and objectives
- contribution to organizational efficiency and effectiveness
- usefulness of the particular procedure or process
- improvement of accountability
- contribution to client satisfaction
- contribution to employee satisfaction
- timeliness in the delivery of services
- contribution to knowledge development
- enhancement of the institutional image and
- stakeholder involvement.

The methodology reviewed a range of institutional practices in IICA based on the various criteria indicated above, identified 15 of these and categorized them in two groups of best and good practices. *Best practices* are defined as those practices that contribute to superior performance, improved efficiency and

effectiveness in the achievement of the Institute's vision, its goals and objectives. *Good practices* are those that satisfy two or more of the following criteria: they lead to a real change; they show an innovative approach or are replicable; they demonstrate sustainability; and they have a positive political impact. These practices add value and contribute to improving the managerial, administrative and operational aspects. They include improvements in the information systems, internal controls and processes, management and use of IICA's resources, and accountability. Raising the standards of good practices can result in these being classified as best practices.

The practices contribute to improvements in *five* broad areas of IICA's operations: Corporate Governance and Management; Technical Cooperation; Strategic Partnerships; Human Resources Development and Management; and Communications and Institutional Image. They include several that are consistent with the implementation of the Integrated Performance Management Model that was recommended by the SACMI in its 2001 report.

4. Group of Best Practices

a. Implementation of Representatives Week

Since 2002, the Institute has executed an Annual Meeting of Representatives that brings together the Institute's corporate leadership, regional directors of operations, technical directors, Representatives of IICA's Offices, hemispheric and regional specialists and various senior managerial and technical staff at Headquarters in a single forum to dialogue, discuss, review

and share information about IICA's strategic direction, its performance and its operations.

Why this is a best practice

- i. Representatives Week is the only forum within the Institute that provides an excellent opportunity to consolidate and project a single corporate image, renew the leadership commitment towards a common vision and promote solidarity within institutional diversity.
- ii. It is an excellent forum to reflect and dialogue on strategic issues, challenges and priorities.
- iii. It provides a good platform to foster links, facilitate integration and align IICA's actions among the various levels of the organization - Headquarters, the regional level and the IICA Offices.
- iv. Representatives Week is a good practice in the implementation of the Integrated Performance Management model.

b. Execution of the National Accountability Seminar

IICA executes a national accountability seminar in which each Office presents the contribution and results of its TC actions to the country's agricultural sector based on the National Technical Cooperation Agenda. The seminar is organized on an annual basis and it brings together the sector's main stakeholders, as well as IICA's partners and the key beneficiaries of its technical cooperation.

Why this is a best practice

- i. This is an innovative practice that is implemented by IICA only as a TC organization in the agricultural sector in the hemisphere.
- ii. It is a major component of IICA's reporting system in which the organization reports to its partners and clients on what it has done during the year.
- iii. The seminar reflects the Institute's commitment to provide accountability of its activities on a regular basis to its clients and partners.
- iv. The seminar provides a good "face-to-face" contact and interaction between IICA and the stakeholders that are more effective than reporting through documentation.
- v. It enhances IICA's institutional values of accountability, transparency and image, particularly in the current environment in which there is much concern on the value-added role and use of resources by international organizations.
- vi. The seminar is a good marketing tool that provides more transparency in the diffusion of information and a good platform for dialogue, reflection and prospective thinking.

c. Observance of IICA Day and Presentation of the Annual Report to the OAS

IICA has institutionalized an activity called IICA Day and the presentation of its annual report to the OAS forum in Washington, DC. These activities reflect accountability and

reporting of the Institute's work to the ambassadors of the Member States assigned to the OAS, as well as to the wider institutional community in Washington. While the national accountability seminar reports on IICA's work at the country level, the presentation of IICA's annual report and observance of IICA Day in Washington disseminates information and increases the awareness of the Institute's work within the OAS and the international community.

Why this is a best practice

- i. These activities are critical aspects of institutional accountability and contribute to promoting and improving IICA's image.
- ii. They provide a good platform for dialogue and reflection in the international community and strengthen IICA's role in the Inter-American system.
- iii. They serve as excellent public relations and promotional activities for the Institute.

d. Orientation of New Staff at Headquarters

Through its Directorate of Human Resources, IICA has designed and implemented a one-week orientation program at Headquarters for new staff, particularly new directors, hemispheric and regional specialists and administrators in IICA offices. The program provides, among others, various materials and information to new personnel and offers them a first, unique opportunity to meet and dialogue with various key personnel at Headquarters and be sensitized on the role, structure and operations of IICA, the relations between various departments and between Headquarters and the Offices, and personnel rules and expectations of staff members.

Why this is a best practice

- i. The orientation program reflects the practice of welcoming new entrants in the organization and facilitates their entry and integration into a large, complex and culturally diverse organization.
- ii. It provides new entrants with updated information on the Institute and "face-to-face" interaction with key staff members at Headquarters, which is not possible when they are located in an Office.
- iii. The program provides the opportunity to exchange ideas and establish network possibilities with Headquarters staff that can facilitate their work when they are assigned to an office.

e. Language Training of Staff

As part of its human resources development program, IICA has made a conscious effort in the past few years to invest in language training of its staff, particularly in English and Spanish, both at Headquarters and in the Offices. It facilitates Spanish language training for its personnel in the Offices in the Caribbean and English language training for those in non-English speaking countries.

Why this is a best practice

- i. As an international organization, it is becoming increasingly important in the global environment that IICA's staff have a mastery of more than one language.
- ii. Language training recognizes the multicultural character of the Institute and contributes to minimizing the cultural and language barriers within the organization.

- iii. It is an important driver for skills improvement and contributes to the modernization process of the Institute.
- iv. It contributes to greater institutional efficiency, employee satisfaction and commitment and greater flexibility of the staff to work in a diverse and challenging environment.

f. Implementation of a Protocol for Representatives

IICA implemented a Protocol for Representatives that provides guidelines for the transfer of the responsibilities of an outgoing Office Representative to an incoming one. The protocol outlines the specific actions to be taken and the process to be followed when a Representative is changed in an IICA office. The protocol mandates every outgoing Representative to prepare a comprehensive report on various aspects of the Office's TC actions, and the managerial, administrative and financial situation of the Office. In addition, it also specifies the practice of an incoming Representative overlapping for at least one week before the outgoing Representative leaves.

Why this is a best practice

- i. The protocol facilitates the smooth transition from one administration of an Office to another.
- ii. The report prepared by the departing Representative facilitates the transition process in changes in the leadership and management of an Office.
- iii. It is a good orientation instrument for a new Representative that provides key information on the status of the Office in a range of managerial and operational areas.

- iv. The report contributes to the institutional memory base of the Office and the Institute.
- v. The protocol promotes the institutional values of accountability, transparency and responsibility.

g. Recognition of Superior Performance by Staff Members

For the past six years, the IICA administration has implemented a program that recognizes superior performance by staff members in various categories. The Director General's Awards for Excellence are granted annually to staff members that demonstrate a solid contribution to the Institute's work and who possess and have demonstrated solid competencies in leadership, creativity, initiative and a strong institutional commitment.

Why this is a best practice

- i. The awards program recognizes and rewards those that make an extra effort to achieve above average performance and results in their work.
- ii. It provides a good incentive to strive for excellence in performance and a driver for employee commitment to the Institute's work.
- iii. It provides an opportunity for staff to make a distinct and unique contribution to the Institute's work.
- iv. The program promotes the institutional values of fostering a culture of achieving higher performance and to be results oriented.

h. Support to Staff for Emergencies

IICA created the Emergency Assistance Program in 2005 to provide financial assistance to staff members and family members that are affected by unforeseen circumstances and emergencies that are beyond their control. The assistance includes financial support to cover medical expenses, severe illnesses and personal and material loss due to natural disasters.

Why this is a best practice

- i. The program reflects an institution that demonstrates good corporate and social responsibilities and a commitment to the welfare of its personnel.
- ii. It is a good initiative for supporting personnel in situations of emergency.
- iii. It contributes to a good corporate image and character.

5. Group of Good Practices

a. Preparation of the National Agenda for Technical Cooperation (NATC)

Since 2003, the Institute has implemented a new instrument for supplying technical cooperation services to its member countries - the National Agenda for Technical Cooperation (NATC). The National Agenda is IICA's country strategy and reflects its commitment to support the government's key priorities and objectives for agricultural and rural development at the national level.

Why this is a good practice

- i. It is a useful planning instrument and a participatory model that defines IICA's actions at the country level, and it bridges IICA's strategic Medium Term Plan (MTP) with every country's needs and priorities.
- ii. The formulation of the NATC reflects a joint partnership and commitment between the national institutions and IICA to supporting a country's agricultural sector.
- iii. It provides a good planning framework that forms the basis of an Office's annual work program and it reflects a demand-driven and "bottom-up" approach that is executed through dialogue and consensus building through the involvement of the main stakeholders in the planning process.
- iv. The preparation of the NATC reflects the institutional values of commitment, dialogue, teamwork and partnership.

b. Implementation of an Annual Regional Planning and Programming Meeting (ARPM) at the Regional Level

At the regional level, IICA has institutionalized an annual activity known as the annual planning and programming meeting (ARPM) that brings together technical directors and other managerial staff from Headquarters, the Regional Director of Operations and Representatives and regional specialists from the particular region. Like the Representatives Week activity, the annual planning and programming meeting provides a single forum to dialogue, discuss, review and share information on IICA's strategic direction, its performance and its operations in each region.



Why this is a good practice

- i. The ARPM provides the best platform to integrate and foster links between the national and regional levels of IICA's operations and Headquarters.
- ii. It is an excellent forum for reflection, dialogue and planning on strategic issues, challenges and priorities on an annual basis at the regional level.
- iii. It enhances alignment and consistency of IICA's national and regional actions with its overall corporate vision and plan.
- iv. The ARPM reflects decentralized planning within the Institute and is an important component of the Integrated Performance Management model.
- v. The activity reflects a conscious recognition of national and regional priorities, their uniqueness and institutional diversity, and the Institute's commitment to regional integration, solidarity and teamwork at the regional level.

c. Guideline for Representatives

In 2008, the Institute published a guideline for Representatives, the first of its kind in the history of the organization. The guideline provides a range of key information for new Representatives and for new staff members in general, and it serves as a good reference document for the Institute's existing staff personnel.

Why this is a good practice

- i. The guideline is an important management tool that contributes to improving the management and operations of an IICA office.

- ii. It clearly defines the responsibilities and functions of an IICA Representative in the political-institutional, managerial-administrative, leadership and technical areas.
- iii. Most of the norms and procedures that are applicable to a Representative's responsibilities have been organized in this single document.

d. Diffusion of Information and Experiences through Publications and Information Systems

A major instrument of technical cooperation and a significant output of the Institute is the supply of various types of information to its Member States, clients and partners and to the wider international agricultural community through a range of information systems, publications, training materials and manuals. This activity adds considerable value to the Institute's work and demonstrates IICA's role as a knowledge-based institution.

Why this is a good practice

- i. IICA's publications reflect the character and depth of the Institute's capabilities to generate and manage technical and related information on agriculture and the rural sector.
- ii. The publications reflect the quality and expertise of IICA's staff in various themes.
- iii. The publications are an excellent instrument for promoting IICA's image and unique character.

**e. Promotion of Inter-Agency Collaboration -
“Working Together”**

For several years, IICA has been promoting the need to strengthen its collaboration with various strategic partners and allies to execute joint actions at the national, regional and hemispheric levels. In this regard, it has promoted an institutional policy of “working together,” recognizing the need for institutions to pool their scarce resources to address common objectives and priorities of its Member States.

Why this is a good practice

- i. Inter-agency collaboration is the best strategy of creating synergy among institutions and maximizing the use of scarce resources.
- ii. “Working together” highlights the distinct strengths of the Institute in relation to those of its partners and fosters the culture of institutional collaboration to achieve common objectives.
- iii. Inter-agency collaboration and coordination is the best strategy to implement the development agenda as outlined by the Millennium Goals, the Summit of the Americas Process, etc.
- iv. It contributes to the construction of a common base of information and knowledge on the agricultural and rural sector in the Americas.
- v. “Working together” fosters the institutional values of solidarity and commitment to addressing the needs of member countries.

**f. Review of Performance Management
and Evaluation of IICA Offices and Units
at Headquarters**

The establishment of the Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation in 2002 reflects a commitment of the Administration to foster an institutional culture of greater accountability and transparency through systematic reviews and evaluations of the IICA Offices and Units at Headquarters.

Why this is a good practice

- i. Continuous review and evaluation are essential managerial practices of every organization - as part of the ongoing process of self-examination, improved accountability and the need to take corrective measures.
- ii. Systematic evaluation is critical to the institutional learning process and its findings make a significant contribution to the Institute’s memory base.
- iii. Review and evaluations are key components in the implementation of the Integrated Performance Management model recommended by the SACMI.
- iv. Lessons learned and best institutional practices are identified through review and evaluations.
- v. Evaluations foster accountability and transparency in the institutional culture.



g. Implementation of an Office Improvement Plan (OIP)

One of the major outputs from review and evaluation exercises and the internal audit review is a set of recommendations for improving and strengthening specific areas of management, administration and the TC services that an Office provides to the country. The recommendations together form an Office Improvement Plan (OIP). The OIP addresses the various deficiencies and weaknesses identified in the office review that are to be addressed by outlining specific actions to be implemented by the Office, responsibilities for their implementation and expected outputs and dates for their achievement.

Why this is a good practice

- i. It is an instrument that provides feedback on performance in the execution of an Office's NATC and its annual action plan and its operations according to established institutional norms and procedures.
- ii. The OIP is a useful management tool that defines the corrective measures to be taken for improving aspects of an Office's administration and operations.
- iii. The guidelines for preparing, approving, implementing and providing follow-up to the corrective measures are clearly defined in an OIP.
- iv. The OIP fosters adherence to the Institute's principles of adopting a results-driven management style and improving accountability through performance and results.

Achievements of the Center for **Leadership in Agriculture**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Achievements of the Center for Leadership in Agriculture

Hernán Chiriboga¹

1. Introduction

The Center for Leadership in Agriculture was established in 2008 in response to the need to train leaders with a global view of the agricultural sector who understand the megatrends of the third millennium and act in accordance with that vision. The Center has implemented its lines of action with direct support from the technical areas of IICA. It has also formed a network of strategic partners and set up an advisory committee to provide guidance for its future work.

The Center's work is based on a "systemic" approach, as the idea is that leadership should become an integral component of the Institute's technical cooperation actions and a means for IICA to achieve its goals in regard to institutions, territories and regional and hemispheric integration.

The Center has adopted a working methodology that involves organizing leadership forums. A forum is a space for dynamic, ongoing discussions that enables ministers of agriculture and their teams, young leaders, extension workers, researchers, technicians, professionals and producers to strengthen their leadership capabilities, increase their knowledge of agricultural and environmental issues, share viewpoints and exchange information on important subjects.

2. Results Achieved

Forum for Leaders in Agriculture

This forum provides a space for dialogue for new ministers of agriculture and high-ranking decision makers in the agricultural sector in the Americas. The forum agendas are prepared bearing in mind the specific needs and interests of the ministries concerned, with a view to generating inputs for reviewing IICA's technical cooperation agenda in the country concerned. The objectives of the forums are: (i) to inspire members of the ministers' teams to adopt a new vision of agricultural and rural life in their country in the context of a globalized world; (ii) to align and support the modernization of institutions in the agricultural sector in response to new challenges; (iii) to consider different scenarios for the future of policies on agriculture, production and trade; (iv) to share knowledge with other institutions, both national and international, and (v) to conduct field trips to observe successful experiments with agricultural technologies that could be applied in the countries, in the areas of sustainable agriculture, hydroponics, production of small species, dairy production and organic farming.

IICA carried out **12 leadership forums** with the participation of ministers of agriculture of Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas,

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Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Haiti, Peru and Saint Lucia. Two forums were also held for high-level decision makers in Honduras and the Bahamas.

In addition, financing was provided for four training activities in the following areas: (i) sustainable agriculture, hydroponics and protected environments: four-week course for 12 extension specialists from the Ministry of Agriculture of Jamaica; (ii) leadership, organic production, biodigestors and earthworm composting: course for seven producers in Belize, (iii) a course for a group of 10 producers in Saint Lucia; and (iv) sustainable agriculture and protected environments: activity with producers from Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Grenada. A network of biodigestors was developed in Saint Lucia, using animal manure to produce agroenergy.

Following is a list of visits by ministers:

- Visit by Mr. Christopher Tufton, Minister of Agriculture and Land of Jamaica. The following issues were discussed: contribution of agriculture to the Jamaican economy, diversification of production, promotion of transparency in technology and modernization of the Ministry.
- Visit by Mrs. Joanne Massiah, Minister of Agriculture, Land, Marine Resources and Agroindustry of Antigua and Barbuda. Discussions were held on increasing agricultural production and productivity in order to maintain acceptable levels of food production, nutrition, income security and export opportunities.
- Visit by Mr. Lawrence Cartwright, Minister of Agriculture and Maritime Resources of the Bahamas. The issues discussed included assistance to farmers through direct marketing initiatives, reducing production costs, promoting the best crops for each climate zone, adoption of greenhouse cultivation technologies and improvement of supply conditions.
- Visit by Mr. Matthew Walter, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry of Dominica. Discussions were held on food security, job creation, participation of youth and women in agriculture, creation of a farmers' fund, legislation on agriculture and modernization of the sector.
- Visit by Mr. René Montero, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries of Belize, who discussed issues relating to assistance in adopting technologies to increase production and productivity, training and product insertion on the international market.
- Visit by Mr. Haynesley Benn, Minister of Agriculture of Barbados. Issues discussed were food security, food safety, nutrition and efforts to get youth interested in the agriculture sector.
- Visit by Mr. Denis Lett, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Grenada. Discussions focused on rehabilitation of nurseries, plant propagation projects, food security and training for ministry officials, agricultural technicians and farmers.
- Visit by Mr. Joanas Gué, Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development of Haiti. Discussions focused on sustainable agricultural production technology, pineapple cultivation methods, tropical crops and a model of EARTH University.
- Visit by Mr. Carlos Leytón Muñoz, Minister of Agriculture of Peru. Discussions focused on agriculture in the Andean area in the twenty-first century, sustainable



rural development, agricultural health and food safety, technology and innovation, natural resources and leadership development for rural youth.

Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture

IICA organized forums for audiences ranging from the hemispheric to the territorial level, as well as the regional and national levels, to help emerging leaders in agriculture in the Americas develop their leadership abilities and become encouragers, facilitators, strategists, guides and service providers. The objectives of the forums were: (i) to consider different scenarios for the future of agriculture and rural life, (ii) to help shape a new vision of agriculture and rural life in a globalized world, (iii) to allow young leaders to share their knowledge and successful experiences with other young leaders in their own countries and in other countries of the Americas; and (iv) to hold discussions on the requirements for leaders in the twenty-first century. Training was offered for **654 young people** in a total of **28 forums** held at the different levels (hemispheric, regional, national and territorial).

a. First Hemispheric Forum for Young Leaders in the Americas

The Institute reinforced the leadership skills of 81 young people from the 34 member countries of IICA, through training on leadership and values, rural development with a territorial approach, agribusiness and efficient methods for searching for information on agriculture. After receiving the training, the young participants returned to their countries and initiated actions designed to replicate the experience, and they started forums at the regional, national and territorial levels. They stay in touch through the Inter-American Network of Young Leaders (REDIJOL), which enables them to exchange new

information, conduct business and find job opportunities and scholarships for study or training.

b. Leadership training at the regional level

Eighty-five participants from the public and private sectors, the academic community and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) received leadership training. IICA presented analyses of issues such as leadership based on values and team work, negotiation and conflict resolution. The training also focused on organic production, climate change and its impact on agriculture, entrepreneurship in rural areas and biofuels. These forums not only helped the participants strengthen their leadership abilities, but also gave them a global outlook on the main trends in agriculture.

The first regional event organized by IICA was the Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture for the Andean Region, held in Quito, Ecuador, at which 25 young people from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela were able to strengthen their leadership skills.

The second regional event organized by the Institute was the Second International Course on Leadership for Development of Ecoagriculture: Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America. This course was held at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Training Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica, in collaboration with CATIE, the University of California at Berkeley and Ecoagriculture Partners. A group of 35 leaders from sectors related to agriculture in Central America attended this course.

The third regional event was the First Central American Leadership Forum on Agroenergy, which was held in Costa Rica in conjunction with IICA's Hemispheric Agroenergy and Biofuel Program. Twenty-five professionals from the ministries

of agriculture and energy and companies producing sugar cane and oilseeds attended this forum, where they were given a global outlook on the prospects and scenarios of agroenergy.

c. Leadership training at the national level

Leadership training was provided for 378 young leaders from different areas of their respective countries, as well as representatives of the private and public sectors, the academic community and nongovernmental organizations. The subjects covered included leadership, food security, rural development and rural business.

This program included the following forums:

- National Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture in the Dominican Republic, to reinforce leadership skills of 80 young leaders from different parts of the country.
- Forum on Leadership Development for Extension Agents working with coffee producers, to strengthen leadership abilities of 30 extension workers.
- Forum on Leadership for Technological Innovation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica and the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System (SICTA). This forum was held at IICA Headquarters, with the participation of 30 extension workers and researchers.
- National Forum of Leaders in Agriculture in Guatemala, at which 40 agricultural professionals and producers received leadership training.
- First Forum on Leadership for Rural Youth in Costa Rica, held in conjunction with the Club Rotario Noreste-San José. Thirty-five young people improved their leadership skills at this forum.

- First Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture in Uruguay, attended by 40 young leaders from different regions in the country.
- Forum on Strengthening Organization and Leadership Development for extension workers in the program of the National Coffee Association (ANACAFE) of Guatemala. This forum was held in conjunction with PROMECAFE and reinforced the leadership skills of 38 extension workers and researchers.
- Five forums were held with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, to strengthen leadership and management abilities of 125 extension workers.

d. Leadership training at the territorial level

IICA provided leadership training for 110 young leaders from rural areas in different countries of the hemisphere, including representatives of the public and private sectors, the academic community and nongovernmental organizations. Participants received training in leadership, territorial development, the role of public policy, natural and cultural resources, and the territorial approach applied to agro-chains and quality.

The main events were:

- The First Territorial Forum, Meeting of Young Leaders in Agriculture in Venezuela, organized jointly with the Secretariat for Economic Development of the Regional Government of Portuguesa State, which provided training for 30 young leaders.

- Territorial Forum of Young Leaders of La Guajira, Colombia, at which 30 young leaders received training; agro-production projects for which funding had already been obtained were also presented. A group of these young people met personally with the President of Colombia.

e. Leadership training at the territorial level for rural leaders engaged in bean production

With direct support from the SICTA Network, the Institute provided leadership training for 50 rural leaders engaged in bean production in Guatemala and Nicaragua. The training was designed to strengthen their organizational skills so as to improve sales of their product and enable them to purchase more inputs; it also helped reinforce their sense of belonging and loyalty to their organizations.

Inter-American Network of Young Leaders in Agriculture

IICA established the Inter-American Network of Young Leaders (REDJOL), which covers 500 young people. This network has enabled young professionals from several countries to keep in touch, conduct agricultural business transactions, and take advantage of job opportunities and internships, such as the exchange between the National School of Agriculture of El Salvador and Mexican agricultural companies. Young people received training in agricultural practices, hydroponics and sustainable production. The Leadership Center coordinates the network's activities.

Internships in Foreign Countries

Under this internship program, the Institute enables young leaders to work for up to one year in a country other than their own. Thus, they have an opportunity to live in a different culture, learn and/or practice a new language, observe different agricultural environments and contribute to implementation of the national technical cooperation agendas of IICA's member countries.

During the period 2008-2009, 12 young people started their internships, as shown in the following table:

Table 9: Internships Organized by IICA.

Young Leader	Country of origin	Country of internship	Project	Duration
<i>Abidemi Smenkh-Ka-Ra</i>	Trinidad & Tobago	Panama	Compiling information on markets for Panamanian agricultural products, and rural tourism initiatives	1 year 2008-2009
<i>Denise Hodge</i>	Antigua & Barbuda	Venezuela	Study of the impact of price increases for raw materials and food products in the territory of Portuguesa state, working with IICA and the Secretariat of Economic Development of Portuguesa State	4 months 2008-2009
<i>Rosalina Godínez</i>	Costa Rica	Colombia	Study of the impact of increases in international prices of raw materials and foods in the Territorial Rural Development Program in the Tequendama Region, IICA-UNAL partnership	3 months 2008
<i>Javier Barría</i>	Panama	Peru	Participation in technical projects aimed at supplementing capacities of MINAG and IICA to make it viable to develop forest nurseries and produce saplings, strengthening capacities of institutions and agricultural producers, and projects at the IICA Office in Peru	1 year 2008-2009

Table 9(Cont.)

Young Leader	Country of origin	Country of internship	Project	Duration
Selwyn Anthony	Guyana	Ecuador	Formulation of profiles and technical cooperation projects in the fields of agricultural health, rural development and knowledge management	6 months 2009
Roberto C. Martínez	Nicaragua	Brazil	Participation in projects for small farmers, knowledge management activities, the Second Exchange for Rural Youth and other technical projects at the IICA Office in Brazil	1 year 2008-2009
José A. Sánchez	Costa Rica	Uruguay	Assist with institutional strengthening of the Agrarian Youth Movement in Uruguay	1 year 2008-2009
Federico Villarreal	Argentina	Dominican Republic	Implementation of technical cooperation actions relating to technology and innovation at the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic	4 months 2009
Harold Uriana	Colombia	Chile	Formulation and participatory validation of the Plan on Rural Development with a Territorial Approach for the municipalities of Corral in Valdivia, Chile	4 months 2009
Ana María Torrealba	Venezuela	Costa Rica	Exchange of experiences and technical knowledge relating to conceptual and methodological aspects of sustainable rural development with a territorial approach, in connection with the emergence of institutional management models for processes defined through the active participation of local governments, communities and rural organizations that have adopted the territorial approach	4 months 2009
Alvaro Arana	Spain	Costa Rica	Support for the establishment of the Andean Alliance, in cooperation with the University for Peace	6 months 2009
Francesco Racanti	Italy	Costa Rica	Support for the establishment of the Andean Alliance, in cooperation with the University for Peace	6 months 2009

Communication Tools

IICA promoted access to information on leadership in agriculture through the following:

- *Revista de Liderazgo en Agricultura*. This magazine includes success stories, articles by experts, methods for consolidating leadership and tools for becoming much more than a manager of an agricultural enterprise.
- Special edition of *IICA Conexión* magazine devoted to the Center for Leadership in Agriculture. This edition included information on activities carried out by the Center during 2008.
- “*Manual de formación de facilitadores para eventos de desarrollo de liderazgo*”. A handbook for facilitators of leadership training events that provides tools for organizing and facilitating leadership activities.
- Report entitled “*Comprendiendo los asuntos urgentes del desarrollo agropecuario del siglo XXI*” (Understanding urgent issues in agricultural development in the twenty-first century).

- Methodological tools used in the leadership forums under the new paradigm:
 - ✓ Integrated leadership profile: mind, body, heart, spirit.
 - ✓ The case of Terra Bella: Visualizing the future.
 - ✓ Resilience: navigating a complex and uncertain world.
- Leadership anthology. A collection of articles and exercises that is used in forums at the hemispheric, regional, national and territorial levels.

3. Other Important Achievements

- Several training events were organized with the participation of personnel from Franklin Covey, including Stephen Covey. These activities were designed to strengthen leadership values among IICA staff.
- A methodology for leadership forums was developed which is based on modules on the subjects of values, building trust, team work, empathetic listening and leadership styles.
- A network of strategic partners was set up to support development of the Leadership Center. These partners include: the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, which provided a specialist for a two-year period and a specialist to work with the Center's Advisory Committee; the SICTA Network, which helped provide leadership training for Central American bean producers; and PROMECAFE, which collaborated with leadership training for extension workers and coffee producers in Central America.
- The Leadership Center worked with IICA Representatives and their teams to coordinate the planning, organization and evaluation of forums for ministers and young leaders. One output of this collaboration was the creation of the program on Executive Leadership in Food Safety, a program developed in conjunction with the Directorate of Animal Health and Food Safety to improve leadership skills of young professionals involved in decision making in those areas.
- The Advisory Committee for the Center for Leadership in Agriculture was established, with the participation of Ambassador Patricio Zuquilanda, Permanent Representative of the OAS in Costa Rica and former Foreign Minister of the Republic of Ecuador; Dr. Blas Santos, former Director of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Latin America Program; Dr. Cristina Rojas, Advisor to the Constituent Assembly of Costa Rica and former Ambassador of Costa Rica to Japan; and Dr. Susan Fritz, Vice-Chancellor of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Institute of the University of Nebraska. The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to guide the Leadership Center in developing lines of action and building strategic alliances.

Agriculture's True Contribution to Development



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Agriculture's True Contribution to Development

Rafael Trejos¹

1. Introduction

The Institutional Modernization Unit (IMU) was created to analyze and evaluate the performance and prospects of regional agriculture and generate strategic recommendations for modernizing agriculture and improving rural life and sectoral institutions, thereby providing input for the decision-making processes of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Executive Committee and the General Directorate of IICA, and for the actions of hemispheric, regional and member country technical cooperation initiatives.

The IMU conducts analyses of the agricultural situation and critical issues, and generates information and knowledge that allows IABA, the Institute and the countries themselves to develop strategic recommendations, policy proposals and solutions to emerging issues. Below are the results achieved by the IMU during the 2002-2008 period.

2. IMU Cooperation Objectives and Lines of Action

- To generate, within the framework of the political guidelines of the Summits process, strategic information and knowledge to support the decisions of the governing

bodies of the Institute (IABA, the Executive Committee and the General Directorate) and the member countries, and to encourage dialogue between key stakeholders.

- To support the processes of institutional and sectoral modernization and policy design and evaluation.
- To guide the Institute towards the adjustments necessary for the proper performance of its technical cooperation function.

3. Results Achieved

Agriculture's True Contribution to Economic Development

IICA wished to demonstrate that agriculture, in the broadest sense, is undervalued because the way official statistics are presented conceals its true importance, and that this has negative effects on the resources allocated for agricultural and rural activities.

The Institute devoted itself to the task of providing the ministries of agriculture and IICA with better information to

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demonstrate the true contribution of agriculture to national economies, rural prosperity and food security. To this end, a methodology for estimating the true contribution of agriculture was disseminated and a number of products were used to promote its application in member countries, including:

- A methodology for breaking down agriculture in social accounting matrices (SAMs) and the creation of the SAM for Costa Rica.
- A study on the true contribution of agriculture to the economy of 11 countries of the Americas, entitled “More Than Food on the Table: Agriculture’s True Contribution to the Economy”, which was teleconferenced to at least eight countries (Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, and the United States), by means of the World Bank’s Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), and by means of regional workshops held in Ecuador, Saint Lucia and Honduras—in the latter case with the support of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI).
- A methodology for incorporating green accounts that was applied to the forestry sector in Costa Rica on a pilot basis.
- Coordination for cooperation with specialists from the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague (Netherlands), who have a great deal of experience in the subject that qualifies them to carry out actions to support the creation of SAMs in Central America and Ecuador.
- Studies on Ecuador and Trinidad and Tobago dealing with the true contribution of agriculture to the economy and an updated version of the study conducted for Costa Rica.
- A publication analyzing the impact that free trade agreements have had on the grain-poultry-swine chain in Peru.
- A collaboration agreement with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which was used to coordinate activities pertaining to the project of analyzing the impact of the Free Trade Agreement between Central America, Dominican Republic and the United States (DR-CAFTA) on Central American agriculture.
- A full estimation of the true contribution of agriculture to the economies of 22 countries, based on the national accounts published by central banks.
- A methodology for evaluating the impact of international commodity price volatility on the food vulnerability of American countries and a methodology for analyzing the transmission of international prices to rural incomes. Case studies on the subject were carried out in 15 regions of five countries of the Americas (Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Peru and Uruguay).

IICA also undertook the construction of an institutional position on the subject of “A renewed appreciation of rural life”, looking ahead to the 5th Summit of the Americas. To achieve this, a conceptual document was prepared on the subject, and another was formulated on the international outlook for agriculture and rising commodity prices. These documents served as input for conducting an international workshop on the subject. In addition, IICA conducted six specific studies on different thematic aspects related to the role of agriculture in the new international environment, following the international workshop’s recommendations.

The position of IICA was presented on the occasion of the 5th Summit of the Americas by means of an executive summary, written in four languages, of a more extensive document that will be presented at the Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture in October 2009.

In addition, IICA participated in the sessions of the FAO/OAS-ICE/IICA Working Group on Agricultural and Livestock Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean, in the regional sessions of this Group held in Buenos Aires, Argentina and Aguascalientes, Mexico, and in the preliminary meetings of the 2010 agricultural census round. Improvements were made on the definitions used to conduct these censuses and determine the sampling frames.

Biennial Report “*Situación y Perspectivas de la Agricultura*” (“The State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”)

IICA prepared the reports on the situation and prospects of agriculture. They were presented at the IABA meetings and the ministerial meetings held in Panama (2003), Guayaquil (2005) and Guatemala (2007). In addition, IICA began to prepare the related report, which will be presented at the IABA meeting and the ministerial meeting to be held in Jamaica in October 2009.

The Institute, in collaboration with funding and research agencies of the Americas, initiated a participatory approach to the preparation of reports on issues critical to agriculture and rural life, in particular the “*Informe de la situación de la agricultura y la vida rural en las Américas*” (“Report on the State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”).

Accordingly, during the preparation of the 2003 Report, IICA coordinated with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), ECLAC, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IFPRI and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) for the report to be prepared based on an outline presented by IICA. During the 12th Ordinary Meeting of IABA, held in Panama, an executive summary was presented and the full report was distributed on compact disk in two languages and later made available on the IICA website.

In 2005, the effort of cooperation with other agencies was centered on defining a set of indicators that would allow the Agro 2003-2015 Plan to be followed up and establishing a system for State monitoring of agriculture. To this end, in 2004 in Santiago, Chile, a workshop was held with ECLAC, FAO, PAHO, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to define the indicators. These indicators were later compiled in a publication coordinated by ECLAC and presented at the Ministerial Meeting held in Guayaquil in 2006.

At this meeting, two other reports were also presented: the report on the situation and prospects of agriculture in 2005, entitled “*Agriculture, a Strategic Issue*”, formulated by IICA, and a special report on the themes of job creation, poverty reduction and rural vulnerability, prepared for the IABA and the 5th Summit of the Americas held in Argentina in November 2005. The report was published under the title “*Policies for Rural Prosperity*”.

The report on agriculture’s situation and prospects was prepared for IABA and the Ministerial Meeting held in Guatemala in 2007, this time entitled “*La agricultura frente a los nuevos retos del desarrollo*” (“Agriculture Facing New Development Challenges”). An executive summary of the

report was distributed and presented at the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the World Bank, the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development and the Subregional Councils of Ministers.

For the 2009 report, the idea was reintroduced of IICA, ECLAC and FAO making a joint effort to prepare a single report for all three agencies. To this end, working groups were created at each of these agencies. A single report endorsed by all three agencies will be presented for the first time during the Ministerial Meeting to be held in Jamaica in October 2009.

Table 10. Technical Forums.

Forum	Date
Challenges for Agriculture in the Americas in the Context of Trade Negotiations: The Canadian Perspective	April 2003
Measuring Agriculture's True Contribution to the Economy	August 2003
Commercial Agriculture Negotiations after the WTO Ministerial Meeting (sponsored by IICA, LATN Network, CABI and COMEX-CR)	November 2003
The True Contribution of Agriculture and Instruments for Policy Analysis (organized through the World Bank GDLN)	April 2004
The Importance of Agricultural Hygiene, Food Safety and the <i>Codex Alimentarius</i>	July 2004
Agriculture and Energy: Prospects for Using Agriculture as an Energy Source	September 2004
Export Opening and Public Health Problems: The Case of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Uruguay	November 2004
Education, Rural Employment and Poverty Reduction	December 2004
DR-CAFTA Approval: The Case of Costa Rica	April 2005

As part of the above process, IICA created an information system allowing access to and use of statistical indicators on agriculture and rural life. It also launched the website of the System of Shared Trade and Production Statistics (FAO and COMTRADE) to be used by Institute specialists.

Technical Forums Series

The table below lists the technical forums held and their dates:

Forum	Date
Progress on the Doha Development Agenda Negotiations (in coordination with LATN Network)	April 2005
Development and Safe Use of Agro-Biotechnologies in the Americas: Implications for Agricultural Modernization and Rural Poverty Reduction	May 2005
Agriculture's Contribution to Job Creation, Rural Poverty Reduction and Promoting Rural Prosperity	May 2005
Agribusiness for Dynamizing Investment in Rural Areas	July 2005
Recent Tendencies in Rural Policy in the United States: The Importance of Territory	October 2005
The Doha Development Agenda Negotiations in Agriculture: Hong Kong Results	January 2006
Policies for the Development of Rural Territories in Brazil	May 2006
State Policy for Agriculture and Rural Development	June 2006
The Importance of Phytogenetic Resources in Tackling Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean	November 2006

Table 10 (Cont.)

Forum	Date
The Peru-United States Free Trade Agreement: Agricultural Negotiation Experiences	November 2006
Climate Change and the Vulnerability of Agriculture and Rural Life	December 2006
Emerging Diseases: The Importance of Veterinary Services, Intersectoral Action and Compensation	April 2007
2006-2010 MTP: Induction Conference	April 2007
Policy Reform and Preparation for the Implementation Date of DR-CAFTA (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) (in collaboration with LATN Network)	June 2007
China and India: Challenges for Agricultural and Food Trade in the Americas	November 2007
Risks, Opportunities and Benefits of Biotechnology for American Countries	December 2007
Agriculture for Development: Presentation of the 2008 World Bank Report	May 2008
Management of Intellectual Property in LAC Agriculture and Regional Public Assets	April 2008
A New Approach for Tackling Zoonotic Diseases	June 2008
A New Appreciation of the Rural Contribution to Development (international workshop)	June 2008
Direct Foreign Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean and its Impact on Agriculture and Rural Development	August 2008

Support for Institutional Modernization

IICA met the need of the countries' agricultural ministries and sectoral agricultural organizations for models and precedents to assist them with their institutional modernization initiatives in a context of changing public- and private-sector roles as they plan for the twenty-first century by providing guidance with the design of institutional modernization strategies for the countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic and documenting success stories in the modernization of agricultural services.

The results of the actions undertaken included the following:

- A forum was held for discussion on transforming IICA into a development organization and the memorandum was prepared, with versions in Spanish and English being distributed for feedback to all IICA offices (2003).
- The *"Informe sobre la situación de los ministerios de agricultura y las gremiales agropecuarias en los países del CORECA"* ("Report on the situation of ministries of agriculture and agricultural organizations in the countries of CORECA"), prepared in collaboration with the company SIDE S.A., was presented to the CORECA Council of Ministers.
- A strategic planning workshop was prepared and conducted for the PROVIA Foundation in Nicaragua (2003).
- *"Políticas e instituciones para la agricultura de cara al siglo XXI"* ("Policies and Institutions for Agriculture in the Twenty-first Century") was published as a book (2004).
- Other documents were prepared and served as inputs for policymaking and institutional modernization: *"La*



competitividad de la agricultura en América Latina: evolución reciente (“Competitiveness of Agriculture in Latin America: Recent Developments”); *Semillas de cambio para la agricultura de América Latina y desafíos para las políticas* (“Seeds of Change for Agriculture in Latin America and Policy Challenges”) and *Estudio comparativo de las agendas de Perú, Ecuador y Colombia, complementarias al TLC con Estados Unidos* (“Comparative Study of Agendas of Peru, Ecuador and Colombia Complementary to the FTA with the United States”), supplementing the studies conducted by LATN for Central America and the Workshop held to discuss them in the Dominican Republic.

- Support was provided to CAC in the process of creating the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA).
- Support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) of Chile, the Ministry of Agriculture of El Salvador and the Secretariat of Agriculture of the Dominican Republic, assisting in the preparing of proposals for institutional modernization.
- An inventory of policies on food safety in the different regions of IICA was prepared in 2008; this information has assisted in the formulation of national strategies.

Critical Issues Analysis

IICA created a process of strategic thinking which resulted in the development of concepts on issues critical to agriculture. This process included document preparing, discussion workshops and publication of the results, which improved the positioning of the Institute and the content of technical cooperation provided to countries. As a result, the following documents were created (See table 11).

Table 11: Documents Relating to Critical Issues.

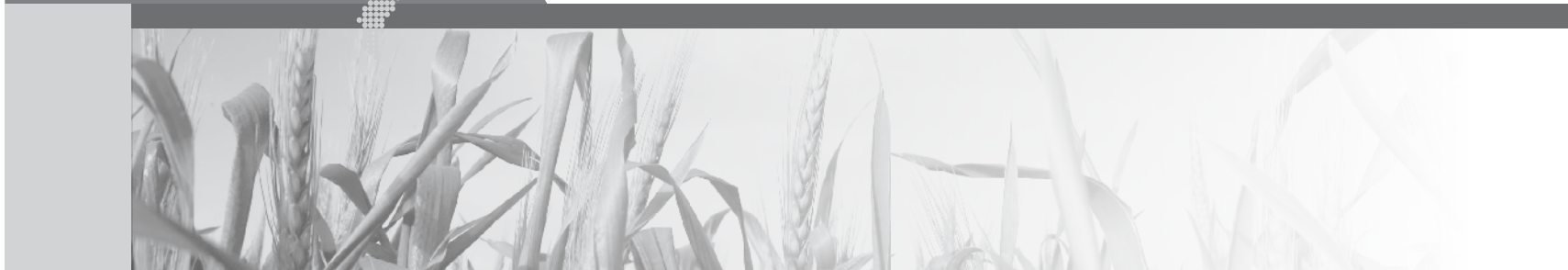
Document	Year
<i>Inseguridad alimentaria</i> (Food Insecurity)	2003
<i>Financiamiento rural</i> (Rural Financing)	2004
<i>Revalorización de lo rural</i> (Rural Revaluation)	2007
<i>Análisis macro de los impactos regionales de la crisis alimentaria</i> (Macro Analysis of Regional Impacts of the Food Crisis)	2008
<i>Análisis de la vulnerabilidad que presentan los países ante el crecimiento de los precios de los productos básicos y los insumos y las respuestas ensayadas por dichos países para enfrentar la crisis</i> (Analysis of the countries' vulnerability to commodity and input price increases and the responses of these countries in their attempts to address the crisis)	2008
<i>El contexto internacional y regional y las políticas para la agricultura y la vida rural</i> (International and Regional Context and Policies for Agriculture and Rural Life)	2008
<i>Pobreza y seguridad alimentaria</i> (Poverty and Food security) (document presented at the 26 th International Course of the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights)	2008
<i>Oferta de alimentos en el contexto actual: tendencias y desafíos futuros</i> (Food Supply in the Current Context: Tendencies and Future Challenges)	2008
<i>Hacia una nueva institucionalidad para el desarrollo de la agricultura: lecciones de la experiencia y propuestas</i> (Towards institutional renewal for Agricultural Development: Lessons from Experience and Proposals)	2008
<i>La institucionalidad para el desarrollo rural en el contexto actual</i> (Institutions for Rural Development in the Current Context)	2008
<i>Biocombustibles y alimentos</i> (Biofuels and Food)	2008
<i>Condiciones de competencia en cadenas agroalimentarias clave en Latinoamérica (2008)</i> (Competition Conditions in Key Agricultural Chains in Latin America (2008))	2008
<i>Agricultura, urbanización y disponibilidad del recurso agua</i> (Agriculture, Urbanization and Availability of Water Resources)	2008



Medium Term Plans (MTPs)

IMU collaborated in the presentation of MTPs for the 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 periods. The plans were created in coordination with the different units of the Institute, using information gathered through consultation exercises carried out in the member countries.

Achievements in Promoting **Horizontal Technical Cooperation**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Achievements in Promoting Horizontal Technical Cooperation

Guillermo Toro Briones¹

1. Introduction

The strategic action priorities laid down for the Institute by the 2006-2010 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) include consolidating a new technical cooperation model, repositioning agriculture and rural life, renewing the institutional framework for these and targeting direct technical cooperation. The MTP also establishes two commitments for IICA:

- a. To create spaces to facilitate dialogue between countries on emerging issues.
- b. To encourage countries to share their experience of successful initiatives in the strategic areas described in the MTP, and to provide the training needed for them to do this.

To allow these institutional commitments to be met, the Division of Horizontal Technical Cooperation (HTC) was created as part of the new IICA structure established by Executive Order no. 23 of 2006 with a view to organizing, facilitating and adding value to the efforts made by countries, institutions and specialists to implement innovative, replicable initiatives in agriculture and the rural milieu and pool this experience, thereby strengthening national, regional and hemispheric capabilities.

2. HTC Commitments

Once created, the HTC Division was charged with meeting the following commitments:

- a. Identifying the main successful initiatives in the countries and turning them into interchangeable public goods.
- b. Analyzing national and regional technical cooperation agendas to determine HTC requirements.
- c. Compiling information on the methodologies adopted in successful initiatives and promoting their transfer to other countries.
- d. Generating a hemispheric map of supply and demand for agriculture-related public goods, by country.
- e. Identifying the mechanisms that have made other international agencies successful and applying them at IICA.
- f. Working with the countries' foreign ministries, and especially their cooperation agencies, to pursue HTC initiatives.

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3. Achievements within IICA

Once the HTC Division had been structured and its operating methods organized, a strategy for obtaining and managing information about the countries' institutions was designed. The approach decided upon was to identify and publicize successful national initiatives that could be turned into interchangeable public goods, offered to other countries in the hemisphere and used to mobilize knowledge, human resources and financial support.

An information platform was organized to systematize successful initiatives generated by the countries' institutions on the basis of the supply and demand embodied in national technical cooperation agendas, to supplement the technical cooperation work of the Institute.

In addition, the "cooperation nodes" methodology was designed to identify countries that were leaders on particular rural or agriculture-related issues or processes so that other countries' institutions could access this information and use it to improve the outcomes of their own actions.

IICA created a program of HTC activities with foreign ministries and national cooperation agencies, and this has facilitated the negotiation and signing of HTC agreements and enhanced IICA cooperation activities.

Since 2006, the Institute has prepared an annual report recording HTC actions by country agencies and the measures taken by IICA to facilitate the transfer of information on successful initiatives. This report has been distributed at the 34 IICA Offices in the hemisphere and sent to diplomatic missions, international agencies and national cooperation agencies.

4. Value Added by IICA HTC during the 2006-2008 Period

The actions taken by the HTC Division at the Institute served to:

- ✓ Strengthen the Institute's relationships with the international cooperation agencies and foreign ministries of Member States and help them use their resources more effectively.
- ✓ Bridge supply and demand in agriculture (public and private sectors) through technical cooperation and support for the sharing of information on replicable successes between regions and countries.
- ✓ Publicize successful initiatives and lessons learned.
- ✓ Promote the design of methodologies for organizing and systematizing HTC processes and ensuring their quality.
- ✓ Incorporate "cooperation nodes" into the countries' institutions as a new innovation mechanism.
- ✓ Promote the pooling of knowledge obtained by the countries' own institutions in subject areas that are of strategic importance for the Institute.
- ✓ Establish institutional policy frameworks to enhance HTC.
- ✓ Forge relationships with strategic partners and publicize the HTC actions taken by IICA.

5. Results Achieved

HTC became an instrument for mobilizing technologies and know-how generated in countries and regions. Knowledge management actions were taken, including the pooling of information on successful initiatives and specialized technical resources, as a mechanism for providing third countries with access to good practices generated in other countries and regions for use in their farm sectors and the countryside. Achievements have included:

- Consolidating the new cooperation model and increasing technical cooperation by mobilizing individual countries' resources, holding events where knowledge could be shared, carrying out technical missions and providing advice on priority issues, all of which brought IICA into closer contact with the countries' institutions and facilitated the transfer of information.
- Preparing the "Directorio de experiencias exitosas y nodos de cooperación" ("Directory of successful initiatives and cooperation nodes"), which summarized the results achieved with strategic issues, thus contributing to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life and the targeting of IICA technical cooperation.
- Signing cooperation agreements with the countries' international cooperation agencies and foreign ministries, which brought IICA into closer collaboration with both types of institutions in countries such as Chile, Argentina, Haiti, Brazil and Mexico.
- Collaborating in the implementation of 100 successful projects in the countries, with the network of IICA Offices in the 34 Member States playing a vital role.
- Conducting HTC on a basis of mutual respect and collaboration, which made it possible to forge closer friendships, open up new opportunities for regional integration and work towards the resolution of problems arising in the agricultural sector and the rural milieu through a process whereby local institutions offered solutions to certain countries' problems while at the same time receiving support from other countries to solve problems of their own.
- Constructing an information bank on successful institutional initiatives, allowing country-level institutions to access fresh information and thus keep their staff abreast of the agriculture and rural development situation.
- Creating an area on the IICA website to publicize the HTC activities of the Institute in an organized fashion.
- Designing strategies, methodological guides and manuals to facilitate HTC actions and ensure their quality.
- Allocating resources in the Institute's 2008-2010 Extraordinary Budget to enhance HTC provision, on the instructions of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA).
- Designing and implementing mechanisms to compile, systematize and disseminate HTC information.
- Preparing the "Manual de procedimientos para la operación de los instrumentos de cooperación técnica horizontal" ("Manual of procedures for operating horizontal technical cooperation instruments") and the "Guía metodológica para identificar las experiencias exitosas del Instituto" ("Methodological guide for identifying successful Institute initiatives").



- Using 50 successful initiatives in the countries to improve agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere; these were detailed in the “Registro hemisférico de experiencias exitosas” (“Hemispheric register of successful initiatives”).
- Distributing the document “Estrategias e instrumentos para convertir a Chile en una potencia agroalimentaria” (“Strategies and instruments for turning Chile into an agricultural power”) and applying experiences in “Políticas de Estado” (“State policies”) and their achievements in four countries of the hemisphere.
- Creating technical cooperation “nodes of excellence”² to promote the pooling of experiences that have the potential to improve agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere; preparing “Nodos de cooperación” (“Cooperation nodes”), which provides information about the concepts, instruments and stages involved in the construction of a node; and preparing the publication “Cooperation node for Latin America and the Caribbean countries”, which details the Chilean experience with efforts to strengthen the public-private relationship in agriculture.
- Working with the Chilean Agency for International Cooperation (AGCI) to organize the regional seminar “Development of nodes of excellence for capacity-building to foster South-South cooperation”, which was held in Santiago, Chile and served as a negotiating forum for cooperation between 18 countries in the hemisphere.
- Generating the following cooperation nodes for priority issues:
 - Brazil node: “Agribusiness and agroenergy”, which puts the experience of Brazil with these two issues at the disposal of the countries of the hemisphere.
 - Mexico node: “Policies for agriculture”, which identifies the main policies, programs and projects adopted by Mexico in recent years to support the agricultural sector and reduce the effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Technical missions from Colombia and Peru visited Mexico to familiarize themselves in situ with this initiative.
 - “Agricultural insurance” node in Uruguay, which makes available the country’s experience from almost 100 years of working with the agricultural insurance market and its advantages for risk mitigation.
 - “Rural agroindustry for the Central America region” node, in support of the Central American Agricultural Policy (CAAP).
 - “Organic agriculture” node in Argentina, for which an information gathering and dissemination follow-up framework was formulated.
 - Work has begun on nodes in the following areas: support instruments for family farming in Chile, rural tourism in Argentina, cooperativism and solidarity in Costa Rica, environmental services in Costa Rica, fruit fly control in Chile.
 - In conjunction with the Program for the Development of Rural Agroindustry for Latin America and

² A node of excellence is a hub that identifies a successful initiative which can be systematized, promoted, publicized and adopted by other countries with similar needs.



- the Caribbean (PRODAR) and the Hemispheric Coordinating Office for Rural Agribusinesses, IICA organized the *“Experiencias exitosas en negocios rurales”* (“Successful rural business initiatives”) competition, which rewarded the best initiatives in the hemisphere out of 40 submissions.
- Holding the international seminar *“Seguros agropecuarios y gestión del riesgo: tendencias y experiencias internacionales”* (“Agricultural insurance and risk management: international trends and experiences”) with contributions from different partners, including the Central American Agricultural Council. This activity was supported by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Costa Rica, among others.
 - Supporting the Uruguayan Ministry of Agriculture and the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) as they organized and held an event to publicize the latest advances in agricultural insurance in the hemisphere: the international seminar for the Southern Region *“Climate risk management and agricultural insurance”*.
 - Actions to coordinate HTC processes involving identification, first, of the demand for cooperation in its various forms and, second, of the supply of successful initiatives and specialized human resources in countries, institutions, IICA Offices and regions. Examples include:
 - Drawing up the proposal to establish an HTC program between Canada and the Southern Cone in the area of agricultural health and training for technology transfer firms.
 - Helping to coordinate the agricultural aspects of the AGCI cooperation program with Haiti.
 - Helping to develop and then negotiate the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System (SICTA) project *“Núcleo de conocimiento Centroamérica-Chile para la innovación agrícola y la seguridad alimentaria”* (“Central America-Chile knowledge hub for agricultural innovation and food security”), which will be presented to the IICA-Central America fund and administered by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).
 - Formulating and coordinating a program of action in the areas of rural tourism, rural agroindustry, biotechnology and organic farming.
 - Helping small Chilean producers and Costa Rican producers to pool their experience with export products, with the collaboration of the Chilean Export Support Program (ProChile).
 - Helping to organize and hold the seminar *“Desarrollo de la agricultura familiar: la experiencia chilena y la cooperación del Programa de Fomento Productivo del Sector Vitivinícola (INDAP) en Centroamérica”* (“Developing family agriculture: the Chilean experience and cooperation from the Wine-growing Sector Production Development Program (INDAP) in Central America”) in Costa Rica.
 - Holding the seminar-workshop *“Modernización del servicio fitosanitario del Estado”* (“Modernizing the State phytosanitary service”), with technical cooperation from Chile and financial and technical collaboration from the FAO, to support Costa Rican institutions in the area of agricultural health.
 - Organizing the lecture *“La investigación e innovación para la agricultura chilena y sus vínculos con Costa Rica”* (“Research and innovation for Chilean agriculture and



its links with Costa Rica”) delivered by the Director of the Chilean Agricultural Research Institute (INIA).

The support given to the countries in preparing, revising, negotiating and signing HTC or cooperation agreements resulted in:

- The signing of the cooperation agreement between IICA and AGCI, which introduced innovative mechanisms into public-private relations, generated Chilean missions and advisory services in a number of countries with technical and administrative support from IICA and led to an international event on cooperation nodes attended by 20 countries.
- Evaluation of the IICA-AGCI Agreement, leading to successful negotiations to reactivate that agreement.
- Signing of an agreement between the Chilean National Irrigation Commission and IICA to cooperate with the Costa Rican National Service of Underground Waters, Irrigation and Drainage (SENARA), for which IICA and SENARA signed an agreement that opened the way for the provision of technical and financial resources from both institutions.
- Implementation of an agreement between the Government of Argentina, the Government of Haiti and the IICA Office in Haiti that resulted in the joint provision of technical cooperation with methodologies and specialists from the PROHUERTA project. The good results obtained with this agreement encouraged new participants to come forward, such as Canada and Brazil, with the program expanding as a result.
- Implementation of a cooperation agreement with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) with a view to implementing an action plan with Haiti and other Caribbean countries.
- Signing of a general cooperation agreement between the Argentine Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship (MRECIC) and IICA to implement HTC actions with the Argentine Cooperation Fund (FOAR).
- Signing of a technical cooperation agreement with the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide greater support on agricultural and rural issues to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Signing of HTC agreements on agricultural insurance with the Inter-American Federation of Insurance Companies (FIDES), to support the Central American project “Apoyo al desarrollo del mercado de seguros agropecuarios en América Central” (“Supporting the development of the agricultural insurance market in Central America”), and with the Latin American Association for the Development of Agricultural Insurance (ALASA), to improve understanding of the issue in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Cooperation with the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) on the drafting of agreements to enhance the participation of Chile as an observer country in the Central American Integration System (SICA) and in CAC.



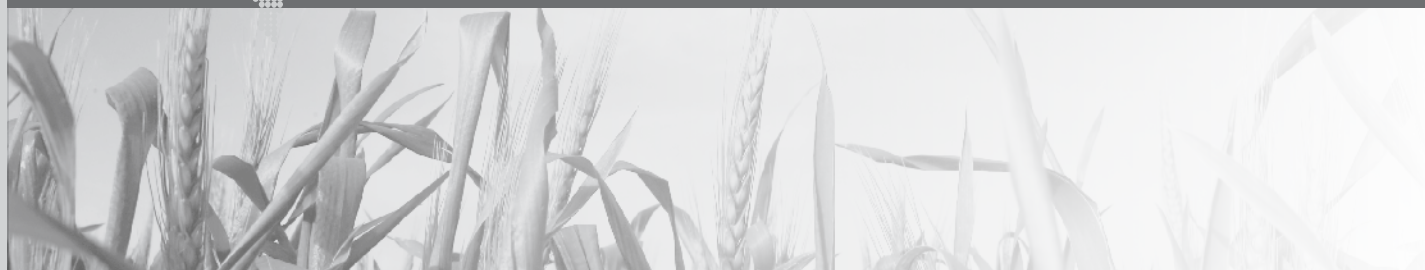
6. New Challenges and Opportunities

HTC represents a great opportunity to support the institutions of Member States by apprising them of experiences in other countries that can help them to solve their own problems. When supported by an organization such as IICA, this form of cooperation adds value to knowledge management, with the Institute identifying successful initiatives in particular Member States, learning from them and sharing this knowledge with other of its Member Countries so that these can resolve problems they encounter in agriculture and rural life.

Cooperation nodes have worked to document and systematize successful initiatives. All countries have some product, process or area where they excel. Identifying these and sharing this knowledge is a way of cooperating while at the same time promoting technological innovation.

This knowledge management mechanism has great potential, but it requires a culture shift within the Institute itself. If this potential is to be fully realized, it is essential that IICA Offices in Member States commit themselves to mobilizing knowledge and working to create a productive relationship with the agencies responsible for international cooperation. This is essential to give greater visibility to the technical cooperation efforts of the Institute.

Achievements in
External Resources-Raising and
Implementing **Investment Projects**



Achievements in External Resources-Raising and Implementing Investment Projects

Nelson Espinoza¹

1. Introduction

The Directorate of External Finance and Investment Projects (DEFIP) was created in 2006. It comprises a director and the technical team of the Projects Unit of the Technical Cooperation Secretariat, which was established in 2003. Thus this report covers the results achieved by the Projects Unit from 2003 through 2005, and the results of DEFIP from 2006 to 2008.

DEFIP worked intensively to mobilize external resources and support for preinvestment and investment activities in their different forms, applying the institution's values and principles and working as a team with all the IICA Offices in member states, different units of the Institute, hemispheric, regional, and national specialists, and in a participatory way with their technical and executive counterparts in the countries. DEFIP has offered support services to other IICA units and to various member countries.

2. Results Achieved

Significant progress was achieved in the following areas: (a) fund-raising; (b) developing capacity for project elaboration and presentation; (c) developing hemispheric, regional, national, and sectoral strategies, action and business plans; (d) strengthening strategic alliances; and, (e) preparing reports on the status of investment in and financing of agricultural and rural development and future prospects.

a. Mobilizing External Resources

As a supplement to negotiation of projects and fund-raising activities promoted by IICA in countries, the Institute carried out intensive negotiations with bilateral and multilateral agencies. In the Hemisphere, a portfolio of projects to create more opportunities in the rural economy of Latin America and the Caribbean was prepared, as support for negotiations to obtain donor financing or cofinancing from Spanish agencies interested in designing and implementing 20 projects in ten selected countries. A portfolio comprising 23 projects, entitled "Investing for the future of food security in Haiti" was also

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prepared. It was presented to donors in Washington, D.C., at the "Friends of Haiti" meeting convened by the Organization of American States (OAS). The portfolio was also presented to the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the European Union (EU), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the French Development Agency (AFD), the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), OXFAM-Canada, and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

Between 2003 and 2008, a total of US\$56.9 million was raised, a figure that clearly shows the advance of investment in the agricultural and rural sector in member countries and the positive investment externalities generated. The total

amount and an aggregate breakdown by regions is shown in the table 12.

In addition, 93 project design activities were carried out, and appear in documents that contain the project ideas and profiles that were used as support in negotiating and in obtaining preinvestment and investment funding (24 projects in the Central Region, 36 in the Caribbean Region, 25 in the Andean Region, and 8 in the Southern Region). In some cases, the project profiles, such as the ones designed for the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) of Costa Rica and for the National Animal Health Service (SENACSA) and the National Plant Health, Quality and Seed Service (SENAVE), both in Paraguay, were used as strategic guidelines for the future development of these entities.

Table 12: Estimates of the Contribution of Fund-Raising to IICA*.

Programs and projects	Total funds raised (in thousands of US\$)
Central Region	
a) Conservation and sustainable use of Central American phylogenetic resources (Central American Network of Phylogenetic Resources - REMERFI); b) Denominations of origin for Central American coffee (Regional Cooperative Program for Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Growing, PROMECAFE); c) Action Plan for Modernization and Development of Agriculture under Irrigation, PLAMAR (Guatemala); d) Project for Development of Fragile Ecological Zones, PRODERT (Guatemala); e) Competitive Fund for Agrofood Technology Development, AGROCYT (Guatemala); f) Salvadoran National Fruits Program, Fruit Trees III (El Salvador); g) National Ground Water, Irrigation, and Drainage Services, SENARA (Costa Rica).	4 150
Caribbean Region	
a) Caribbean Agricultural Council for Higher Education, CACHE (regional project); b) Sugar Industry (Belize); c) Dominican Republic: Avian flu; d) Haiti: 1) Marketing in Artibonite; 2) Small egg-production farms; 3) Construction of storage tanks in Artibonite; 4) Strengthening <i>Kredifanm</i> ; 5) Technical capacity building; 6) Fruit flies; 7) Agro-industrial development of Artibonite; 8) Pwotokol; 9) Avian influenza; 10) Prohuerta.	17,130

Table 12 (Cont.)

Programs and projects	Total funds raised (in thousands of US\$)
Andean Region	
a) Yacambú-Quibor (Venezuela); b) Colombian Rural Development Institute, INCODER; c) Observatory of territories (Colombia); d) Los Ríos (Ecuador); e) El Oro (Ecuador); f) Territorial projects, Ministry of Social Welfare, (Ecuador); g) Potosí (Bolivia); h) Camirí (Bolivia); i) Community tree nurseries (Ecuador).	1 619
Southern Region	
a) Avian influenza, Southern Agricultural Council, CAS; b) Jopoi-Mbareterá (Paraguay); c) Brazil: 1) Information technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply, MAPA; 2) Institutional management, MAPA; 3) Guamaré; 4) Production chains, MAPA; 5) Alto Apodi-Idema; 6) Piauí Crédito fundiario; g) Rural territories, STD; 7) Social participation; 8) National integration; 9) Marañao Crédito fundiario; PGRH Bahía; 10) Sao José Ceará; 11) Program to Combat Rural Poverty, PCPR II/PHASE II, State of Piauí; 12) Service contract between Foundation Bank of Brazil and IICA.	34,000
Total	56,899

* Data on figures available at DEFIP, in the document "Updated annexes on fund raising."

b. Development of Capacity for Project Presentation

Caribbean region. From 2004 to 2006, nine project design training events were organized for 248 participants from Jamaica, Suriname, Barbados, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, and Belize. In 2007, videoconferencing was used for a course on fund raising for IICA officials (the course consisted of five training modules). In the Caribbean, together with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), two initiatives were supported: a) support to UNECLAC to train professionals from Suriname on the socioeconomic impact of disasters, using UNECLAC

methodology for that purpose, to analyze the damages caused in 2006 by the floods in the country (2006); and, b) support to UNECLAC in training professionals from Jamaica on the socioeconomic and environmental impact of disasters, using UNECLAC methodology (2006).

Central region. Four training events on project design were held: in agro-biotechnology (regional in scope), with the Biotechnology Area (17 participants); in nutritional food security, with the IICA Office in Costa Rica (20 participants); in technological innovation, with the SICTA network (25 participants); and, in agricultural protection and health, with the IICA Office in Nicaragua (22 participants). Training in economic evaluation of irrigation and drainage projects and

in development of farm models was provided to two officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica, and to two others from the Honduran Secretariat for Agriculture and Livestock.

Andean region. Two events were held: “Harmonization of project design” (2003); and, “Preinvestment strategies and good practices for projects,” which was conceived as a new paradigm for management of technical cooperation of the Institute (2006). Both were organized together with the IICA Office in Bolivia.

Southern region. A course on participatory project preparation was held together with the National University of Cuyo, in Mendoza, Argentina.

Materials to improve and systematize training events and project design, and to support the different thematic areas, were prepared and disseminated. These materials included the following:

- Guide for preparation and presentation of national or regional investment projects for prevention of avian influenza, to support negotiations involving binational and/or multinational donations and/or requests for financing and private sector contributions (Spanish and English versions).
- Guidelines for redirecting loan funds to investment and technical cooperation projects and programs (Spanish and English versions).
- Methodology to identify regional needs in agrobiotechnology and biosecurity.
- Methodology to align priorities with project descriptions in Competitive Funds.
- Methodology for economic evaluation of irrigation and drainage projects, with a multi-market model.
- Methodology to design farm models for their economic and financial evaluation.
- Methodology for participatory preparation of plans and projects, as a tool for strengthening human resources and social capital in rural territories.
- Publication: “Systematization of the process for preparation and management of the northeastern Canelones development plan: an applied experience of a territorial approach to sustainable rural development in Uruguay.”
- Methodological material on “problem trees” and “logical framework.”
- Design of a virtual course on fund-raising, comprising five modules (English and Spanish versions).
- Technical notes on sunken costs, scenarios for evaluation, farm models, computing “border prices,” economic evaluation of the Yacambú-Quíbor Project (Venezuela).
- Methodology for estimating damages caused to Grenada’s agricultural sector by Hurricane Ivan.
- IICA’s bidding strategy.
- IICA’s strategy for relations with international organizations.
- IICA’s project strategy.
- “Competitive Funds for Agriculture and Rural Development: rationale, uses, and lessons learned,” a joint publication of IICA and the Regional Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA).
- Proposed methodology and manual for regional workshops, to support the socialization and complementarity process

of the Sectoral Development Plan of Bolivia's Ministry of Rural Development, Agriculture, and the Environment (prepared jointly with the technical team of the IICA Office in Bolivia).

- Study to determine the viability of granting credit to micro-businesses, conducted jointly with Development Finance Limited (DFL), Caribbean Region.
 - Study to facilitate regional trade by establishing a mechanism to support countries in the areas of food safety and agricultural health, through the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHSFA), Caribbean Region.
 - Priorities for rural and agricultural development in Brazil: reflections on the subject.
 - Strategy for preparing and negotiating projects and technical cooperation with external financing (Bolivia, 2003).
 - Together with the Master's Program of Campinas University (UNICAMP), Brazil, preparation of a study on alternative tools for financing agriculture (2006).
 - Preparation of a proposal on "Development of a conceptual and methodological framework for participatory identification and design of programs and projects with a territorial approach," for use in "reference territories" selected in countries of the Andean Region (2006).
 - Case study on "Commercial agro-production chain for vegetables, a new financial structure model."
 - Study on systematizing the operation of environmental preservation funds in the Chilean mining sector.
- Organization and management for preparing project profiles designed to modernize official health and sanitation services.
 - Official guide for preparation of IICA technical cooperation projects.

c. Development of Hemispheric, Regional, National, and Sectoral Strategies, Action Plans, and Business Plans

IICA supported hemispheric, regional, and national action and business plans, strategies, and policies, including the following ones:

- **In the Hemisphere: a) Business plan:** IICA technical cooperation in agricultural insurance (IABA mandate, Resolution No. 411).
- **Central Region: a) Regional:** 1) Central-American Agricultural Policy (PACA), an initiative headed by the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC). It supports the PACA formulation process with regard to the public investment component; it serves as the technical secretariat for the component, and supports the corresponding regional technical group. As a contribution to this group, three documents were prepared for this group: "Support for the design of PACA by analyzing the tree of problems and the logical framework of the agricultural public investment area," "Preliminary analysis of public agricultural investment of the Central American isthmus in the context of Latin America and the Caribbean," and "Preliminary analysis of investment opportunities inferred from reports of technical groups (2006-2007)"; 2) Forum of Central American Vice-Presidents: support for devising



guidelines for the 2003-2007 Action Plan and the 2003-2004 Annual Plan; IICA's contributions focused on the Border Development Program; 3) Central American Forum for Dialogue and Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education: support was given for five conferences and the accreditation process; **b) Belize:** 1) Strategy for adaptation of the country's sugar industry: 2006-2015: It has five components: production, processing, and transport of the sugar cane; diversification in the sugar industry; diversification in the Northern Region; socioeconomic interventions; and, policy interventions; 2) Support for the organization and design of a "Medium-term strategy for development of the agricultural/rural sector of Belize (2003); **c) Honduras:** 1) Strategy for public investment in the agro-food sector with a focus on production chains: 2008-2012; 2) Review and modification of the "expression of interest" in participating in the prequalifying round for the Rural Business Development Program, IDB loan # 1919-HO.

- **Caribbean Region:** **a) Regional:** 1) Support for the process of organizing and holding the Agriculture Donor Conference in 2007 in Trinidad and Tobago: IICA prepared and presented five projects and played an important role in discussions with donor agencies; 2) Summary of regional project proposals for presentation at the Agriculture Donor Conference; 3) Moving CARICOM Agriculture Forward (summary of proposals); 4) Strategic approach to ensure the contribution by agriculture to the development of CARICOM; 5) IICA Strategy on Environmental and Natural Resources for the Caribbean; and **b) Saint Kitts:** 2007-2011 Agricultural Development Strategy: It has four components: 1) agricultural production; 2) marketing; 3) livestock production; and, 4) development of fisheries.

- **Andean Region:** **a) Regional:** 1) Met the request of agriculture ministers to support the design of agricultural and rural development strategies; 2) Supported preparation of a proposal on "Strengthening national capacities in design of policies and instruments for territorial rural development in Andean countries"; 3) Prepared the business plan on "Technical cooperation in agricultural tracing for the Andean Region; **b) Bolivia:** 1) In the framework of the "National Dialogue on Production in Bolivia," support for preparation of the proposed consultation/participation of the Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy of the Ministry of Small Farming and Agricultural Affairs; 2) Support in designing the Agricultural Development Plan, as part of the Potosi Department Development Plan, in coordination with the Agricultural Departmental Service and Bolhispania Cooperation; 3) Support to the Deputy Minister of International Economic Affairs, with the preparation of the "Strategy for promotion of Bolivian oilseed exports"; **c) Ecuador:** 1) Support for the Ministry of Agriculture in preparing a proposal for coordinating sectoral strategies and policies; guidelines and short-, medium- and long-term instruments were identified, for the "Agro Revitalization Plan in the Mountain Region," in harmony with the sectoral policy and local development strategies undertaken by provincial governments; 2) Support for MBS [Social Welfare Ministry], through a joint MBS-IICA-FAO project to define and implement the MBS intervention model, linked to a territory-based strategy for sustainable rural development; in formulating and implementing a plan of action for approval and release of resources for a portfolio of selected projects; in preparing a proposal of the Territorial Project Management Committee and a proposal to hold workshops on strategies for implementing the MBS model on a local level, in three regions; and 3) preparation of a business plan for the Los Rios provincial investment program; **d) Colombia:**

1) Support for INCODER in defining a strategy for territorial investment programs and intervention, consistent with binding sectoral and rural development policies and with the principles of a territorial approach to sustainable rural development.

- **Southern Region:** a) Support for preparing the “Comparative Study on Agricultural Policies in the Member Countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS)”.

d. Strengthening Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances were strengthened in various ways, such as:

- Support for negotiations with IDB: a) Document on “Creating opportunities for majorities in rural areas,” to support the IICA Director General’s letter to the IDB President; b) Resolution No. 431 of the Fourteenth Regular

Meeting of the IABA (July 27, 2007) on “IICA’s Role as an Executor of the Programs and Projects of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).”

- Served as Secretariat for the Coordinating Committee on Matters related to Strategic Partners, which facilitated internal coordination, helped to define institutional policies, and strengthened the Institute’s alliances. Task forces were established to develop relations with IDB, FAO, CATIE, and ECLAC.

e. Contribution to Preparation of Reports

Since 2004, support has been provided for preparing the IICA Report on “Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas,” by developing regional reports on the status of investment and financing in agriculture and rural development, and on future prospects. In 2005, during Representatives’ Week, a presentation was made on this subject for both LAC and for the Central, Caribbean, Andean, and Southern Regions, and Mexico.

Special Reports



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Special Reports

Coordination of the Office of the Director General



Coordination of the Office of the Director General

Pamela Stroude¹

1. Introduction

The Office provides support to the Director General in the discharge of the duties assigned to him by the governing bodies of the Institute. At the beginning of the first administration, the Director General set up a team to assist him in defining the strategy to reposition and modernize the Institute and this Office participated actively in that process, which eventually led to the crafting of the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan.

In 2002, the Director General decided to focus greater attention on the observance of protocol within IICA. As a result, this Office was given oversight for protocol matters and, subsequently, responsibility for establishing the Unit for Protocol and Institutional Relations (later known as the Office for Diplomatic Relations and Protocol). In addition, this Office was instrumental in developing an extensive database on the wide network of institutions with which IICA maintained relations and in spearheading the manual entitled "Protocol for the reception of visitors at Headquarters."

2. Management of Operations

Coordination with IICA Headquarters and National Offices

Throughout the period under review, the Office promoted high standards of professionalism and was successful in coordinating follow-up to the directives from the Director General with the Heads of Departments at Headquarters and the Representatives in the Offices in the countries, obtaining their input on matters for decision, based on their specific areas of expertise. Special mention can also be made of the collaboration with the Office for Public Information and Institutional Image in the compilation of press releases and communications for IICA's clientele and strategic partners throughout the hemisphere; with the Human Resource Development Division in the selection and orientation of new staff; with the Secretary to the Cabinet and the IABA in organizing the meetings of the Executive Committee, the Special Advisory Commission and the IABA; with the Finance Division in the preparation of key documents for Member States on quotas and arranging meetings with the Audit Review Committee; and with the Office for Diplomatic Relations and Protocol and the Office for Official Events in the planning and execution of all events at Headquarters involving the Director General.

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Human Resource Development

The efforts invested in building and maintaining a strong team throughout the two administrations played a major role in the success achieved by the Office of the Director General. As part of this process, an exercise was undertaken to link each staff member's Individual Contribution Plan to the goals of the Office and to the primary objectives of the Institute.

Furthermore, given the focus on human resource development, this Office collaborated with the Human Resource Division to ensure that staff members - including those in the Office for Diplomatic Relations and Protocol - were exposed to training to improve their competence in a wide variety of areas, including the Institute's official languages, especially English, computer software programs, protocol, business administration, international relations and emergency procedures. This action produced very positive results.

Establishment of a System of Correspondence

In addition to managing the database on the Institute's extensive network of strategic alliances mentioned above, a major aspect of the work of the Office involved the processing of a large volume of correspondence. This included matters received from and dispatched to Ministers, representatives of Member States and other partner institutions, documentation from the departments at Headquarters and from IICA's Offices in the Hemisphere. This Office worked with the Informatics Unit to devise systems to allow for recording, classifying, follow-up and quick retrieval of items of correspondence and for managing the many speeches and presentations delivered by the Director General throughout his terms of office.

Budget

In keeping with the policy of observing financial prudence, the Office for the Coordination of the Director General prepared its budget (which included the Office for Diplomatic Relations and Protocol) and successfully managed the allocated resources. As a result, throughout the period under review, all programmed activities were executed within the available budget.

3. Strengthening Relations with Member States

Official Missions by the Director General

One of the primary objectives of the Director General's official missions was to promote dialogue with key decision-makers and raise IICA's profile in the hemisphere. These missions mostly involved meetings with high-level government officials, including presidents or prime ministers, foreign ministers, ministers of agriculture as well as other relevant ministers and representatives from the private sector and the agricultural community.

This Office coordinated an average of sixteen official missions per year to the Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern regions. The critical importance of these meetings was that they provided an opportunity for the Director General to share with these high-level officials IICA's strategies for working together with the national governments to reduce rural poverty in their countries and the wider hemisphere. The Director General's participation in the national accountability seminars and the delivery of the country reports to the governments played a significant role in increasing awareness

of the value of the Institute. This, in turn, led to the building of trust and over the years, to a marked improvement in the payment of quotas and arrearages by Member States, which had a positive impact on IICA's financial standing.

Evidence of the Member States' satisfaction can also be seen in the number of honors and distinctions bestowed on the Director General. In 2003, he received a royal award entitled the "Companion of Honour" from the Government of Barbados; in 2004, a doctorate honoris causa from the National University of Asuncion, Paraguay; in 2006, an award for the Institute's work in agriculture in Brazil from the Governor of the State of Rio Grande do Sul; in 2008, the Award for Merit in Agriculture from the Confederation of Faculties of Agricultural Sciences of Ecuador; and in 2009, a doctorate honoris causa from La Molina National Agrarian University in Peru and an honor from the government of the province of Huaura, Peru.

Organization Of-High Level Events on Behalf of the Director General

Part of the strategy to build strong relations with Member States involved extending an invitation to ministers, ambassadors and other representatives to IICA Headquarters and provide opportunities for them to hold discussions with the Director General and IICA Directors to define areas for closer cooperation. These are some of the major events coordinated by this Office:

- The official meeting for the resident diplomatic community in Costa Rica in 2003, to sensitize them to the issues relevant to the Twelfth Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture on Agriculture (IABA);
- The 60th IICA Anniversary Celebration in 2002 and the 65th Anniversary in 2007;

- The inauguration ceremony for the Director General's second term of office in 2006, attended by ambassadors and representatives of 32 Member States and 9 international organizations as well as IICA staff members; and,
- The official visit by the President of Chile, Her Excellency Michelle Bachelet, in 2008.

In the execution of these events, the Office worked closely with the Office for Protocol and Diplomatic Relations, the Office for Public Information and Institutional Image and the Unit for Official Events.

Forums for Leaders in Agriculture

This Office was an integral member of the team that planned this initiative, launched in 2007, and participated actively in the forums for the Minister of Agriculture of St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Dominica and Belize. The three-day seminars were of value to the ministers, especially those appointed only a short time before and those who came from academic backgrounds other than agriculture. The knowledge and insights they received in the meetings at IICA Headquarters and during the field trips proved useful and succeeded in broadening their perspectives on the way in which IICA could assist them in implementing their national technical cooperation agendas and programs.

This Office also played an integral role in the development and execution of the Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture that brought together some 81 participants from Latin America and the Caribbean in 2008, motivating and orienting the facilitators drawn from the cadre of young professionals at IICA Headquarters and in the development of mechanisms to create positive interaction between the members of staff at

IICA and the group of young leaders, thereby expanding their knowledge of IICA's work in the hemisphere.

4. Support to the Director General in Building Strategic Alliances

In supporting the Director General's efforts to strengthen IICA's network of alliances, this Office worked closely with the IICA Office in Washington D.C., the Directors of Regional Operations and Integration and the Representatives at the IICA National Offices.

Organization of American States (OAS)

The Director General held several fruitful meetings with OAS Secretary General Dr. Cesar Gaviria and with his successor, Jose Miguel Insulza, to define areas for collaboration between the two institutions. In addition, this Office coordinated successful visits to IICA Headquarters by the OAS Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Albert Ramdin, in 2006 and 2008.

In keeping with the policy of accountability and transparency, the Director General instituted a practice of presenting to the ambassadors on the OAS Permanent Council individual country reports based on the national agendas developed with the Member States. In this way, IICA succeeded in building closer ties with the OAS as well as with Member States, since the ambassadors on the Permanent Council were able to report to their capitals on the specific work that IICA had undertaken in their countries. This initiative was so successful that in 2006

the Permanent Council passed a historic resolution creating an annual "IICA Day."

The Director General also attended every OAS General Assembly during both of his mandates, since this forum represented an excellent opportunity to meet face to face with key decision makers, namely the foreign ministers of the hemisphere, their ambassadors, the OAS Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General and the heads of the inter-American agencies.

Summit of the Americas

Since the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec City in 2001, the Heads of State and Government of the Inter-American System put agriculture back on the front burner and entrusted IICA with maintaining focus on this vital sector. In conjunction with the Office for Follow-up to the Summit of the Americas Process and the IICA Office in Washington, the Office of the Director General ensured that the head of this institute or his designate was able to represent the organization at key Summit Implementation Review Group Meetings and at events involving the other inter-American agencies in the Joint Summits Working Group. The Director General attended the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata in Argentina in 2005 and participated in the Fifth Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago.

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

From the beginning of the first administration, the Director General placed great emphasis on forging closer ties with the Pan American Health Organization and signed an IICA/PAHO Strategic Alliance for Human Development and Prosperity in 2002 with Sir George Alleyne, the then Director of PAHO. This

Office coordinated a successful visit by Dr. Alleyne to IICA Headquarters in 2003 and another in 2006 for his successor, Dr. Mirta Roses. These visits and the harmonious relationship had a number of positive results, including the development of joint initiatives, increased interaction with the PAHO Representative in Costa Rica and collaboration on joint forums like RIMSA, which brought together health and agriculture ministers for discussions on issues of hemispheric concern.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Given FAO's global scope and IICA's involvement in agriculture and rural development in the Americas, the Director General held several discussions with FAO Director Jacques Diouf about engaging in complementary actions that would benefit Member States. As a result of this, IICA and FAO Representatives met to formulate joint activities and stronger relations developed with Dr. Jose Graziano Da Silva, FAO Assistant Secretary General for Latin America and the Caribbean, who, among other things, delivered an address at IICA's Representatives' Week in 2006. Similarly, the Director General was invited to participate in several of FAO's high-level forums, for example, the 30th Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2008.

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank

The Director General also focused on strengthening the relationship with these two banking institutions and interacted with IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno and with Pamela Cox, World Bank Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean. IICA also welcomed a number of IDB Executive Directors to Headquarters to explore avenues for improving the financing of the agriculture sector in the Member States.

Regional Integration Mechanisms

The Director General worked to boost relations with regional integration mechanisms throughout the hemisphere. This was done primarily by designating IICA officials to coordinate actions with these organizations and in many cases IICA served as the Secretariat to provide continuity and follow up to the integration process. The following are the most noteworthy: CARICOM, the Alliance of Ministers of Agriculture, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the Andean Community, the Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation in Central America, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Mexico (CORECA), the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS).

5. Establishment of the Information Center at Headquarters

In 2004, in what for years had served as the main lobby at Headquarters, an *Information Center* was set up to provide visitors with up-to-date information on IICA and its Offices in the 34 Member States. Easels were placed around the lobby to hold display boards with photographs of the personnel and Representative in each IICA Office. On each board, there is also a photograph of the minister of agriculture of the respective country. Also available are a number of important publications such as the Annual Report of each Office.

The touch screen kiosks located in the lobby, donated by the Kellogg Foundation under the SIDALC project, provide



visitors with a brief overview of IICA's activities throughout the Hemisphere. In this way, both those who visit IICA on official missions, such as ministers of agriculture and their delegations, and those linked directly or indirectly to agriculture who wish to learn more about the work of our Institute, have access to up-to-date information on IICA and its principal accomplishments, as the leading institution and partner of choice in technical cooperation for agriculture. In addition, there are two plasma TV screens: one plays videos related to the work of the Institute, and the other offers information on the official events scheduled for the week at Headquarters.

6. Inauguration and Operation of the Historical Gallery

The Center also houses a Historical Gallery which offers information on the founders of the Institute and all of its Directors General, as well as the focus of the work of each Administration. It offers a summary of the evolution of the Institute and the areas in which IICA provides technical cooperation. It also provides details on the Institute's most important strategic partners, including international organizations (FAO, IDB, ECLAC, etc.), public institutions (ministries of agriculture, health and trade and academic and other institutions) and organizations of civil society, with which works to provide cooperation in the member countries.

7. Operation of the Office of Diplomatic Relations and Protocol

- An office was created under the Office of the Director General to deal with all matters related to how to treat and address people, etiquette, good manners, official relations, protocol, official hospitality and the privileges and immunities granted to IICA and its international and associate personnel. The Office is responsible for the protocolary aspects of all official acts that involve the Director General and national authorities. It also requests visas, tax exonerations, permits to import and export vehicles and household belongings, permits for vehicles to leave Costa Rica and the exonerations of taxes on equipment; pays license fees for MI vehicles; and ensures that the Director General, Deputy Director General and others are properly treated and received at the airport.
- The Office ensures that all IICA protocolary procedures are in line with the rules and regulations in force in each country, in conjunction with the Office of the Coordinator of the Office of the Director General.
- The Office promotes the appropriate use of diplomatic language in all Institute correspondence, including the proper forms of address for different national and international authorities, which can be found in the Directory of Official Contacts, available on the Intranet.
- The Office provides protocolary and diplomatic for the meetings of the IABA and the Executive Committee, Representatives' Week and other events. It is also



responsible for diplomatic formalities at Headquarters and the airport (including access to diplomatic areas and VIP lounges), the preparation of information packets, the organization of ceremonies, the presentation of awards, etc. in connection with visits by presidents, ministers of agriculture, and representatives of the diplomatic corps and international organizations associated with IICA, including high-level authorities of the UN and the OAS.

- The Office enhanced diplomatic relations by preparing and sending letters of congratulations to newly elected high-level officials in the member countries and related organizations, and letters of congratulations on the celebration of national holidays, as well as the provision of credentials for Institute personnel to participate in international fora.
- The Office is an active member of the Association of Diplomats in Costa Rica (ADICOR). It keeps in close contact with the other members of ADICOR, most of whom are from IICA member or observer countries.
- The Office supports many official events at the Institute, such as seminars, workshops, fora, international conferences by providing protocolary services at the airport, coordinating ceremonies, preparing and distributing invitations and organizing luncheons offered by the Director General.
- The Office prepared the “Guide on privileges and immunities for International Professional Personnel at Headquarters and the IICA Office in Costa Rica,” which has been posted on the Intranet and proven to be very helpful.
- The Office set up the Diplomatic Documents Control System to keep track of dates for the renewal of visas and the identification cards given to the IPP and Associate Personnel by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This system automatically notifies the IPP of the expiration dates of visas, identification cards and passports, and also serves as a registry of IPP vehicles.
- The Office posts information on the Intranet related to visa requirements for people traveling to or from Costa Rica and even provides support in obtaining visas for special guests of the Institute. We also provide information for travelers who are leaving or returning to IICA regarding the requirement for yellow fever vaccinations or other health-related issues and help obtain visas for IICA staff who must travel on official mission.
- The Office prepared the “Directory of Institutional Relations” which later was handled by the Office of the Coordinator of the Office of the Director General. We also began the process of preparing a “Guide for Protocol and Etiquette” for the treatment of official visitors to IICA, with support from students of international relations.
- The Office forged closer relations with the Ministry of Foreign Relations of Costa Rica, both on political issues and the process involved in preparing and presenting documents to both this ministry and the Ministry of the Treasury. The Director General made a presentation on challenges in agriculture at the Diplomatic Institute of Costa Rica. The Director General also visited the Institute during the presentation made there by the Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, Ambassador Albert Ramdin.
- We worked with the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Treasury to reduce the time involved in approving exonerations for IICA and its IPP. In multiple meetings with both Institutions, we were able to establish mechanisms



that are more streamlined and enable IICA, for example, to get equipment out of customs more quickly, thus reducing the high cost of storage charges.

- We were successful in convincing the Costa Rican Tourism Institute (ICT) to continue exempting IICA from the payment of the tourism tax (5%) on airfares purchased by IICA and its personnel and their relatives, provided the tickets are acquired by IICA in its capacity as an international juridical person. The ICT was asked to exonerate all airline tickets purchased by IICA at Headquarters.
- Thanks to improved relations with the Immigration Service, IICA can obtain passports quickly for IICA personnel needing to travel on official mission, and visas from the Embassy of the United States of America. In addition, we strengthened relations with the Ministry of

Public Security to provide security when IICA has high-level visitors, and have received support from that ministry in training IICA personnel in the areas of institutional and personal security.

- We engaged in joint activities with Institute units such as the Legal Advisory, Services and Official Events Units, to wit: legal registration procedures with the first, transportation and exonerations with the second and protocol with the third.
- In coordination with the Human Resources Development Division, we have ensured that new members of the IPP receive effective orientation. They are given the “Guide on privileges and immunities for International Professional Personnel at Headquarters and the IICA Office in Costa Rica,” and receive support in matters related to immunities and privileges in Costa Rica, etc.

Special Reports

Internal Audit Unit



Internal Audit Unit

Luis Condines¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the objectives and activities of the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) from 2002-2008 and its contributions to achieving both the goals established in the 2006-2007 Medium Term Plan and those proposed by the Administration of the Institute.

The contributions described in the present document should be viewed as accomplishments achieved by the IAU together with the Administration and the Offices in the countries, which complied with the recommendations and proposals of the Unit, successfully implemented preventive and corrective measures and developed plans for continually improving their operations.

2. Objectives of the Internal Audit Unit

- To promote frugality, effectiveness and efficiency in the operations of the Institute and in all its programs and projects.
- To support the Administration, verifying compliance with the Institute's rules and regulations.

- To keep the Director General informed of and advise him on ways to improve operations and reduce the risk of loss caused by inefficiency or actual or potential irregularities.

3. Results Achieved

The audits conducted over the years yielded mandatory recommendations and proposals for improvement that were accepted and implemented by the Administration at Headquarters and in the Offices in the countries, and which contributed to reinforcing the principles set forth by the Director General at the beginning of his administration *"financial prudence, transparency, effectiveness, accountability and respect for the Institute's rules and regulations."*

The audit function at IICA was strengthened with the allocation of more financial resources to cover operating costs.

Thanks to the efforts of the IAU, the management of the Institute's finances was judged to be sound by the External Auditors, who for the first time since 1995 and beginning in 2004, approved the financial statements with no emphasis of matter paragraphs.

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In 2007, the technical skills of our personnel in the areas of finance and accounting, regulatory compliance and computer systems were strengthened.

Our work focused on:

- Evaluating operations in the Offices in the countries and in Headquarters;
- Reviewing and validating accounting records and financial management practices;
- Evaluating the internal controls system;
- Assessing exposure to actual and potential risks;
- Testing the reliability, security and integrity of informatics systems;
- Verifying compliance with the Institute's rules and regulations; and,
- Assessing administrative management of the Offices.

The results of these audits are summarized in 154 reports presented to the General Directorate. To this end, we developed a work plan that considered the characteristics of each Office, the complexity of its operations, the volume of resources it executed, its control structure, its administrative capabilities and administrative record, all based on the results obtained in previous audits. At Headquarters, plans called for different administrative units to be audited to measure the level of compliance with the Institute's rules and procedure and determine whether or not they were adequate and provided a reasonable degree of security.

IICA defined three types of audits to be performed, depending on the specific requirements in each case: regular audits, transfer audits (for changes of Representatives) and special audits.

Regular Audits

These audits are aimed at verifying and validating:

- a. Compliance with rules and regulations
- b. Internal controls
- c. The accuracy of financial and accounting information
- d. Protection of computer systems (hardware and software), and,
- e. Exposure to actual and potential risks.

Transfer Audits

The audits have three basic purposes:

- a. To determine the state of administrative, financial and accounting operations in an Office when there is a change of Representative;
- b. To supervise preparation of the report the outgoing Representative must present, verify that it complies with the provisions of the protocol for the transfer of responsibilities between Representatives and ensure that the information included in the report will be useful to the incoming Representative during the orientation process; and,

- c. To formalize the transfer of responsibilities, drawing up a document (record) of same.

Special Audits

These audits are conducted at the express request of the Director General and are designed to provide him with the specific information he requires.

■ *Audits conducted in the Offices in the member countries*

Table 13 shows the audits performed between 2002-2008, classified by type and region, as well as the total number of recommendations issued, the number of same implemented and those being implemented.

Table 13. Audits Performed from 2002-2008.

	Andean	Caribbean	Central	Northern	Southern	Total
Transfer audits	7	12	13	6	6	44
Regular audits	9	10	13	2	9	43
Special audits	0	4	4	1	3	12
Total	16	26	30	9	18	99
Recommendations issued	249	294	397	123	222	1 285
Being implemented	36	0	81	39	5	161
% being implemented	14%	0%	20%	32%	2%	13%
% implemented	86%	100%	80%	68%	98%	87%

The contribution of the IAU is the recommendations it made to the Offices in the countries, which led to the implementation of measures or actions aimed at:

- Determining the legal status of certain Offices;
- Reorganizing administrative structures and procedures;
- Monitoring the status of law suits;
- Ensuring adherence to legislation governing the execution of public funds in the respective country;
- Ensuring compliance with labor and tax laws;
- Making adjustments in types of contracts offered;
- Keeping the number of bank accounts to a minimum;
- Updating and validating signature cards and rules governing the operation of bank accounts;
- Monitoring bank accounts on line, held in conjunction with the Bank of America;
- Providing guidance on how to reduce risks in financial management;

- Monitoring the risk rating of the banking institutions with which IICA works;
- Promoting the use of technology as it applies to financial transactions;
- Promoting the application of good practices in administrative, financial and accounting management;
- Establishing termination pay reserves for personnel whose salaries are paid with external resources;
- Complying with rules, manuals and executive orders;
- Establishing contingency plans;
- Protecting computer systems (hardware and software); and,
- Maintaining, backing up and retrieving data stored in computers.

■ *Audits conducted at Headquarters*

Table 14 shows the number of audits performed from 2002-2008 in the different administrative units and projects at Headquarters, as well as the total number of recommendations issued, the number of same implemented and those being implemented.

Table 14. Audits Performed at Headquarters.

	Finance	Human Resources	Services	ICT	Others	Total
Regular audit	5	17	10	5	3	40
Special audit	1	3	3	1	7	15
Total	6	20	13	6	10	55
Recommendations issued	22	57	76	36	58	249
Being implemented	0	12	4	3	8	27
% being implemented	0%	21%	5%	8%	14%	11%
% implemented	100%	79%	95%	92%	86%	89%

The contribution of the IAU is the recommendations and proposals for improvement it made to the different administrative units at Headquarters, which led to the implementation of measures aimed at:

- Tightening internal controls
- Complying with the Institute's rules and regulations
- Improving the Institute's rules and procedures
- Verifying compliance with the rules governing the operation of bank accounts held with the Bank of America, and the registry of signatures for those accounts

- Establishing an emergency fund for staff members
- Defining policies and procedures for the use of computer equipment
- Promoting the use of technology
- Updating the contingency plan and establishing redundancy mechanisms
- Implementing policies and procedures to protect informatics resources (hardware and software)
- Documenting procedures for the use of informatics resources, and
- Applying procedures for backing up and retrieving data stored in informatics systems.

4. Strengthening of the Internal Audit Unit

The internal audit function was strengthened as a result of the participation of the Internal Auditor in the Cabinet, added to the participation of the IAU in an advisory capacity in the meetings of the Administration and Finance Committee, the Corporate Purchasing Committee and the Programming Committee. This decision helped us gain a better knowledge of the operations of the Institute and expanded our vision of the topics addressed, processes followed and decisions made by those committees. It also gave us the opportunity to offer opinions and contribute to decision making. The participation of the IAU in the committees focuses on providing guidance

and ensuring, in advance, that the decisions are made within the framework of the Institute's rules and regulations.

The IAU participated actively in the ad hoc committees set up to analyze and prepare the Office Improvement Plans, the IAU participated actively, offering examples of situations identified as opportunities for improvement during the audit missions to the Offices in the countries.

The IAU offered suggestions on different working committees in which proposals for improving institute rules were analyzed:

- The updating, organization and prioritization of the Institute's rules and regulations
- Elimination of obsolete Executive Orders
- Policies and procedures for identifying, negotiating, approving, executing, settling and reporting on the external resources mobilized by IICA
- The use of e-mail at IICA
- The definition of guidelines for hiring local or international personnel whose salaries are covered with external resources
- Official travel
- The development of a protocol for the transfer of responsibilities between Representatives
- The use and custody of IICA's electronic moveable assets
- The use of IICA vehicles
- Establishment of the conceptual framework, regulatory provisions and operating procedures that govern the hiring of national and international professional consulting services



- Preparation, approval, implementation and monitoring of the OIP in the Offices
- Definition of a policy for recovering taxes
- Determination of administrative information to be posted on the Intranet, and
- Updating of the Procedures Manual for Purchasing Goods and Contracting for Services.
- We prepared a statement of principles and a commitment to quality and professional ethics at IICA, following the rules established by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IAI) for practicing the profession.
- The staff of the IAU joined the IAI of Costa Rica, which entitles them to receive up-to-date information on the internal audit function on a regular basis.

5. Improvement of Internal Capacity

Since 2002, all IAU missions to the Offices in the countries have comprised a team of professionals. This made it possible to conduct more thorough investigations and analyze operations more carefully.

Other accomplishments were:

- We promoted participation in courses and workshops for professional upgrading, and the entire IAU team received training in the use of the SAP.
- We organized a library with teaching materials related to the audit function, and we acquired texts on relevant labor and tax legislation in the countries where IICA has Offices.
- We installed specialized software to retrieve and analyze information contained in accounting data bases.

Special Reports

Performance Management and Evaluation



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Performance Management and Evaluation

Dowlat Budhram¹

1. Introduction

Since its establishment as the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, IICA has been supported by a unit responsible for institutional evaluation, generally attached to the programming or planning units. This report presents a summary of the results obtained by this entity over the period 2002-2008.

2. Origin and Mandate of the Directorate of Performance Management and Evaluation (DPME)

In 2001, the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues Affairs (SACMI) recommended the establishment of an integrated management system to coordinate the various components of institutional management. Based on this recommendation, in March 2002, IICA created the DPME as part of the implementation of a performance audit, monitoring and evaluation program that *“will enhance the process of evaluating IICA’s technical activities in the field; develop appropriate performance norms, and implement measures to evaluate performance, together with adequate corrective actions.”*

The establishment of the DPME fostered accountability, transparency and the transformation of IICA into a results-based institution. As such, the Directorate received the mandate to permanently review and evaluate the performance of the units of the General Directorate in order to achieve five main objectives:

- i. To improve the management and performance of the IICA Offices and the units at Headquarters.
- ii. To improve the contribution of IICA to agriculture and the rural sector of the Member States.
- iii. To promote a culture of self-evaluation and accountability.
- iv. To promote and support institutional best practices.
- v. To enhance the institutional memory.

To respond to this mandate, the principal functions of the DPME were defined as: (i) to conduct regular analyses and evaluations of the actions executed by the Offices in the Member States and the units at Headquarters; (ii) to provide input for the decision-making process of the General Directorate in order to improve institutional performance and accountability, and (iii) to verify the coherence between the information generated by the system of follow-up reports, the strategic orientations and the operational programs. The latter function was subsequently allocated to the Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration (DORI).

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As a result of the missions carried out by DPME, IICA defined 11 institutional competencies or capacities that the IICA Offices should adopt: leadership and management capacity, technical capacity, administrative capacity, capacity to manage external resources, teamwork, application of the institutional regulations, internal communications, institutional image, relations with governmental agencies and authorities, relations with strategic partners, and identification of institutional best practices.

3. Evaluation Methods and Instruments Used

The internal institutional evaluation process was established in 2002 as an essential tool for improving performance, institutional alignment and effectiveness in the delivery of technical cooperation services and products. It entailed a revision of the evaluation methodology used up until 2001, which led to a redefinition of the approach, method and instruments used, in order to give the methodology a systematic and comprehensive quality aimed at institution-building and learning, and eliminating the practice of evaluations designed to respond to specific cases and problems.

In this way, the approach developed and applied within IICA became innovative, because it transformed the function of institutional evaluation into a systematic, methodical, continuous and inclusive practice. The current evaluation process includes missions to all the Member States, entails a comprehensive review of all aspects of the management of the Offices and the cooperation activities, and involves the direct participation of representatives of the organizations that are the Institute's clients and partners, as well as staff members, by means of individuals interviews.

The conceptual elements used to design the new methodology were based on the performance management approach, which aims to enhance the achievement of results at the individual, group and organizational level. This approach responds to the objective of the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan to transform IICA into a results-based institution.

During the seven years of experience in performance management and evaluation, IICA has revised the methods and instruments used three times and introduced improvements and innovations to capture and analyze information and to document, implement and follow up on the recommendations received. The methodology applied and the results obtained in the evaluation process are duly documented in protocols and databases and form part of the institutional memory. The following three methods were defined:

- i. Review of the documentation on the activities implemented and the results obtained.
- ii. Individual interviews with clients, partners and users, and the staff of the Offices and at Headquarters.
- iii. Completion of questionnaires by all officials of the Offices.

Each method complemented the information received from the others and allowed the information obtained to be validated and compared, so that, taken as a whole, the three contributed to obtaining an objective, uniform and verifiable perspective of institutional performance.

The documentation review permitted prior knowledge and analysis of the actions, so as to prioritize any issues that needed to be dealt with, and to adapt the instruments for gathering information (interviews, questionnaires and visits) that are applied during each mission in advance. The main documents

reviewed are the national technical cooperation agendas (ANCT), the annual action plans (AAP), the bi-annual reports on the implementation of these plans, the budgetary allocations and execution, and the external financing agreements.

The missions to the Offices allowed us to present the objectives, the method to be used, and the work plan to be implemented to the entire staff. These prior activities contributed to the objective of strengthening the culture of self-evaluation and enabled the staff to consider the mission an institution-building and learning process, rather than a supervisory visit.

The external interviews of executives and officials of the principal public and private institutions that have had a direct relationship with IICA cooperation actions in the country, as well as the users of the Institute's services, provided us with information on the level of satisfaction of the clients, partners and users of the Institute's services, and allowed us to assess the significance and impact of the cooperation, to hear opinions and suggestions regarding how to improve the institutional performance, to identify cooperation opportunities, and to validate the information reviewed on the activities and results.

The interview with each Office official was essential to obtain the internal perspective of the management and performance of each Office and the impact of the cooperation provided. IICA prepares three documents on each mission:

- a. A confidential managerial report for the Director General on the principal findings, conclusions and recommendations of the exercise; a list of proposed recommendations on cooperation services, human resource management,

internal and external communications, relations with clients and partners, and other aspects related to the institutional performance.

- b. An Office Improvement Plan (PMO), indicating specific actions that should be undertaken to overcome any shortcomings found and to take advantage of opportunities detected during the evaluation exercises.
- c. A final report on the mission, presenting detailed information on the opinions obtained, an analysis of the questionnaires, and the conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned from the mission.

4. Results Achieved During 2002-2008

Over the period 2002-2008, the DPME evaluation missions included visits to 28 IICA Offices in the Member States, three of which were visited twice during this period. Since the approach and methodology used were designed to encourage self-evaluation and organizational learning, external consultants were not required for the evaluation activities.

Table 15 presents the missions and the evaluations carried out by the DPME over the period 2002-2009, during which 1100 people from 500 public and private organizations that are the Institute's clients or partners were interviewed. In addition, individual interviews were conducted with 500 IICA officials and consultants, who were also asked to complete a questionnaire.

Table 15: DPME Evaluation Missions for the Period 2002-2009.

Region	Office	Date
Andean	Bolivia	February 2003
	Colombia	November 2004
	Ecuador	February 2003
	Ecuador	February 2008
	Peru	November 2005
	Venezuela	July 2007
South	Argentina	April 2005
	Chile	November 2006
	Paraguay	October 2003
	Uruguay	March 2009
Central	Belize	August 2002
	Costa Rica	March 2004
	El Salvador	January 2003
	El Salvador	May 2008
	Guatemala	January 2003
	Honduras	June 2004
	Nicaragua	February 2004
	Panama	March 2009

Region	Office	Date
Caribbean	Guyana	June 2007
	Jamaica	November 2007
	OECS (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Granada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia)	November 2003
	Dominican Republic	March 2003
	Dominican Republic	October 2008
	Surinam	February 2005
	Trinidad and Tobago	May 2004
	Other units evaluated	Directorate of Education and Training (DECAP) and Distance Education Center (CECADI) – Head Office Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development (SIHCA) - Venezuela
Permanent Office in Europe (Spain)		May 2004
Inter-American Program for Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety (Miami)		November 2005

The main results obtained from the four activities carried out by DPME during the period 2002-2008 are described below:

a. Evaluation of IICA Management and Actions in the Member States

DPME officials visited 28 IICA Offices to carry out institutional performance evaluations. The results of these missions were as follow:

- The Director General and the officials of the Institute reviewed and assessed the information obtained on the level of satisfaction of 1000 clients and partners belonging to approximately 500 public, private and international entities regarding IICA's cooperation activities in the different countries and heard the suggestions of these clients and partners regarding how to improve institutional management and services.



- The Director General authorized specific actions to improve cooperation, management, coordination, communications and the other areas of institutional performance, based on the conclusions and recommendations obtained during the performance evaluation missions.
 - The IICA Offices implemented the recommendations obtained from the evaluation missions to enhance the institutional image, improve the management of operations, strengthen alliances with clients and partners, and improve the products of cooperation activities in the Member States.
 - The personnel who took part in the evaluation were able to express and discuss internal matters relating to institutional management and become aware of the benefits of performance evaluation, thereby promoting the development of a culture of self-evaluation and accountability within the institution.
 - The IICA Representatives and their staff in the Offices that were evaluated got to know the level of satisfaction and the opinions of officials of public and private entities regarding IICA's cooperation services in the country.
 - 500 officials of the IICA Offices in the Member States learned about the objectives and scope of the new evaluation system, gave their opinions on institutional performance, and made suggestions to improve it.
 - The IICA Representatives and their staff adopted internal measures to enhance their work commitments and improve work relations and the working environment within the Office, based on the opinions provided in the interviews and the questionnaires completed during the evaluation missions.
- b. Advisory Services to the Director General for Decision Making to Improve Institutional Performance**
- The Institute implemented innovations and changes in the allocation and management of resources based on the findings and recommendations deriving from the performance evaluation process.
 - IICA re-oriented and reinforced agreements with the multinational agencies that are its strategic partners, based on the reports prepared by the DPME on joint actions with these agencies.
 - As of 2007, the functions and priorities of CECADI and SIHCA were reorganized and re-oriented.
 - As of 2003, a managerial information system was implemented to improve the preparation of the periodic progress reports on compliance with the Institute's annual action plans.
- c. Enhancement of the Knowledge Base on Institutional Management and Cooperation Services**
- The Institute's memory has been enriched by the documentation of a series of institutional best practices and successful management experiences arising from the review and analysis of the institutional performance.
 - A database has been established in the Institute to record the conclusions and recommendations on IICA's management and actions arising from the missions carried out by the DPME.



- IICA prepared a protocol that established the procedure to be followed when transferring the responsibilities of the Representatives in the States Members in order to comply fully with the corresponding regulations and help safeguard the institutional memory.
- d. Improvement of the Institute's Planning, Execution and Accountability Process**
- The Institute implemented monitoring and performance evaluation norms and policies that improved the process of accountability to Member States and strategic partners.
 - The information for decision-making contributed by the monitoring and performance evaluation procedures helped develop strategic partnerships and improve the institutional image and the Institute's cooperation programs.
 - IICA established a protocol for the institutional performance evaluation methodology, and its procedures and instruments were updated and improved as a result of seven years of experience in applying them.
 - The mechanisms for preparing and monitoring the Office Improvement Plans (PMO) were designed and put in practice to ensure the effective implementation of actions designed to improve the management and the provision of cooperation services.
 - The Institute has a Representatives' Manual that describes in detail the criteria they should follow in the performance of their responsibilities in the politico-institutional, managerial and administrative spheres.
- Advisory services were provided to committees and groups established by the Director General concerning decision-making on resource allocation, institutional organization and design and implementation of norms and procedures to improve institutional management and the provision of cooperation services.
 - In summary, today, IICA is in a better position as regards its clients, partners and users, who consider that the Institute's work is useful and of a high quality. Moreover, they are aware that IICA has reduced its technical capacity and is unable to expand its efforts and make them more effective owing to constraints in financial resources.
 - The Institute's characteristics that its clients, partners and users appreciate most are its nature as an apolitical and neutral entity, its network of Offices and contacts throughout the hemisphere, and its capacity to enlist support at the national and multi-national levels.
 - IICA's clients and the users of its services underscore that, in general, the Institute now has more flexibility to respond to requests for short-term cooperation.
 - There is a greater degree of trust among the governmental organizations and the financial entities through which the Institute manages the funds obtained from agreements and contracts, because this activity is carried out correctly, using appropriate standards and records.
 - The technical and managerial capacity of the Representative and his level of commitment to the Institute's mission are decisive factors for the effectiveness of cooperation



activities, the maintenance of a positive image of IICA in the countries, and satisfactory management of the Offices.

During the DPME's missions, clients and partners expressed their satisfaction regarding the Institute's decision to carry out periodic evaluations of its work in the countries and to give them the opportunity to offer their opinions and suggestions on the products and the results of this work. They consider this action to be an appropriate and valuable institutional practice within the process of accountability and as an example to be followed by other cooperation agencies.

The establishment of a specialized, systematic and inclusive process of performance evaluation has allowed IICA to obtain reliable information on the degree of satisfaction of its clients, on the effectiveness of the cooperation services it provides, and on the management situation in the Offices. Based on this information, actions are taken to improve the management and provision of services.

The institutional performance evaluation system has helped construct a culture of self-evaluation and accountability in the Institute.

A stylized, dotted map of the Americas (North and South America) is positioned on the left side of the page, partially overlapping a dark grey triangular shape that points downwards. The map is rendered in a light grey color against a white background.

Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, the Executive Committee and the Cabinet

Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, the Executive Committee and the Cabinet

Fernando del Risco¹ and Leda Ávila²

1. Introduction

The Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Executive Committee (EC) and the Cabinet was created to provide support to and follow up on all technical and administrative matters pertaining to the governing bodies of the Institute, i.e., IABA and EC, and their regular and special meetings. The Technical Secretariat also assists the Director General with the organization, implementation and follow-up of meetings of the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI) and the Cabinet.

The Special Events Unit works within the Technical Secretariat, providing support in the organization of regular and special meetings of the governing bodies and advisory mechanisms. It also helps plan, carry out and coordinate the services needed to assist participants and support the secretariat of the meeting. The Special Events Unit helps logistical arrangements for events organized by other units in Central Headquarters.


2. Organization of Meetings of the Governing Bodies of IICA

With guidance from the Director General and acting within the scope of its responsibilities and authority, the Technical Secretariat submitted proposals for the Executive Committee to take on additional responsibilities. The idea is to enable the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) to delegate to the Executive Committee most administrative and internal management matters pertaining to the General Directorate, so that IABA can play a more strategic role and carry out those responsibilities that cannot be delegated. As the Technical Secretariat ensured efficiency in the organization of meetings and preparation of agendas, background documents and resolutions, the Executive Committee was able to assume roles, powers and responsibilities that had previously been held by the Inter-American Board of Agriculture.

From 2002 to 2008, the Technical Secretariat and its Special Events Unit organized, serviced and followed up on four IABA meetings, namely: Panama City, Panama, 2003; Guayaquil, Ecuador, 2005; Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, 2007; and

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Montego Bay, Jamaica 2009³. At those meetings, the Board adopted a total of 73 resolutions on technical matters, institutional management, governing bodies and partnerships with other institutions.

The Technical Secretariat also organized and serviced eight meetings of the Executive Committee at which a total of 156 resolutions were adopted, and nine meetings of SACMI. In addition, the Special Events Unit coordinated, organized and supervised services for four Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life, in the context of the Summit of the Americas process.

Under the leadership of the Director General and with the support of the Special Events Unit, the Technical Secretariat organized IABA meetings in coordination with the high-level authorities of the foreign ministries and ministries of agriculture of Member States hosting the meetings. Given the complexity of those events, these preparations required a serious commitment on the part of all concerned.

To ensure maximum effectiveness and efficiency in the organization and conduct of the meetings, IICA developed a legal framework laying down the obligations and contributions of all parties concerned. By systematically following up on this instrument, both the host countries and IICA were able to meet their commitments.

Another key to the success of meetings was the fact that IICA maintained ongoing contacts with the national committees and subcommittees set up in host countries to organize and carry out meetings of IICA's governing bodies, especially

meetings that were held away from the Institute's Central Headquarters. At each event, the inter-institutional work teams contributed to the efficiency of services and assistance to delegates, including high-level authorities such as heads of State, foreign ministers, ministers of agriculture and special guests participating in the meetings.

Working Papers and Background Papers

In preparation for meetings of IABA and the Executive Committee, the Technical Secretariat coordinated, followed up on and/or prepared working documents to enable Member States to discuss, take decisions or issue recommendations on the topics discussed. It also prepared background documents to provide additional information. As indicated in the pertinent regulations, the documents were made available to participants 45 days in advance of meetings of the governing bodies. Between 2002 and 2008, 229 documents were prepared.

Draft Resolutions and Resolutions of IABA and EC

Following instructions of the Director General, the Technical Secretariat developed a process for holding consultations with the units responsible for agenda items on which a resolution would be needed. The process involves drawing up one or more drafts to be reviewed and discussed with the unit concerned. The drafts are then approved by the Director General and submitted to the Legal Counsel for review. Once the Legal Counsel gives his approval, the draft resolution is sent for translation and submitted to representatives of Member States present at the meeting in question for their discussion and approval.

³ The Fifteenth Regular Meeting of IABA will be held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, during the last week of October 2009. The preparatory process for this meeting began in 2008 and is proceeding on schedule.

Between 2002 and 2008, the Technical Secretariat prepared and/or coordinated the preparation of draft resolutions, most of which were accepted and adopted, with or without amendments, by the representatives of Member States. The decisions and instructions adopted by delegates have an impact on the Institute's policies, its technical cooperation services and its relations with other agencies, as well as on budgetary and financial matters and internal regulations. During the period 2002-2008, the Heads of Delegation of Member States adopted decisions on 59 IABA resolutions and 135 EC resolutions (See table 16).

Table 16. Draft Resolutions Submitted by the Technical Secretariat and Adopted by Governing Bodies.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total
IABA Meetings								
Draft resolutions proposed by the Secretariat		22		23		14		
Resolutions adopted by IABA		(23) 384-406		(21) 407-427		(15) 428-442		59
EC Meetings								
Draft resolutions proposed by the Secretariat	22	19	18	19	17	19	17	
Resolutions adopted	(22) 362-383	(23) 384-406	(19) 407-425	(17) 426-442	(16) 443-458	(22) 459-480	(16) 481-496	135

3. Support to the Special Advisory Commission on Management Issues (SACMI)

In 2002, a new approach was adopted whereby SACMI became an essential tool for facilitating and improving the effectiveness of the Institute's highest levels of management. It serves as a channel for consultations with Member States on key issues that are subsequently submitted to the Institute's governing bodies for their consideration.

The Technical Secretariat and the Special Events Unit helped to redirect and strengthen the role of SACMI as an advisory mechanism for the top levels of management by adopting innovative procedures and adjusting its duties to the regulations and needs of those concerned. The Secretariat's support is reflected in the following arrangements: (i) meetings are organized according to specific agendas, with working documents provided 30 days before each meeting; (ii) those responsible for agenda items participate actively in the proceedings at meetings; and (iii) support services for participants and for the secretariat of each meeting are well coordinated and organized.

From 2002 to 2009, SACMI held ten meetings, two of which were special meetings. At the meetings, members

of the Commission considered administrative and financial matters as well as issues relating to technical cooperation and the positioning of the Institute.

Member States consider that the recommendations submitted to SACMI by the General Directorate have been important to the management of the Institute. They acknowledge that the Commission has proved to be a useful mechanism for advising the Director General and facilitating dialogue among Member States on matters that are subsequently decided by the Executive Committee or IABA. Accordingly, the members of the 2009 Advisory Commission requested the Director General to propose at the next regular meeting of the Executive Committee that the Commission should become a permanent organ of the Institute and that its sphere of competence should cover both management, administrative and financial matters, and strategic issues.

In accordance with the by-laws of SACMI, the Director General submitted the annual reports of the Commission to the Executive Committee; those reports were approved without objection. In 2008, a report on the work of SACMI during the period 2002-2008 was prepared for submission to the Executive Committee at its twenty-ninth regular meeting. This report will serve as the basis for requesting the inclusion of the Advisory Commission as a permanent component of the Institute.

4. Development of Information Systems

In 2002, the Technical Secretariat and the Special Events Unit modernized procedures for transmitting working documents and other materials used at official meetings to the parties

concerned. As a result of this modernization, savings were made in the reproduction of documents and postal services. By applying the principles of financial prudence, three interactive information tools were developed to streamline data transmission, facilitate dialogue and consensus through electronic discussion groups, and modernize registration of participants.

These three information tools are available on IICA's Web portal; they are confidential, intended for discretionary use, and can only be accessed with a password that is updated at each meeting. These tools comprise the online information systems used to support IABA, EC and SACMI.

Improvements were made in the system for reporting and publishing on the Web the results and resolutions of meetings of the governing bodies, and a system for registering participants and making their hotel reservations was developed. Using media for distance communications, an efficient system was also developed for monitoring compliance with IABA and EC resolutions, SACMI recommendations and Cabinet decisions.

5. Secretariat of the Cabinet

The Director General's Cabinet is an institutional management forum that provides a platform for disseminating the institutional policies and philosophy of the Director General. The members of the Cabinet consider their meetings to be one of the main mechanisms for dialogue and reflection in carrying out the General Directorate's duties as technical executive body of the Institute.

The Technical Secretariat assisted the Director General in connection with the organization and convening of Cabinet meetings, preparation and electronic distribution of meeting documentation, and following up on decisions reached. All this was accomplished through ongoing consultations with participants in Cabinet meetings in connection with the preparing of records to ensure that they accurately reflected the essential aspects of discussions, recommendations and decisions, and with follow-up on decisions taken. This work has been performed in a timely and efficient manner.

To follow up on the Cabinet's decisions, the Technical Secretariat set up a mechanism for reviewing progress in the implementation of recommendations. Each Unit at Central Headquarters assigns a member of its staff to be responsible for updating information on the actions taken by that Unit. The mechanism outlines the procedure to be followed in recording progress in carrying out decisions and reporting on that progress to the Cabinet.

During the period between 2002 and 2009, 43 regular meetings and two special meetings of the Cabinet were held. These meetings contributed towards consolidating the role of the Cabinet as a high-level forum for discussion and decision making in the General Directorate of IICA. During this period, the Cabinet generated 43 records of its meetings, containing 418 decisions. The Technical Secretariat and the ICT Unit keep print and/or digital records (CDs and electronic versions on the Intranet) of all Cabinet meetings.

6. Publication of the Official Documents Series

The Technical Secretariat and the Special Events Unit prepared and published, both in print and electronic versions, 13 final reports of meetings of the governing bodies. They also collaborated in the layout, publication and distribution of two medium-term plans (See table 17).

7. Organization of Meetings

In the view of the Technical Secretariat and the Special Events Unit, the success of an event lies in the convergence of interests of all participants, organizers and support staff in achieving a common objective. Accordingly, the emphasis is on team work.

The Special Events Unit took a holistic approach to the organization of events by setting up a meetings support services team. This interdisciplinary team is made up of the following: the Special Events Unit, the Services Division at Central Headquarters (as a whole), the Office of Public Information and Institutional Image, the Office of Diplomatic Relations and Protocol and the ICT Unit, all working together to create synergy in support of the units responsible for events. After each organizational meeting, the Special Events Unit prepares and distributes a work plan that serves as a tool for follow-up and guidance, both for leaders of the units included in this interdisciplinary team and for those in charge of events, along with the meetings support staff.

Recognizing the importance of team work to ensure successful meetings, the Special Events Unit and the Technical Secretariat

Table 17. List of Official Documents Published During the Period 2002-2009.

Series No.	Document title	Publication date	Languages
69	Report of the First Ministerial Meeting in the Context of the Summit of the Americas and the Eleventh Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture Bávaro, Dominican Republic, 26-29 November 2001	May 2002	S-F-E-P ⁴
70	Report of the Twenty-Second Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee San Jose, Costa Rica, 2-3 October 2002	January 2003	S-F-E-P
71	Medium-Term Plan 2002-2006. People-Centered and Committed to the Future	December 2002	S-F-E-P
72	Committees on Management of the General Directorate. Purpose, responsibilities, composition and operating modalities San Jose, Costa Rica, June 2003	June 2003	S-E
73	Report of the Twenty-third Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee San Jose, Costa Rica, 23-24 July 2003	October 2003	S-F-E-P
74	Final Report of the Twelfth Regular Meeting of IABA – Panama City, Panama, 13 November 2003	March 2004	S-F-E-P
75	Report of the Twenty-fourth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee San Jose, Costa Rica, 22-23 July 2004	December 2004	S-F-E-P
76	Report of the Twenty-fifth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee Ribeirão Preto, S.P., Brazil, 13-14 May 2005	July 2005	S-F-E-P
77	Final Report of the Thirteenth Regular Meeting of IABA - Guayaquil, Ecuador, 30 August - 1 September 2005	February 2006	S-F-E-P
78	Report of the Twenty-sixth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee - San Jose, Costa Rica, 27-28 September 2006	March 2007	S-F-E-P
79	Medium-Term Plan 2006-2010: Promoting rural prosperity in the Americas	December 2006	S-F-E-P
80	Report of the Twenty-seventh Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee - San Jose, Costa Rica, 15-17 May 2007	July 2007	S-F-E-P
81	Final Report of the Fourteenth Regular Meeting of IABA – La Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala, 26-27 July 2007	April 2008	S-F-E-P
82	Final Report of the Twenty-eighth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee – San Jose, Costa Rica, 26-27 July de 2007	March 2009	S-F-E-P
83	Final Report of the Twenty-ninth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee – San Jose, Costa Rica, 14-16 July 2008	September 2009	S-F-E-P
84	Final Report of the Fifteenth Regular Meeting of IABA – Montego Bay, Jamaica, 30 - 31 October 2009	To be prepared in November 2009	S-F-E-P

4 Official languages of IICA: Spanish, French, English and Portuguese

set up and supported three working teams. The teams are: a group of pages and messengers, a group of précis-writers and a support team for meetings of the governing bodies. These working groups received training in the official languages of the Institute and in technologies used at meetings. As a result, IICA now has a team that has the skills and experience needed to provide support services during the organization and conduct of official events.

8. Modernization of Procedures

In order to provide efficient, reliable and economical services, the following actions and procedures were modernized:

- **Hotels and transportation for participants:** Negotiations were held with hotel sales managers to arrange for complete packages that included rooms with breakfast, airport shuttle, and transportation to IICA Central Headquarters for groups of ten or more participants. As a result, very good rates were obtained for participants.
 - **Registration of participants and hotel reservations:** An online system for registration and hotel reservations was developed with the help of the IICA Webmaster and the ICT Unit. This system, which was started in 2003, has evolved over the years into a full-fledged support services management system that is administered by the Special Events Unit. It is also available to all units at Central Headquarters and IICA Offices in the countries.
 - **Short-wave walkie-talkies in the meeting rooms:** Having this equipment available provides the following advantages: (i) communications between pages is facilitated, so they do not have to move around so much, and they can respond promptly to delegates' requests; (ii) pages and sound technicians are able to communicate with each other to solve problems with sound or projection equipment; (iii) direct coordination with the documentation center is facilitated, thus expediting document distribution; and (iv) emergency situations can be dealt with promptly.
 - **Audio and video Webcasting:** In 2002, meetings of the governing bodies acquired added value, as meetings were broadcast over the Internet. In the beginning, meetings were transmitted in one language by telephone, and an e-mail address was set up so that participants in the IICA Offices could send in their questions. During the ceremony celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of IICA (2002), this tool was developed one step further, as the transmission included sound from the floor, as well as Spanish/English interpretation and the video of proceedings in the meeting room.
- In 2003, IICA began webcasting the opening meetings and working meetings of the governing bodies. Thanks to the investment made in a digitizing card, the IICA Offices and other guests were able to participate virtually in the meetings.
- With a minimum investment in telecommunications equipment, IP technology was acquired to provide connectivity for Secretariat support staff, IICA officials and delegates of Member States participating in meetings of the governing bodies that were held outside of Costa Rica. This enabled the Secretariat to achieve significant savings in telecommunications.
 - In order to expedite vote counting in elections and show the results graphically on a screen, a *voting and vote-counting system* was developed. A preliminary version of the system



was used in some of the meetings of Representatives, and it will be implemented with some adjustments at the election of the next Director General.

The improvements made possible by these innovations, the use of distance communications and the adoption of more efficient procedures allowed IICA to achieve savings in its resources and in the conduct of meetings.

9. Comprehensive Renovation of Meeting Equipment

The equipment used at meetings had to be modernized in order to ensure efficient servicing of the meetings of the Executive Committee, IABA, the Cabinet and the technical cooperation units, as well as many other events. The equipment acquired between 2002 and 2008 was financed entirely with the savings generated in the budget assigned to IABA and the Executive Committee. This equipment meets current international standards and has enabled the Special Events Unit to provide services simultaneously for different events, as noted below:

- The Unit has sound amplification, recording and fixed simultaneous interpretation equipment for two languages in three simultaneous and separate events. This equipment also makes it possible to stream two events in one language, or one event in two languages.
- Portable simultaneous interpretation equipment can also be provided for two separate groups, through the versatile “tour guide” systems.

- In addition, sound amplification can be provided for three additional events without affecting other events already in progress.

With its new ICT capabilities and meeting equipment, IICA is now able to:

- Service eight meetings simultaneously (this number varies depending on the requirements for each meeting and the number of participants).
- Record meetings in different reading and reproduction formats.
- Edit audio recordings.
- Project videos and graphic presentations.
- Facilitate simultaneous interpretation with fixed conference equipment for five languages.
- Provide simultaneous interpretation with portable wireless equipment for two languages.
- Duplicate recordings on medium-scale compact discs (DVD, CD, MP3, JPEG y PPTX).
- Amplify sound.
- Digitally restore audio recordings.
- Digitize analog recordings.
- Stream meetings on the Internet (audio and/or video).

Bearing in mind all the above, it can be said that the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, the Executive Committee and the Cabinet, working with the Special Events Unit, has fulfilled the mission entrusted to it. This was possible thanks to a team of people who had the necessary skills and experience, and to the availability of information technology and modern equipment for supporting the work of the Cabinet, SACMI, the Executive Committee, IABA and the meetings of ministers of agriculture of the Americas.

Documentation and Publications



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Documentation and Publications

Federico Sancho,¹ Priscilla Cascante,² Manuel Hidalgo³ and Marta Abarca^{4}*

1. Introduction

The period 2002-2008 saw a series of global developments in the field of documentation and publications, including a shift towards knowledge-based environments. The transformations that took place included the switch from the analogue to the digital domain; the abundance and rapid multiplication of new information; the intensive, large-scale use of the Web as a means of communication; and the strengthening of the social networks that operate via Internet and their impact on contemporary society.

IICA changed the way it manages technical information to keep pace with the abovementioned developments. A specialized unit was created that built on all the experience acquired over previous decades by the Orton Memorial Library and the Venezuela Library, the Agroamerica publishing unit and the Agricultural Information and Documentation System of the Americas (SIDALC). The new unit's remit was to come up with creative solutions in a context that had changed dramatically within the space of only a decade.

One of the objectives established by IICA in its 2002-2006 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) was the implementation of information and communication management processes that would facilitate cooperation with the countries and the projection of a corporate image. This was to be achieved by standardizing information systems, producing documentary information and strengthening the networks of documentation centers and agricultural libraries in the hemisphere. In the 2006-2010 MTP, priority was attached to making knowledge management an element of the institutional culture and consolidating IICA's Offices in the countries as information, technology and training centers.

In the area of technical information management, the Institute gave priority to the following three aspects:

- a. Standardization of its **publications** and the visibility of the intellectual production of the countries
- b. Modernization and repositioning of the services provided by the **Orton Memorial Library (Turrialba)**, the **Venezuela Library (Headquarters)** and **IICA's Digital Library**
- c. Institutionalization and strengthening of the **SIDALC**.

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These three elements (publications, libraries and the SIDALC) were seen as key to implementing the strategy for managing technical knowledge within IICA and in the Member States. Therefore, this report on the results achieved by the Institute in the field of documentation and publications between 2002 and 2008 will focus on those elements, in line with the commitments made by IICA, especially with regard to institutional modernization and the provision of innovative technical cooperation to the countries.

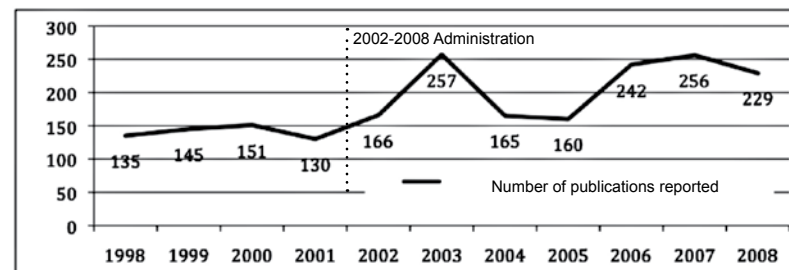
2. Results Achieved

a. IICA Publications

During the period under review, the Institute revamped its regulations dealing with publications, issuing a policy and a guide to IICA's intellectual production, the management of copyright, the distribution and marketing of publications and other, related matters. As many as 1475 publications were produced between 2002 and 2008, an average of 211 per year, compared with an annual average of 140 publications during the period 1998-2001 (see Figure 7).

The significant increase in the number of publications produced was achieved thanks to the balance struck between production at Headquarters and in the Offices in the countries. Before 2002, IICA's Offices produced fewer publications than Headquarters, but by 2008 Headquarters accounted for less than 25% of production institution-wide, showing to the extent to which the Offices were strengthened to enable them to systematize and share knowledge. Another important development with regard to the production of institutional publications during

Figure 7: Number of Publications Reported Each Year During the Period 1998-2008



Source: Documentation and Publications Unit.

the period under review was the increase in the number of publications written in English (19%), Portuguese (18%) and French (1%), an important consideration for an international organization like IICA.

Another achievement was the increase in the number of publications registered with an international standard book number (ISBN). During the period covered by this report, ISBNs were assigned to 60% of all publications, while previously the figure was only 10%. Nearly 98% of all reported publications now form part of the institutional memory. In addition, full-text versions of institutional publications are available in a well-structured section of the Institute's website with open access.

One of the most important publications for IICA, especially in terms of accountability processes, is its Annual Report. Between 2002 and 2008, the report was presented punctually to the Organization of American States (OAS), the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA),

the Institute's Executive Committee and various other hemispheric, regional and national entities to which IICA reports. This kept all stakeholders abreast of the results and outputs that the Institute generated through its technical cooperation actions.

The technical journal *COMUNIICA* was also made available to decision makers in the agricultural and rural sector. Produced every four months, this publication contains reference material and affords IICA professionals a way of sharing their knowledge and experiences.

Under a partnership with Google Inc., the IICA archives maintained by the Orton Memorial and Venezuela libraries, containing close to 24,000 documents (publications and gray literature), were converted to a digital format. The documents can be consulted via the Google books search engine and IICA's Digital Library. This initiative made IICA the first LAC organization to place its entire institutional document archive on line with open access.

The IICA Offices in the Member States also donated over 5000 books produced by the Institute, underscoring the institution's interest in sharing the knowledge it acquires.

Furthermore, IICA developed a tool on its website to sell its publications via the Internet. Allied to the effort with Google Inc., this enabled the Institute to sell more of its publications.

Finally, IICA and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) conducted two studies on the segment of the publishing industry that specializes in agriculture. This provided the two organizations with up-to-date information on the sector and the different suppliers and potential partners for joint publications in the future.

b. Orton Memorial Library (BCO)

Over the last decade, the Orton Memorial Library (BCO), located in Turrialba, Costa Rica, has adapted to the changes taking place, the institutional reforms and the new trends in modernization. Thanks to these efforts, IICA has remained in the forefront of the field of agricultural information in the Americas, meeting the needs of users in the hemisphere in this area. Using cutting-edge information and communication technologies (ICTs) and implementing innumerable training events, the Institute focused on providing technical cooperation for the management of scientific and technical information in the Americas, thereby supporting the research, education and technology transfer processes that IICA promotes.

In 2002, under the IICA Library System (SIBIICA) project, a virtual catalogue of the Institute's libraries was produced and the first meeting of IICA information centers and libraries took place. This served as a launch pad for efforts to improve technical cooperation in the countries and formulate projects to strengthen and modernize the Venezuela Library (Headquarters), the BCO and other documentation centers located in the Institute's Offices in the Member States.

IICA and the Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) manage the BCO together. The library has provided bibliographic services continuously for 66 years and possesses one of the most extensive collections of agricultural information in the Americas.

Some of the BCO's most important actions and results during the 2002-2008 period were as follows: a) it facilitated the dissemination of, and access to, information via the institutional website; b) it assisted 98,144 clients in situ; c) the library's online services were used 777,285 times; d) the

number of bibliographic entries in the catalogue of monographs increased by 85,292; e) under a project initiated in 2003, 4666 university theses and other documents were digitized and made available free of charge in the institutional repository; f) the catalogue of journals available was updated and 881 of the 9853 titles listed are available in a full-text format; g) 239,269 technical and scientific documents were acquired (in printed and electronic formats); h) the library maintained 723 subscriptions to scientific journals; i) it purchased 589 scientific books and acquired regular updates of the international CABI and TEEAL databases; and, j) around 15,000 documents were bound and repaired, which helped maintain the institutional memory.

The BCO also promoted and marketed its services. To meet the needs of remote users, a Web page was developed to provide easy access to bibliographic resources. As already mentioned, a virtual bookstore was set up that sold over 10,600 publications produced by IICA, CATIE and other institutions. The document reproduction service photocopied/printed 5,138,635 pages. An agreement was signed to gain access to the digital platform of scientific information of the University of Idaho, which contains a large number of journals. Over 1000 documents were also loaned out through other libraries.

Eight information resource centers were set up on the following subjects: avian influenza, carbon stocks in aerial biomass in Central America, *Brossimum allicastrum*, coffee, avocados, organic agriculture, forest seeds and agroforestry in cacao. IICA's contributions to agricultural development and the Regional Research and Technology Transfer Networks (PROCACAO and PROMECAFE) were also published on CD.

Under the BCO's Information Culture Program, its staff trained 2752 students, researchers, extension workers and educators in the management of agricultural scientific literature and the

use of electronic and conventional information sources. They also gave the course to 480 master's program students. They organized twelve courses and in-service activities to train 277 agricultural librarians in the development of virtual platforms for the management of digital libraries; and gave 36 lectures.

The BCO strengthened its alliances with international strategic partners, thanks to which it secured financing for projects and promoted the sharing of, and access to, information resources. Especially important were the partnerships with the National Agricultural Library (NAL) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Agriculture Network of Information Centers (AGNIC), FAO and the universities of Idaho and Harvard. In the case of Harvard, the BCO was equipped with digitization technology under the Latin American Libraries Program.

The BCO also received US\$12,000 from USDA/ARS/NAL to digitize 2461 articles published in the *Turrialba* journal (1950-1995). Thanks to this support, full-text versions of every issue of one of the most prestigious journals of agricultural scientific literature in the hemisphere were made available. Furthermore, the USDA/NAL and Harvard University digitization projects (costing US\$20,000) made it possible to add 37,755 scanned pages to the institutional collection.

In partnership with FAO, the beta version of the Integrated System for Agriculture Library Management (LISAGR) was developed and released. This made it possible to link the bibliographic, circulation and loan databases to the system, thereby expanding the descriptors available in three languages, facilitating simultaneous feeds of several bibliographic inputs in network, and streamlining access to the system and the permanent updating of information. The Institute also revised and adapted to Spanish two modules of the Information Management Resource Kit (IMARK) on the management of

agricultural information and electronic documents and digital libraries. The kit was developed jointly by FAO, the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and other organizations.

Following the NAL/USDA evaluation of the BCO in 2007, the Institute completed the first phase of a project designed to preserve the inter-American collection of documents of IICA and CATIE and to carry out infrastructure improvements at the BCO, for which US\$70,000 were allocated. Other project proposals aimed at improving the BCO's physical and technological infrastructure have since been submitted to international entities, including USAID-ASHA, the Elsevier Foundation and the UK Government.

The library signed a contract with Google that made it possible to digitize approximately 12,000 documents from the IICA and CATIE collections, in addition to the materials digitized at Headquarters. Other partnerships aimed at strengthening agricultural research, education and innovation made it possible to evaluate the DIGITOP platform of USDA/NAL and to produce, together, the 2010 edition of the NAL's Agricultural Thesaurus in Spanish.

c. Venezuela Library (Headquarters)

Under new leadership, the library embarked on a process designed to promote specialization in the strategic issues on which IICA focuses (policies, trade and agribusiness; rural communities; natural resources and the environment; technology and innovation; and agricultural health and food safety), endeavoring to complement the services that the library offers with those of the BCO.

The Venezuela Library undertook a planning process that defined its vision, mission and objectives, to make them dovetail with the transformation and modernization process implemented within IICA and, in that way, improve the library's information services, access to information resources and databases, and physical infrastructure. The library also decided to reorganize and digitize its collections. The planning effort included a diagnostic assessment of the library and the formulation of a proposal for its modernization, with the short-term goal of transforming it into an information unit with greater projection within IICA and in the international community. Thanks to this work, the library achieved greater institutional visibility.

To achieve its objectives, the library established several partnerships. For example, Google digitized 8968 original documents from IICA's collection. The Venezuela Library was the first in Latin America to digitize its document archive and make it available to the public through the Google search engine. The alliance with Cornell University afforded access to the TEEAL database and its most recent updates. A study also was completed with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to evaluate the possibility of IICA being granted access to the DIGITOP information service, which is for the exclusive use of USDA personnel. These resources facilitated the delivery of specialized services to meet the information needs of the Institute's technical areas and provide tools with up-to-date information resources and content characterized by greater technical and scientific rigor.

Other information services were implemented, such as searches for specialized information and current awareness services, which have allowed IICA to improve its technical cooperation outputs. For example, two digital outputs were produced on current topics (rising food prices and food security worldwide).

As part of its current awareness services, the library issued a monthly bulletin on its activities that was sent out to all IICA information users and used to publicize the services of the Venezuela Library and new materials added to its collection. This created closer ties with the technical units that develop major information resources and carry out important research. The library also operates a specialized service for the technical areas that informs them of new acquisitions in the different areas of specialization.

The library also provided the technical areas with information related to the importance of water, the appropriation of land, biofuels, climate change, communication, agricultural extension, hydroponics, geographical indications and denomination of origin, organic agriculture, food security, transgenics, statistics in agriculture, the financial crisis, biotechnology, cacao, agrifood chains, Codex Alimentarius, rural development and youth, *Jatropha curcas*, legislation, leadership and the green revolution. Another substantive contribution with regard to information services was the production of full-text, digitized versions of IICA's collection of documents for the agricultural community. By the end of 2008, approximately 10,000 documents had been made available.

Furthermore, the Venezuela Library played a key role in developing distance learning methodologies and new applications. It gave its first course on digital document management, which benefited information professionals of IICA and the Red Nacional de Información Agropecuaria (REDNIA) of Costa Rica, professionals from the SICTA cooperative program and information specialists from Ecuador, Paraguay, Argentina and Honduras. The methodology developed was also used for a program of courses for the Caribbean community.

The library has an up-to-date website that conforms to institutional standards. With the catalogue accessible online and via the SIDALC, the library processed enquiries from the SIDALC (350) and internal and external users (300), and prepared 330 catalogue entries for IICA-produced materials. The links to the Digital Library and the Venezuela Library were incorporated into IICA's home page.

A key task assigned to the Library in 2005 was that of gathering and storing the publications produced by the Institute's technical areas at Headquarters and the Offices. Some of the most important achievements in this regard are as follows:

- The library garnered 90% of the institutional memory for the period 2002-2008, which was made available to the agricultural community of the hemisphere through the Digital Library and the library's current awareness services.
- About 50% of the current database was updated and nearly 9000 IICA documents were digitized that were previously available only at Headquarters in the form of hard copies. They are now available through the Google search engine and the Institute's Digital Library.

Visitors to Headquarters now have a library at their disposal that has a better work environment, is more organized and has more efficient computers for conducting information searches. Some external signs consistent with the library's specialty were also incorporated.

d. IICA's Digital Library

The services of the BCO and the Venezuela Library were integrated into IICA's Digital Library (<http://orton.catie.ac.cr/>)

bibliotecadigital), which was set up following an intense process of digitizing documents. The Digital Library, which can be accessed via IICA's website, offers over 2500 full-text documents. The more than 20,000 older documents digitized with Google will be added, along with the new electronic materials that IICA produces, such as texts, photographs and audio and video recordings. Linked to the institutional repository, the Institute uses the library to preserve its memory and ensure that the knowledge generated is available for current and future cooperation processes.

e. The Agricultural Information and Documentation System of the Americas (SIDALC)

Created in 1999 under a cooperation project funded by the Kellogg Foundation, the SIDALC (www.sidalc.net) has become one of the most important portals for accessing agricultural knowledge in LAC. IICA institutionalized the service in 2004 as one of its main tools for managing agricultural information in the hemisphere.

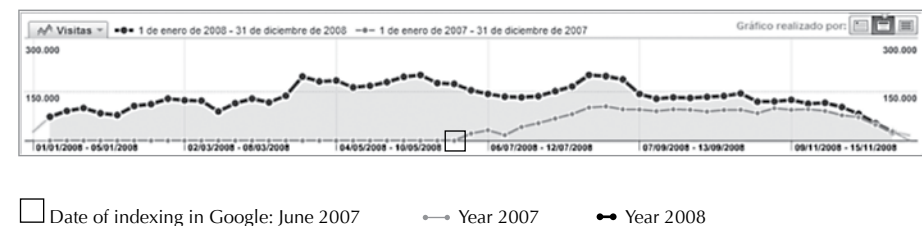
Ten years ago, the SIDALC had 150 databases and fewer than 10,000 full-text documents. It now contains over 2.2 million references and 99,311 full-text documents available in 266 databases of 158 agricultural institutions in 23 countries, including universities, research institutes, ministries of agriculture and nongovernmental organizations. Its growth has resulted from the inclusion of 187 new databases and the updating of the SIDALC at least 687 times over an eight-year period.

The SIDALC has been a success because it has tapped the enormous intellectual capital of those 158 institutions

and 26 national agricultural information networks (a total of 1745 agricultural information specialists are involved). As intermediaries in the management and dissemination of information, they see the need to expand and continually modernize their services to adapt to the new paradigms of the knowledge society. IICA continues to support these processes aimed at strengthening and modernizing national information networks, libraries and specialized information units in the hemisphere.

At the beginning of 2007, the SIDALC allowed its collection to be indexed in the Google search engine. In a matter of months, the number of hits rose from nearly 3000 per month to 40,000 per day in 2008. As shown in Figure 8, following the indexing of the collection on 1 June 2007 there was a significant increase in the number of hits, which reached 200,000 per week in 2008. Some 2141 users and 718 agricultural libraries are currently registered with the SIDALC.

Figure 8: Trend in Weekly Visits to the SIDALC after it was Indexed in Google



Source: Google Analytics 2009.

According to Google's records, between June 2007 and 2009 the SIDALC received 11.3 million hits and generated 22.4 million page views.

Twenty-three IICA Offices in the countries have reported that a number of agricultural information networks are able to deliver better services since they became active members of the SIDALC. Those networks include the Mexican Network of Agricultural Libraries (REMBA), which renewed its institutional framework and policies and developed products such as the Information System for Rural Development and the Mexican Catalogue of Agricultural Information; the Agriculture Information Network Center (AGNIC) in the United States, of which IICA is an active partner; and the National Agricultural Information Network (REDNIA) of Costa Rica, which devised an agricultural information policy and set up a digital library.

In the Caribbean, with financial assistance from the CTA, the "Leadership in agricultural information management" program was implemented, based on IMARK material developed jointly with FAO. This made it possible to enhance the capabilities of 32 information professionals in the region and draw up work plans with them to improve the delivery of information management and dissemination services.

Furthermore, 6500 CDs were distributed all over the hemisphere containing the SIDALC's data banks, so that rural communities that still do not have access to the Internet could take advantage of the tool. Michigan State University currently provides a mirror server for the SIDALC to offset any problems that the Institute's computerized services might experience.

Between 2002 and 2008, the SIDALC made it possible for IICA to:

- Be a leader - the largest information service specializing in agriculture and rural life in the Americas. This was reflected in its participation in 20 congresses, 12 workshops

and 55 training activities, at both the national and international levels.

- Link up with other international information systems and initiatives developed at the world level (FAO, BIREME, USDA, AGNIC, NAL, Canadian Agricultural Library), enabling the Institute to keep abreast of the latest developments in the area of information and knowledge management.
- Promote a new culture aimed at sharing original content and the indigenous knowledge of LAC countries in an organized way.
- Afford users in the hemisphere access to scientific material available in the collections of prestigious specialized libraries.
- Be recognized, at the national and international levels, by the networks, libraries and other information centers specializing in agriculture that join the SIDALC each year.
- Increase the demand for its services and the positive impact on the reference services of the libraries, which are sharing information resources and adopting tools and methodologies for the management of specialized information.
- Continuously share experiences with specialists and institutions, which helps identify opportunities and find solutions to common problems.
- Identify the potential for expanding the SIDALC to other sectors, such as forestry and natural resources and the environment. This idea will be presented at the World Forestry Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 2009.

The Renewal of IICA: Repositioning the Institute to Face the Challenges of the 21st Century



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

The Renewal of IICA: Repositioning the Institute to Face the Challenges of the 21st Century

Chelston W. D. Brathwaite¹

1. Introduction

In 2001, we realized that, given today's realities, the IICA of the 21st Century had to embrace a new style of technical cooperation, one that emphasized operational efficiency, prudent financial management, better use of our human resources, expanded international strategic partnerships with the private and public sectors, and a new relationship with our Member States based on participation, transparency and accountability.

Based on this strategic vision, we prepared a framework for the renewal of the Institute, which was set out in the document "Repositioning IICA to face the challenges of the 21st Century". That document was shared with the agricultural community of the Americas at the beginning of 2002. We concluded that IICA needed a clear strategic vision and a well-developed strategy, backed by carefully aligned operations, to position the Institute for long-term growth and development.

Today, I am pleased to report that a significant part of the plans and proposals that we presented for the renewal and transformation of IICA have been achieved. This document

presents a summary of the background, the challenges, the formulation of a new technical cooperation model and the main results achieved during the period 2002-2008.

2. Mandates of the Third Summit of the Americas and Institutional Transformation

The Third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec City in April 2001, produced a hemispheric Declaration and a Plan of Action which clearly defined the strategies and programs to be pursued by the countries of the Hemisphere to create greater economic prosperity, expanded economic opportunity and further international relations among the countries of the Americas in the foreseeable future.

In both the Declaration and the Plan of Action, the Heads of State and Government of the Americas recognized the importance of agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere. They declared the sector to be the livelihood of millions of rural inhabitants, and a strategic sector of the socioeconomic system for generating prosperity.

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Having recognized the importance of agriculture, the Heads of State and Government agreed to promote a joint hemispheric effort involving all actors in the agricultural sector. The aim was to achieve the sustainable improvement of agriculture and rural life and, at the same time, develop medium- and long-term national strategies for their sustainable improvement, based on a dialogue that would include government ministers, parliamentarians and different sectors of civil society.

The decision by the Heads of State and Government at the Quebec Summit to recognize and promote the hemispheric ministerial meetings as mechanisms for the implementation of their mandates led to the establishment of the ministerial meetings on “Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas”, within the framework of the Summit Process.

IICA was designated as an institutional partner in the Summit process, along with the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), for the purpose of supporting countries with the implementation of the mandates, thereby forming part of the follow-up mechanisms. IICA thus became the Secretariat for the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life within the Summit Process.

Faced with the task of shaping a renewed vision for agriculture and rural life in the hemisphere, and taking into consideration the Millennium Development Goals, the Ministers of Agriculture of the Hemisphere approved the Bavaro Declaration at their first Ministerial Meeting in Bavaro, Dominican Republic, in 2001.

The Bavaro Declaration expressed the Ministers’ commitment to promote joint actions aimed at improving agriculture

and rural life, as stated in the Plan of the Third Summit of the Americas. The agreement calls for efforts to make progress in food security, the reduction of rural poverty and the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, while simultaneously addressing the aspects of competitiveness, equity, environmental sustainability and democratic governance. In essence, it recognized the need to renew the institutional framework for sustainable agricultural development in the Americas.

Consequently, based on the mandates of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas (Quebec), at the beginning of 2002 IICA assumed the responsibility of playing a dual role in agriculture in the hemisphere: a new role as an institutional partner in the Summit of the Americas process, as well as its traditional role as an international technical cooperation agency.

In its new role as Secretariat of the Ministerial Process, the Institute was mandated to facilitate the continuation of the Ministerial Meetings on Agriculture and Rural Life, in order to:

- Contribute to the linkage between the Ministerial Process and the Summits of the Americas Process; and,
- Contribute to the follow up and implementation of Summit mandates.

Repositioning IICA to Face the New Challenges

The administration, which began on January 15, 2002, and which I have the honour to lead, responded swiftly and with full commitment to these new challenges and mandates, initiating an institutional transformation process which

clearly defined the Institute's dual role: (i) a new role as the Secretariat of the Ministerial Meetings, within the framework of the Summit Process, and (ii) a conventional but renewed role as the Inter-American technical cooperation organization for agricultural and rural development.

The institutional modernization process was guided by the document *"Repositioning IICA to face the challenges of the 21st Century"*, which formed the basis for the Medium-Term Plans for 2002-2006 and 2006-2010. That document defined a new mission for the Institute to support Member States in their pursuit of progress and prosperity in the hemisphere through the modernization of the rural sector, the promotion of food security, and the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed, and socially equitable for the peoples of the Americas.

This process was led by a deep conviction that the current challenges faced by agriculture in the 21st Century demanded that we review and modernize the traditional model of technical cooperation.

We took the view that technical cooperation in the 21st Century should not be "top down" but based on the establishment of a true partnership between the Institute and its Member States, a partnership underpinned by transparency, accountability and shared responsibility, and taking into consideration local knowledge and local capabilities.

We were also convinced that technical cooperation had to recognize the unique nature of each Member State, while at the same time promoting hemispheric solidarity, common agendas, cooperation and integration among them.

Furthermore, we had a responsibility to visualize what the Institute could become while respecting its past achievements.

The transformation process was based on the need for the Institute to maintain its place of technical excellence and technical leadership in the agricultural community of the Americas by satisfying the countries' priorities.

The administration took the view also that organizations such as IICA must focus less on self preservation but, instead, should assume a higher responsibility of ensuring service to stakeholders as well as social responsibility to society.

We also recognized that leadership in the 21st Century requires attributes relating to character that are similar to, but at the same time different from, those of the past. Values and principles such as integrity, courage, vision and determination are unchanging leadership qualities.

The ability to deal with uncertainty and complexity and to lead in a globalized world is, on the other hand, new leadership requirements. The very role of the leader of the past has changed from the old command and control model of the 20th century to a new role as motivator, facilitator, team leader, coach, strategist and steward.

We were also aware that the Administration would eventually be judged not by what we changed from the past but by what we built for the future.

After 20 years in this institution, I was convinced that the time had indeed come to stop rewarding effort and activities and to start rewarding results.

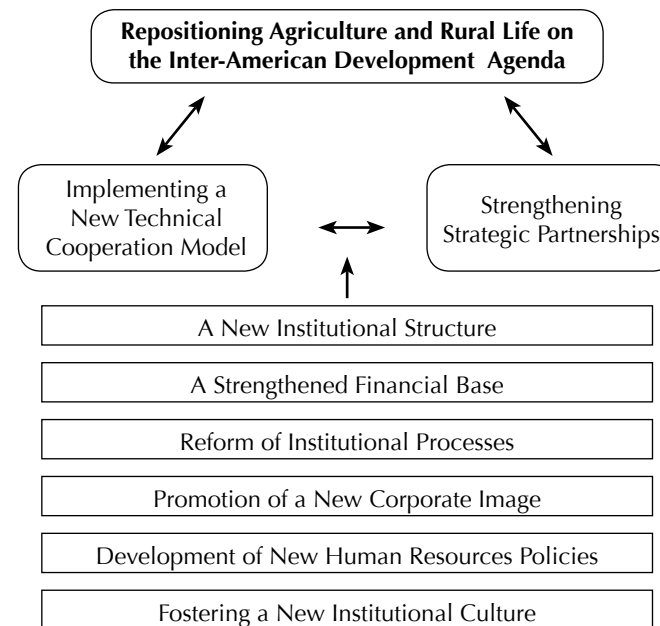
As a result of these realities, this Administration pursued and implemented what were considered the ten characteristics that a modern institution must have for success in the 21st Century:

- A strategic vision and a sound implementation strategy;
- A management structure that effectively responds to the mandates and priorities of the Institute;
- Defined mechanisms for performance management and evaluation;
- Clearly defined human resources management policies;
- Comprehensive financial management policies and processes;
- Strategies for the promotion of a corporate image;
- Ethical principles and values;
- Social responsibility to staff, stakeholders and society;
- The capacity to think and to anticipate the future; and,
- Leadership skills to forge a common purpose and a common agenda.

This report is a summary of our efforts to achieve three strategic objectives (Figure 9):

- To reposition agriculture within the Summit of the Americas Process, thus ensuring that agriculture and rural life were central to the Inter-American Development Agenda;
- To implement a new Technical Cooperation Model focused on promoting partnerships, transparency and accountability to our Member States; and,

Figure 9: IICA's Strategic Objectives



Source: Prepared by the author.

- To strengthen strategic partnerships to widen the scope of our technical support services.

These three strategic objectives were supported by six complementary actions designed to:

- Strengthen the financial base of the Institute;
- Implement a new institutional structure;
- Put in place new institutional processes;
- Promote a new corporate image;

- Introduce new human resources development policies; and,
- Foster a new institutional culture.

3. Repositioning Agriculture within the Summit of the Americas Process

The Ministers' efforts to build consensus around a shared hemispheric agenda, defined at the First Ministerial Meeting, led to the continuation of the dialogue and to the definition of the second Ministerial Agreement. This initiative was formalized at the Second Ministerial Meeting in Panama where the Ministers approved the AGRO Plan 2003-2015 - A Shared Vision for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, prepared jointly by the Institute and the Ministries of Agriculture of the Americas. The Plan defines the strategic actions required to advance towards the achievement of key goals by 2015. They also approved the renewed concept of agriculture, which enables us to understand that successful agricultural development depends on equity, sustainability, competitiveness and good governance.

The Plan recognizes that agricultural development and the promotion of rural welfare are critically important for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals of reducing extreme poverty by 50% by the year 2015. In fact, the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved unless an effort is made to reduce rural poverty and promote rural prosperity.

At the Third Meeting, at which the Ministerial Agreement of Guayaquil 2005 was concluded, and at the Fourth Meeting,

held in Guatemala in 2007, the Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and updated it with complementary strategic actions for the biennia 2006-2007 and 2008-2009. Priority was accordingly given to: (i) promoting a national policy for agriculture and rural life, based on public-private and multisectoral coordination, (ii) regional integration in the context of the hemispheric Ministerial Process and (iii) the development of an information system for the follow-up and evaluation of the AGRO Plan.

At the Special Summit of the Americas in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2004 and the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 2005, the Heads of State and Government pledged their firm support to the process to improve agriculture and rural life, led by the Ministers of Agriculture. In both Summits, they undertook to make a sustained effort to improve the living conditions of rural populations and, in that context, decided to support the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan as a "national commitment", defined in paragraph 35 of the Plan of Action of the Fourth Summit.

At the recently concluded Fifth Summit of the Americas, held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, the Heads of State and Government of the Americas reaffirmed their commitment to the AGRO Plan and to the multidimensional approach to agricultural development.

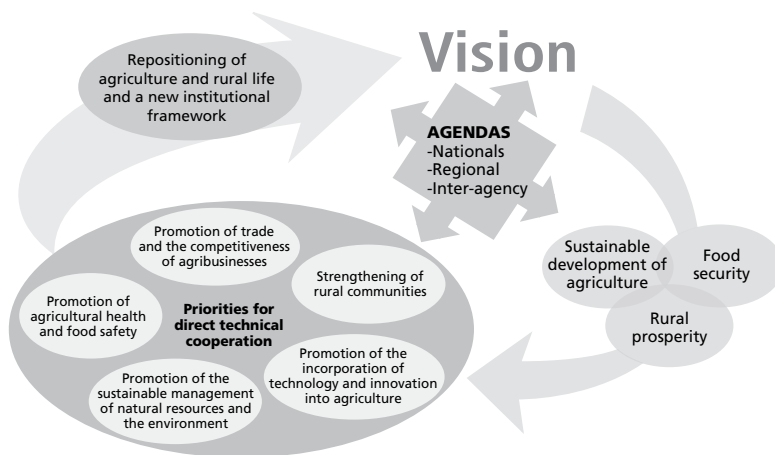
4. The Medium-Term Plans and the New Technical Cooperation Model

The Medium-Term Plan for 2002-2006 had three clearly defined goals: the promotion of sustainable agricultural development,

food security and rural prosperity. It was focused on people and committed to the future.

In 2005, the administration was reelected unanimously for a second term and the Medium-Term Plan for 2006-2010, while having the same three goals of the previous plan, defined more clearly the challenges facing the agricultural sector of the Americas and focused the actions of the Institute on six strategic priorities (Figure 10):

Figure 10: IICA's Priorities for Strategic Action



Source: Prepared by the author.

- Repositioning agriculture and rural life and a new institutional framework;
- Promoting trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness;
- Strengthening rural communities;

- Promoting the introduction of technology and innovation in agriculture;
- Promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment; and
- Promoting agricultural health and food safety.

The New Technical Cooperation Model

In response to the new mandates received by the Institute, and considering the challenges that lay ahead for agriculture and rural life in the 21st Century and the objectives of the Medium-Term Plans, this Administration adopted a new model for the provision of technical cooperation services to the countries and allocated additional resources to national priorities.

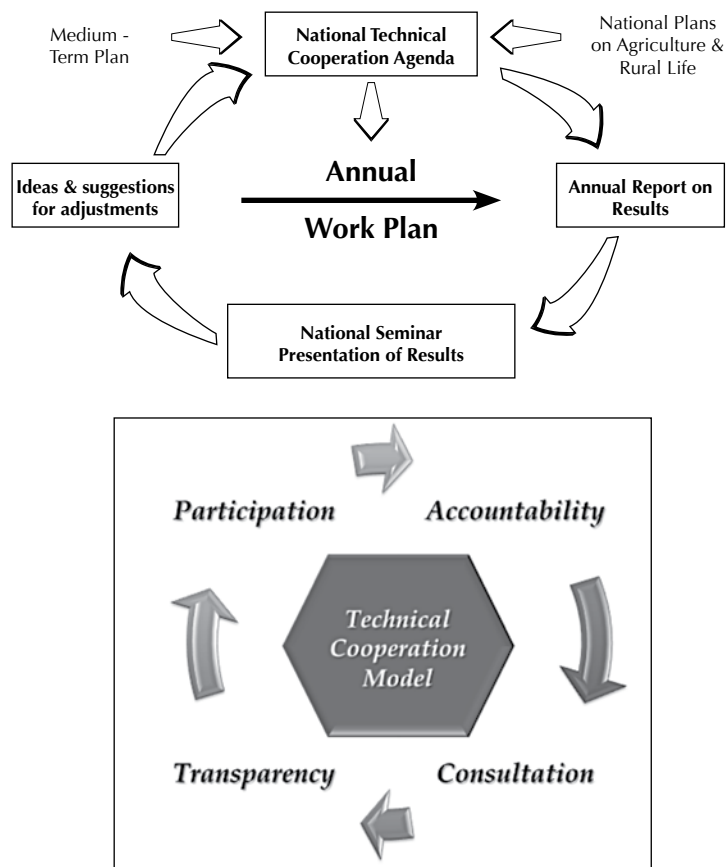
Through Offices in its Member States, IICA initiated an ongoing dialogue with national authorities and other key stakeholders in the agricultural sector (private and public organizations, the private sector, civil society, NGOs, academia, farmers' organizations and professional societies) in order to align IICA's actions in the countries with national priorities and development plans, taking into account the Institute's strategic areas of action and strengths and the plans and policies of the countries.

National Technical Cooperation Agendas

The first component of the new model is a process of consultation, dialogue and consensus building with national authorities, the private sector, academia and civil society, to draw up National Technical Cooperation Agendas and to spur a principle-centered process of institutional transformation (Figure 11). This process aims to meet the Member States' need for technical cooperation that responds to their demands

and priorities. The products of this endeavour are the National Technical Cooperation Agendas through which the Institute implements its technical cooperation at the country level.

Figure 11: The New Technical Cooperation Model



A New Relationship between the Institute and its Member States

Source: Prepared by the author.

Preparation of these agendas represents a new approach to technical cooperation, one that emphasizes participation, partnership, cooperation and demand-driven efforts.

The National Agendas respect the unique nature of each of the Institute's Member States, and the approach used in preparing them is holistic and cross-thematic. They afford an opportunity for the principal actors in agriculture and rural development to contribute significantly to developing IICA's technical cooperation programme, thus ensuring that it meets their needs. It is therefore "their" programme, implemented with mutually agreed upon human and financial resources.

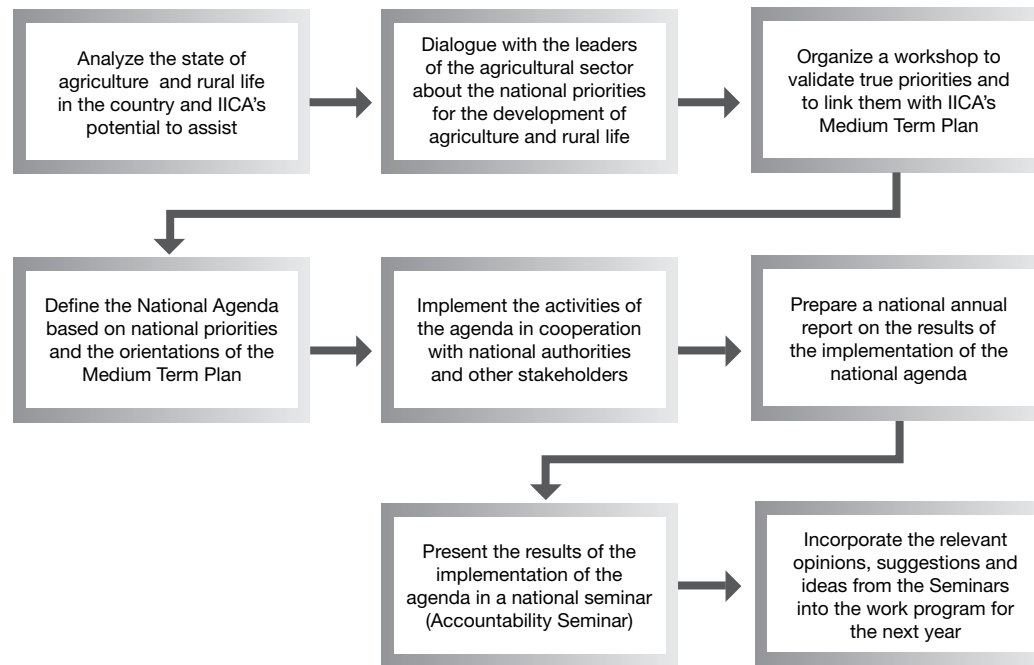
The Consultation Process

The process of preparing an overall strategy for IICA's actions at the country level is based on an extensive process of consultation and consensus building with key stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the Americas (Figure 12). Its guiding principles are:

- The strategy must be based on the interests of the countries and be designed to achieve impact as soon as possible.
- It must take into consideration the Institute's mandates, new vision, mission and priorities, matching them with the countries' priorities.
- Preparation of the agendas is an ongoing process based on consultations with and the participation of partners. It does not impose a result or create a commitment. The strategy must reflect what IICA believes can effectively be done in each country and region.



Figure 12: Steps in the Development and Implementation of the National Agenda – (PACT model)



Source: Prepared by the author.

- The strategy must define areas in which there is an effective match between the interests of the parties and the human resources available for implementing the necessary actions. A realistic assessment of resource constraints (human, financial and physical) is of key importance.

Development and Approval of the National Agendas

IICA's Representatives lead the process to prepare the agendas, taking into account the information generated in the consultation and following the established guidelines.

Once agreement on cooperation actions has been reached with national authorities, each Office prepares a draft National Agenda that includes a timetable of activities for the year, as well as an assessment of opportunities for securing additional financial resources to support cooperation actions.

Once consistency of the prepared National Agenda with IICA's Medium- Term Plan is assured and programming and budgetary considerations are reviewed, the National Agendas are approved and communicated to national authorities, representatives of the private sector, universities, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Review and Periodic Updating of the National Agendas

IICA's strategic planning process is dynamic and ongoing. The National Agendas, cornerstones of the process, are evaluated annually to assess the progress made and the results achieved. The evaluation also serves to identify problems, document lessons learned, and identify and propose changes in needs and priorities.

It aims to ensure the relevance of the National Agendas to changing circumstances in agriculture and in rural life. This assessment is conducted with the presentation of an annual report to all the stakeholders, clients and strategic partners that participated in formulating the National Agenda, as well as other interested parties.

With this new inclusive approach to technical cooperation, the Institute succeeds in achieving the following results:

- **An improved relationship with our Member States.** The development of the National Agendas, the

preparation of national annual reports, the presentation of these national reports in an annual seminar and the incorporation of ideas and suggestions from the seminar into our work plans for the next year, have greatly improved our relationship with the Member States. This approach leads to partnership, accountability and transparency and builds confidence and trust. There is a renewed awareness that IICA can make a significant contribution to agriculture and rural life in our hemisphere.

- **Increased technical cooperation actions.** We have successfully changed the actions in several of our offices in the countries from being primarily offices for the administration of financial resources to being providers of technical cooperation services. Almost all the new agreements we have signed incorporate technical cooperation elements.

5. Strengthening Technical Capacity and Capacity Building

The Institute also made a number of improvements in technical cooperation services. Among these are the following:

- We assisted the ministries of agriculture in developing a strategic vision for Agriculture and Rural Life in this hemisphere through the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan which, when implemented, can help the Americas to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty, promoting environmental sustainability and fostering a global partnership for development.



- We developed the Agromatrix as a practical, systemic tool for the diagnosis, planning and evaluation of an integrated agricultural sector that recognizes the political, economic, social and environmental dimensions of a country or region.
- We expanded the proportion of the budget allocated to technical cooperation at the office level, from 37% in 2002 to 40% in 2006, despite a frozen budget and higher costs at the national level.
- We reorganized the technical services and established a new Directorate of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management (DTLKM) to expand IICA's role as a knowledge-based institution with responsibility for monitoring the state of agriculture in the Americas and to strengthen inter-thematic actions at the hemispheric, regional and national levels.
- We established an office in Miami, U.S.A., to support a new Hemispheric Program in Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety in 2003. This office was established to strengthen the agribusiness capabilities of small and medium-scale agri-food businesses and link them to market opportunities in the United States of America, Canada and Europe. The office also provides market intelligence and market information to food exporters and importers throughout the hemisphere and so support the free trade agreements that are negotiated between member states.
- We implemented a program in organic agriculture that supports the design of national strategies and policies, establish and strengthen institutional frameworks and enhance knowledge management in organic agriculture.
- We implemented a program in bio-energy that supports a platform for the dissemination of knowledge, information and experiences in agro-energy and facilitates horizontal technical cooperation between and among member countries, helping them to better understand the complexities of agro-energy and bio-fuel production.
- We implemented a program in biotechnology and bio-safety which supports the design of national policies, strengthens regional initiatives and promotes networks and alliances with strategic partners at the regional and hemispheric levels.
- We implemented a program in agricultural insurance to assist Member States in their efforts to manage risks inherent in the agricultural production process and mitigate the adverse effects of natural events such as hurricanes and floods.
- We established the Agro-Tourism Linkages Program in Barbados as a platform to strengthen linkages between agriculture and the tourism sector.
- We developed a methodology for analysis of the true contribution of agriculture to economic development in member countries in the hemisphere in which we promote the concept that agriculture is more than primary production. We have shown in our studies that when all of the backward and forward linkages are taken into consideration, agriculture's contribution to national development is greater than reported in national statistics. Agriculture's contribution to national development is three or seven times higher than the percentages reported in national statistics, when all of the backward and forward



linkages in the commodity chain are considered. In addition, these analyses demonstrate that approximately 74% of the primary products of agricultural production are inputs into other sectors of the economy such as agro-industry and manufacturing. These results are documented in the report *"More Than Food on the Table: Agriculture's True Contribution to the Economy"*.

- We have increased the technical cooperation in the area of biotechnology that we provide with Canada and the United States of America. Information and agricultural health actions were implemented in these two countries that were once only providers of financial resources to the Institute. And we have promoted greater regional integration between the NAFTA countries by strengthening regional mechanisms such as PROCINORTE and the Trinational Council.
- We have improved relationships with the private sector at national and regional levels. The establishment of the 36th office of the Institute in Miami, which is focused on agribusiness development in the hemisphere, enhances this relationship in the future. The appointment of five agribusiness specialists in the region has further strengthened our relationship with the private sector.
- We have increased horizontal technical cooperation between and among countries, between and among the regions as a result of the elimination of the regional centers and the building of the hemisphere team of national specialists, regional specialists, country representatives and directors of thematic areas. The creation of a Division for Horizontal Technical Cooperation has also promoted greater activity in this area.
- We supported a study of an evaluation of the technical capacity of the Institute which seeks to identify gaps in our delivery of technical cooperation services and provide solutions for strengthening our technical capacity.
- At the request of the Ministries of Agriculture, the Institute assisted in the development of proposals for the restructuring and reform of the Ministries of Agriculture in Chile, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, St. Lucia, Panama and Jamaica. In Jamaica, our efforts were specially related to reform of the Veterinary Services of that country and, in Panama, we supported the restructuring of the agricultural extension service and recommended an integrated model involving the public sector, the private sector and academic institutions.
- At the regional level, the Institute also became the Secretariat for regional mechanisms for the integration of agricultural policies and decisions. These mechanisms -the Southern Agricultural Council in the South, the Alliance for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean, the Central American Agricultural Council and the Trinational Council in the North- are all coordinated by IICA.
- The Institute developed a Performance Vision and Strategy tool (PVS), which has been used internationally to evaluate the performance of the veterinary services in the Member States. This evaluation can then be used to modernize veterinary services. It is based on interviews with focus groups, public- and private-sector groups and includes not only animal health but also food safety issues.

6. Strengthened Strategic Partnerships

The development of expanded relations with strategic partners at the national, regional and international levels is a means of mobilizing resources, creating more synergy in technical cooperation and developing a more holistic approach to agricultural and rural development.

The strategic partners include the OAS, FAO, IDB, the World Bank, PAHO, ECLAC, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Swiss Agency for International Development, the Biotechnology Industry Organization, the International Executive Service Corps, the US Grain Council, Harvard University, Florida International University, and the Rural Policy Research Institute, Cornell University and the University of Florida at Gainesville, Florida.

Two years ago, IICA signed a new strategic partnership agreement with the FAO. That agreement will lead to closer and more systematic collaboration between the two organizations and it is intended to enhance the cooperation that both provide to the countries of the Americas. The agricultural and rural sectors of the hemisphere will be the beneficiaries of this initiative, which will promote joint action as a means of making better use of resources and enhancing the effectiveness of both institutions. We presented the First IICA – FAO Joint Report at the 30th Annual Conference of FAO in Brazil in 2008.

As a result of the work with strategic partners:

- New links were forged with organizations such as the French International Center for Cooperation in

Agricultural Research for Development (CIRAD), the Spanish International Cooperation Agency, the United States Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC) and the Catholic Relief Services.

- IICA and CATIE expanded their collaboration through the work of capacity building in biotechnology and agroforestry; the management of agricultural information at the hemispheric level through the Orton Memorial Library; technological innovation for the production and marketing of Central American coffee and the design of projects for joint implementation that were presented to the Global and Environmental Facility (GEF), IDB and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Strategic partnerships have been strengthened with the World Bank through the Global Development Learning Network, with the Inter-American Development Bank through FONTAGRO, with the Pan-American Health Organization through joint actions on BSE (mad cow disease), FMD (foot and mouth disease) and Avian Flu, and with FAO, through joint actions at the national and regional levels, in information and agricultural health and food safety.
- Increased participation by Member States in the meetings of the World Trade Organization in Geneva has been supported to promote greater awareness of the global trading system. We have also launched a new instrument for modernizing agricultural health and food safety systems in the hemisphere. The performance, vision and strategy instrument for the analysis of the agricultural health systems of the Member States is now being used to review agricultural health systems in countries around the world.

- The IICA Office in Washington returned to the OAS building in Washington D. C. as part of a strategy to build a new relationship with the OAS, which involves developing specific initiatives at the operational level. The OAS has designated a special day for IICA in its agenda.
- IICA strengthened its office in Madrid, Spain, in support of stronger linkages with Spain, the European Union and European financial and technical institutions.
- IICA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) expanded cooperation in the areas of agricultural health and food safety, biotechnology and agricultural information. In agricultural health and food safety, emphasis was placed on support to training programs in Codex Alimentarius norms and regulations in cooperation with FAO and OIE, and in capacity building for control of avian influenza, foot and mouth disease and mad cow disease in the hemisphere.

7. Strengthening the Financial Base of the Institute

In 2002, the external auditors and the Audit Review Committee reported that the Institute “lacked economic viability due to the increase in the amount of quotas owed by the Member States”. These quotas totaled US\$13,540,545 at 31 December 2002 and that figure increased to US\$17,743,795 at 31 December 2003. The report indicated that the deterioration of the finances of the Institute would hinder the effectiveness of the institution in terms of the achievement of its objectives.

As a result of concrete actions taken by the administration in cooperation with the Governing Bodies of the Institute, we were able to reduce outstanding arrearages of quota contributions from \$13.5 million in 2002 to \$2.2 million at the end of 2008. The collection of these outstanding quotas allowed us to carry out a number of actions, including:

- Repayment of a line of credit of \$1.5million;
- Addressing critical infrastructure needs at Headquarters and in the country offices; and,
- Financing special programs in agricultural health, biotechnology, agro-energy, leadership and agro-tourism.

In addition,

- We increased the number of contributing member countries to the Institute from 22 in 2002 to 34 today. The payment situation where all member states are today in regular status is the best payment situation the Institute has been in since 1986. (See Figure 13).

Figure 13: Financial Situation of the Institute in 2002 and 2008

	Year 2002	Year 2008
Out standing quota Contributions	US\$13.5 m	US\$2.2 m
Countries in Regular Status	22	34
Extra quota - External Fund	US\$127 m	US\$206 m
Quota Budget	US\$27 m	US\$27 m

Source: IICA



- We increased the external funds budget from \$127 million in 2002 to \$206 million in 2008.
- We received all annual quota payments from member states, which can only be interpreted as an expression of satisfaction with our work, notably as a result of implementation of the new technical cooperation model. The external auditors have confirmed for the sixth consecutive year that the finances of the Institute are managed with high levels of transparency and accountability.
- We eliminated the Regional Centers, instituted a flatter institutional structure and reassigned US\$1.2 million in savings from these actions to improve technical cooperation in the Member States.
- We modernized the financial system and improved financial management and accountability by implementing a new financial management system (SAP) at Headquarters and in selected country offices during the 2007-2008 period at a cost of \$2.0 million.
- We have obtained approval from the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) to include in the Program Budget a new chapter for maintenance and the renewal of infrastructure.
- Consolidation of units at Headquarters, creating a flatter, more efficient institutional structure, resulting in the reduction of D Level Management positions from 36 to 20;
- Creation of a new unit for budget preparation and control;
- Establishment of a Directorate for Performance Management and Evaluation to ensure that proposed actions are implemented in a cost-effective manner;
- Creation of a Directorate for Follow-Up of the Summit of the Americas process to provide appropriate follow-up to the mandates issued at the Quebec 2001 Summit and the OAS General Assemblies;
- Establishment of a Directorate of Regional Operations and Integration to link the Headquarters of the Institute with the National Offices and the appointment of Regional Directors at Headquarters for the management and coordination of our regional agendas and regional actions;
- Establishment of a Directorate for Strategic Partnerships in the Washington D.C. Office;
- Creation the Agro-tourism Linkages Program based in Barbados;
- Establishment of the Directorate of Technical Leadership and Knowledge Management;
- Establishment of an Office for Public Information and the promotion of a new institutional image;

8. Implementation of a New Institutional Structure

A new institutional structure has been introduced based on an integrated management system, which is simpler and more horizontal and which includes the following actions:

- Establishment of the office in Miami, U.S.A, to coordinate our program in Agribusiness, Trade and Food Safety; and,
- Establishment of a Centre for Leadership in Agriculture to promote a new generation of leaders, and to broaden the application of leadership concepts, values and principles throughout the hemisphere. The Centre provides a forum for leaders to be informed about the following topics:
 - The role of agriculture and agribusiness in economic development;
 - The challenges and opportunities for agriculture in the 21st Century;
 - The role of the Minister of Agriculture as a member of the Ministerial process within the framework of the Summit of the Americas process and as a Member of the Inter-American Board;
 - IICA and its role in agriculture and rural development in the Hemisphere; and,
 - The bases for the establishment of a new agenda for cooperation between IICA and its Member States.

The Centre also supports a forum for young leaders, mindful that we must invest in bright young minds in order to develop the leadership of the future. We are conscious that the development of young leaders in the agricultural sector is an important part of the future agenda of the Institute as we seek to create a new vision for agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

- We implemented a program of renewal of the infrastructure at IICA Headquarters, including: renewal of the electrical

system of the main buildings, painting of the entire building, conversion of the lobby into an information centre, purchase of a diesel electric generator, purchase of new equipment for meetings and conferences, purchase of a new communication equipment including the virtual private network for communication between offices and Headquarters and construction of a Gymnasium for Staff.

9. New Institutional Processes

One of the most important internal factors that supports the new model for technical cooperation is the Institute's monitoring, supervision, evaluation and follow-up system, which links planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up activities. This integrated management framework is managed by our newly established Directorate for Performance Management and Evaluation. In addition, it ensures that the IICA Offices in the countries and relevant Directorates and Units at Headquarters work in an integrated and holistic fashion. The system is designed to be supportive, and embodies an essential part of the Institute's responsibility in the areas of leadership, management, coordination, control and accountability in the use of its resources. It is also designed to foster relationships that contribute to improving individual skills and performance, and to bring people and resources together, based on clear objectives and priorities defined in our work plans, and in the National, Regional and Hemispheric Agendas.

In addition, for the benefit of IICA:

- We have reviewed the norms of the Institute, eliminating outdated executive orders and updating the regulations



and procedures, and we prepared these in four files which have been distributed to all units of the Institute.

- We introduced an on-line system for meetings management, which has resulted in a 12% reduction in the cost of official meetings.
- We drew up plans to ensure the continuous improvement of the offices (OIP).
- An annual hemispheric forum called “Representatives’ Week” to foster strategic planning, promote dialogue, facilitate hemispheric horizontal cooperation between and among countries and to build a hemispheric team of professionals was created.
- We established a protocol for the transfer of Representatives at the office level and prepared a guide for the orientation of new Representatives in order to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities at the office level and to improve management of national offices.

10. Promotion of a new Corporate Image

Special importance is attached to information, communication and the projection of our institutional image. The promotion of the Institute’s new global dimension and image is of fundamental importance in efforts to position the Institute as an international development organization that is recognized and respected as a reliable strategic partner that can make a major contribution to the development of agriculture and rural life

in the Americas. Our new information and communications policy fosters:

- Dialogue with the community of agriculture and the Member States and keeps them informed of the activities and results of the Institute’s work. Publications of the National and Regional Technical Cooperation Agendas, IICA’s Annual Reports, IICA Connection (an electronic bulletin), Comuniica on line and the Director General’s Infoletter, together with the improvement of the Institute’s new website (www.iica.int), are examples of this policy.
- Investment to modernize the Institute’s Information and Communication Systems. During this period, IICA modernized its technological platform to support a more efficient supply of technical cooperation services. It installed a Virtual Private Network, which links Headquarters and all Offices, investing nearly US\$250,000.00. It is also installing a new telecommunications platform in the IICA Office in Miami, as a back-up to the telecommunications system at Headquarters, at a cost of US\$65,000.00. Substantial improvements have been made in the technological platform at Headquarters. thanks to the renovation of telecommunications equipment and servers, and work is under way to upgrade the telephone switchboard.
- Two important information systems to provide Member States with relevant contents for their agricultural activities were improved and expanded. INFOAGRO.NET has now implemented modules on trade, agribusiness, technology, biotechnology, health, rural development and agro-industry, and serves approximately 17,000 users, while the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas -SIDALC- contains data collections of more than 157 institutions in 23 countries in the hemisphere, with an estimated 25,000 users per day.

- An expanded and enhanced web page that provides a range of information several aspects of the Institute's activities including its structure, national agendas and work plans, projects and activities executed by Headquarters and each Office, current events, video transmissions, etc.
- The new IICA Web portal was launched in February 2008 to make it easier to access, exchange and update information on agriculture and rural life in the Americas. It is a user-friendly platform whose different pages are managed and maintained by those responsible for same.
- In the area of Knowledge Management, the General Directorate restructured IICA's technical areas in 2006, incorporating Knowledge Management and the sharing of knowledge as a means of strengthening the technical cooperation offered by the Institute. The web portal has been redesigned entirely, providing easy access to knowledge within IICA and integrating all of the IICA countries into one system, giving center stage to the technical areas, their technical personal and contact information, documents and publications, knowledge communities, seminars and other technical events as a means of sharing knowledge internally and externally. IICA's educational, training and distance education center has been restructured to facilitate communication and the sharing of knowledge within the Institute and among its member countries. Most recently, IICA has developed the concept of knowledge communities, permitting technical groups within the institute around themes of common interest to share knowledge, experiences, best practices, publications among other communications as a means of improving technical cooperation. This effort is playing a central role in integrating the technical capacity from across the Institute and the 36 offices, to solve country problems and address member country needs.

- We established an agreement with Google so that through the use of the Internet some 9000 documents in agriculture are now available to the agricultural community on line.

11. Human Resources Development Policies

As an organization promoting the development, transformation and transmission of knowledge, the Institute developed a three-year plan for the improvement of our human resources, which included:

- Reviewing the Institute's classification system, salary scales and its recruitment practices;
- Increasing the number of women in positions of management in the Institute. Additionally, we have assigned a greater number of national professionals to management and leadership responsibilities;
- Reducing the average age of the professional staff of the institution by retiring all staff above sixty five years old. This has allowed us to recruit younger professionals;
- Linking the new individual performance appraisal system to the work plans of the Institute units to ensure coordination of individual performance with institutional goals;
- Redefining the role of our Representatives at country level, emphasizing leadership and management capacity. Based on this new profile we appointed new Representatives in many of our Member States;

- Developing a new code of ethics, which takes into account the standards of the Institute, as set out in the Rules of Procedure of the General Directorate, the Staff Rules and the Financial Rules. The purpose of this code is to build an ethical system that recognizes the value of the individual and of diversity, and to foster an environment characterized by high moral integrity so that staff members can realize their full potential. It also highlights those IICA values which govern staff members' work at the Institute so that all members observe the highest values of ethical conduct, namely: impartiality, integrity, professionalism, flexibility, discretion, loyalty, financial prudence and responsibility. It sets standards for staff members' conduct within and outside the Institute, relations at work, personal business and moral issues, as well as the use and disclosure of information, conflicts of interest, and political activity. The code must be interpreted as a clear signal that this administration will not tolerate corruption, improper conduct or political activity within the Institute; and,
- Striving for excellence at all levels. To this end, the Director General's Award for Excellence Program was created to contribute to shaping an institutional culture of recognition for creativity, outstanding performance, leadership and teamwork. For many years, the Institute had provided awards to its staff for years of service. It is the view of this administration that in addition to awarding years of service, we need to award superior performance of our staff. We therefore initiated in 2002, the Director General's awards for excellence. During the last four years, we have provided these awards for excellence to 143 members of our staff.

The administration considered that promoting a caring environment and one that fosters the professional growth of its staff is an indispensable dimension of the Institute's

transformation process. Consequently, we took a number of steps to implement a strategy with the following five objectives:

- To promote an environment of caring for the personnel;
- To recognize superior performance;
- To provide opportunities for the personal growth and updating of professional skills;
- To foster effective communication; and,
- To encourage recreation and healthy lifestyles.

Other actions included:

- In 2008, when food prices spiked, we provided a food security bonus to assist the most vulnerable staff members.
- We established an Emergency Assistance Program to provide emergency assistance to IICA employees in any Member State who suffer personal hardship as a result of unforeseen circumstances beyond their control.
- We developed a program for continuous professional development to provide development opportunities and financial support to our personnel in order to enhance and update their professional knowledge and skills in their areas of expertise as well as in the areas of leadership and management.
- We established a language laboratory to improve the levels of competence of our staff in the official languages of the Institute and contracted an English teacher of as part of the permanent staff at the Institute's headquarters in Costa Rica.

- In the area of communication and information, we established an internal news bulletin for staff and promoted a number of communication instruments to keep staff informed of the Institute's activities.
- We promoted good health for our staff by promoting recreational activities, the construction of a gymnasium for our staff and promotion of occupational health and strengthened medical services.
- During the transformation process, we have promoted the values of flexibility, accountability, commitment, efficiency, transparency, teamwork and an attitude of service to the Member States.
- We promoted the welfare of employees in order to ensure the satisfaction of our Member States.

12. Fostering of a New Institutional Culture

Our success in achieving our objectives has been based on a number of changes in the institutional culture. Seven aspects of this cultural change are described below:

a. A Culture of Accountability and Transparency

The emphasis we have placed on accountability at all levels of the Institute has promoted individual responsibility for results and the achievement of institutional goals.

This started with the implementation of our individual contribution plan which identified the contribution of each

individual to the institutional goals. This was supported by an evaluation system based on the individual contribution plans.

The monthly reports of each unit in the Institute were another instrument that supported a culture of accountability.

The most important aspects of our accountability were our annual accountability seminars at the national and regional levels, our presentation of our annual reports to the Executive Committee and the Board and to the Permanent Council of the OAS. These presentations provided excellent opportunities for communicating the work of the Institute and obtaining feedback on our performance.

b. A Culture of Teamwork

Teamwork has been emphasized at all levels of the organization. This was supported by implementing a system of communities at Headquarters and by annual regional and hemispheric meetings. The most important of these was "Representatives' Week" which is an annual meeting of all Representatives, Regional Specialists Directors and management staff at Headquarters. In addition, the Director General holds a monthly meeting with all staff at Headquarters to inform staff of institutional actions, policies and achievements.

c. A Culture of Information Sharing

The information policies of the administration and the use of new communication tools have resulted in promoting a culture of information-sharing. The institutional website, where all offices can share information with each other and with Headquarters, the Intranet, the Infoletter, IICA Connexion, *COMUNIICA*, etc., are all instruments that provide for information-sharing in the Institute.

d. A Culture of Excellence

Creating awards for excellence has reinforced the culture of excellence in the Institute. The awards are given for those individuals who demonstrate the organizational values and who make a tangible contribution to the work of the Institute. These awards are special and are only presented to five to ten individuals per year. They provide a unique opportunity for the Institute to reward superior performance.

e. A Culture of Equity

The promotion of transparent human resources policies has improved the culture of equity in the Institute. Promotion based on merit, advancement of women to management positions and our efforts to support the least fortunate of our staff in times of need has improved the culture of equity in the Institute.

f. A Culture of Continuous Learning

Promotion of language training, computer training and the professional development program has supported the concept that life in the Institute should be a process of continuous learning.

g. A Culture of Leadership

The establishment of the Leadership Centre and the promotion of courses in leadership at all levels of the Institute have reinforced a culture of the importance of leadership in the Institute.

13. Final Comments

In 2002, when we distributed the document “Repositioning IICA to face the challenges of the 21st Century”, we set out a bold strategic vision for the future of this Institute. Today, I am pleased to announce that a significant part of the plans and proposals presented in that document have been achieved.

In the last eight years, we have followed the six strategic elements for a successful change process, as described by John P. Kotter, Professor of Leadership at the Harvard Business School.

- a. We developed the vision and the strategy for change.
- b. We communicated the vision.
- c. We established a sense of urgency.
- d. We built a team for managing the change process.
- e. We empowered our staff especially our Representatives.
- f. We reported on some short term successes.
- g. We consolidated the gains of the past.
- h. We have anchored some of the most important changes into the institutional culture.

Our fundamental achievement is that we were able to reposition our institution and refocus it so that today it is recognized as an important component of the development framework of the Americas; that contributes to the promotion of sustainable agricultural development, food security, and the promotion of rural prosperity in our hemisphere.

In retrospect, IICA is a different organization today, having evolved to meet the changing times. During this administration, we have promoted:

- Operational efficiency,
- Prudent financial management,
- New human resources policies,
- Expanded strategic partnerships, and,
- A new relationship with our Member States based on participation, transparency and accountability.

The Institution today is renewed and refocused and is poised for further growth and development in order to satisfy the needs of its Member States for technical cooperation services that are visionary, innovative, efficient and effective.

Furthermore, based on a survey by the Franklin Covey Company, in 2007, 87% of the staff of the Institute considered that the Institute had improved over the five year period 2002-2007, and 89% indicated that they were committed to further improving the operating efficiency of the Institute. In different forums held in the countries for accountability purposes, leaders from the public and private sectors, associations of farmers and professionals, academia and NGOs have expressed satisfaction with the results achieved through the implementation of the new technical cooperation model.

It is results like these that contribute to continuing this journey and to the success of the administration.

The future is exciting and filled with hope. I wish us all the very best as we pursue the noble goal of continuing to strengthen our Institute to make it the best Inter-American institution in the hemisphere and so continue to fulfill the dream of Henry Wallace and his colleagues of 1942.

In all that we have done in the last eight years, we have sought to:

- Inspire trust
- Clarify purpose
- Align systems and
- Unleash talent

We have recognized that these four imperatives of leadership are the key to superior institutional performance.

We stand today at an important moment in history, between the industrial society of yesterday and the information society of tomorrow. To face these new challenges, we need people and institutions that are accountable, transparent and ethical. It is my hope that IICA of the future can continue to incorporate these values.

Lastly, I am proud to say that this Administration has been tireless in its efforts to redefine and modernize our Institute. In the language of the private sector, we have created the IICA brand, which is founded on partnership, transparency, accountability, the attainment of results and the search for excellence in all areas of the Institute's work. These accomplishments belong to all who have contributed, and I wish the Institute great prosperity and success as it enters the next stage of its institutional life.


14. Documents

The underpinnings and achievements of the Administration, and the process of reform, are set out in a number of reference documents, which are listed below.

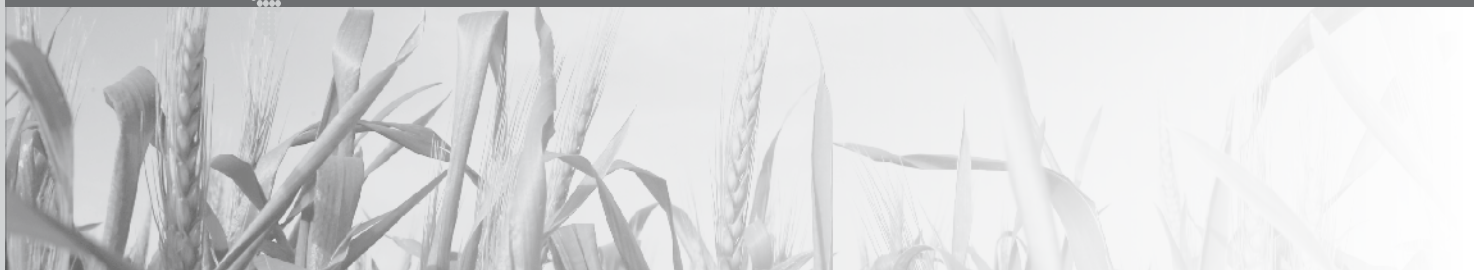
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IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the **Andean Region**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Andean Region

Roberto González Gómez¹

1. Introduction

In the Andean Region, the last decade has been characterized by the application of institutional reforms in the economic, social and political spheres, aimed at building development models that are not only more competitive, but also more inclusive and equitable in terms of the distribution of benefits. The more recent policies, strategies and development programs implemented in these countries reflect their search for a new development model through which they seek to improve the governance, legitimacy and equitable development of their rural territories. The Andean Region is distinctive from the rest of the regions due to its prodigious ethnic diversity, biodiversity, rural enterprises and natural resources, and more especially its human capital.

The crisis triggered by the increase in food prices has placed agriculture at the forefront of public opinion and, although this trend has been reversed, the agricultural sector remains the center of attention, given its strategic importance for the food supply. The large migratory flows that almost deprived

the region of its rural workforce began to be reversed as a result of the financial and economic crisis, and once again the region's inhabitants have turned to agricultural activities as a means to ensure their individual and collective survival.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Andean Region

IICA's work in the Andean Region focused on finding mechanisms to address climate change and its impact on small-scale agriculture and rural life; the challenges associated with food security, food production and rural well-being; and on identifying opportunities in the context of a new agriculture.

One of the Institute's major contributions was the design and dissemination of a new methodology to estimate the real contribution of agriculture to economic development, especially in countries with limited socioeconomic indicators. This methodology makes it possible to measure the current

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and potential impact of the agricultural sector on a country's economic and social development, thereby influencing the design of policy instruments and contributing to a more effective allocation of public-private resources to the agricultural sector. IICA carried out and disseminated studies on agriculture's real contribution to the economy of various Andean countries, taking into account all the sector's possible linkages (productive, economic and social) with the rest of the economy.

At the same time, IICA designed and implemented a new information and communications policy with its clients and partners, who were constantly kept informed about its actions and results.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

In relation to the *modernization of national agricultural health and food safety services*, IICA applied the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) methodology to all the Andean countries' agricultural health and food safety services. In Ecuador, this process resulted in a strategic planning effort and the design of AHFS policies; in Colombia, it resulted in the development of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Policy for the National System of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures; in Peru, it facilitated the formulation of SENASA's Strategic Plan for 2007-2012, in consultation with the private sector; and in Venezuela, it resulted in a strategic plan to modernize the Autonomous Agricultural Health Service (SASA) within the Autonomous Institute of Agricultural Health (INSAI).

In Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, comprehensive quality control and food safety systems were introduced, including inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to define the tasks and responsibilities of all the actors involved in those systems.

IICA also supported *capacity building efforts to promote the implementation and management of sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS)*, through national events that also strengthened its institutional relations with the Secretariat of the SPS Committee of the World Trade Organization (SPS-WTO) and the international reference organizations: the Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Most of the Andean countries established national SPS committees made up of representatives from various ministries and other institutions, which worked to modify and update sanitary and food safety standards as well as the regulations and requirements for conducting agricultural trade activities in the international sphere.

IICA cooperated with countries in the systematization and analysis of useful information in order to formulate strategies and plans to assess their institutional capacity to implement SPS standards and regulations. Several training workshops and other events were organized on the Codex Alimentarius and its regulations, which served to strengthen the national committees of the Codex Alimentarius. Information meetings on this topic were also organized in each of the countries.

With regard to *emerging issues and emergencies*, IICA supported the General Secretariat of the Andean Community of Nations (SGCAN) and the Regional Project of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in disseminating guidelines on how to design and present investment projects for the prevention of avian influenza. IICA also produced and distributed a series of radio programs, videos and other

training materials to each country, to inform small-scale poultry producers and subsistence farmers about AI. Together with the United States National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Service (APHIS), prevention activities were carried out through the Live Bird Marketing System (LBMS) program. This promoted inter-institutional coordination and resulted in the establishment of national action plans to improve the LBM system. IICA provided technical assistance and cooperation to the National Committees for the Prevention of Avian Influenza (AI), helping these bodies to execute projects and encouraging small and medium-scale producers to adopt good practices in poultry production and biosafety measures.

In relation to foot-and-mouth disease, IICA implemented a training program for instructors on topics such as epidemiological surveillance, quarantine and sampling. It also coordinated a series of binational and regional activities with a view to conducting joint simulations (Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela).

IICA continued to support the Andean Agricultural Health Forum, which has operated for many years with the participation of representatives from the region's National Agricultural Health Services. This Forum, which promoted the establishment of the Center for Phytosanitary Excellence (CEF) in Colombia, provided national and regional level-services to implement Pest Risk Analysis (PRA), increase the export potential of various plant species and design geographic information systems (GIS) for agricultural products with export potential. In the context of the Binational Chile-Peru/IICA Agreement for the Control and Eradication of the Fruit Fly, this pest was eradicated in southern Peru.

In the area of food safety, IICA assisted countries in their efforts to improve food quality and safety through the promotion

of good agricultural practices (GAP), good manufacturing practices (GMP) and the System of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

All the Andean countries designed and implemented projects to develop quality management and food safety systems aimed at small and medium-scale food producers and processing plants, as a result of a workshop on GAP, held in Cartagena, Colombia. The workshop was organized jointly by IICA, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID) and the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA), which presented guidelines on this issue, and shared Spain's experience in the implementation of GAP in the poultry, livestock, fruit and vegetable subsectors.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

With regard to policies and trade, IICA's results may be summarized as follows: improved the capacity of the Region's public and private agricultural and rural development institutions to design, implement and evaluate public policies and their instruments, based on the application of the AGROMATRIX principles formulated by IICA. The Institute provided technical assistance to the agriculture ministries of Peru and Ecuador to help establish State policies through the analysis of concepts and the dissemination of instruments and experiences in agricultural and rural development.

Together with the respective ministries in each country, IICA documented and disseminated experiences in the design and implementation of national agendas in response to open trade with the United States and also promoted discussion on related issues. Colombia, Ecuador and Peru formed part of this effort.



Together with the SGCAN, IICA provided support to the Andean countries' ministries of agriculture to conduct a comparative analysis, both at regional level and for each country, of policies to improve agrifood and agricultural production systems. An online computer platform was implemented to update and exchange information on policies for the region's agrifood sector.

In association with Ecuador's Center for Studies and Policies for Agriculture (CEPA), the Directorate of Agricultural Planning of the Peruvian Agriculture Ministry and the Directorate of Sectoral Policy of Colombia, IICA contributed to the creation or strengthening of agricultural planning departments and the design of policies and tools for the agricultural sector.

IICA facilitated comprehensive information to the countries' agricultural negotiators and technicians involved in trade negotiations and private-sector participants, on experiences and negotiating strategies in agricultural trade, through lectures, workshops and events. The aim was to disseminate information on the contents, opportunities and challenges of the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Agriculture; on how to better understand and take advantage of the trade preference systems with the United States and the European Union (EU); on the progress and prospects for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA); on experiences in agricultural negotiations with the EU and their implications for the countries of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN); and on the main advances achieved in the WTO Doha Development Round and its implications for the countries.

IICA also helped to improve the capacity of the public and private sectors to forecast and assess the impact of contextual changes on the incomes, food security and well-being of rural populations through the development, validation and dissemination of concepts, methodologies and procedures

to assess the status and changes in the food security of smallholders and rural dwellers. Studies were carried out to gauge the impact of price volatility on agricultural incomes and the food security of populations in the reference territories of the five Andean countries. These countries now have statistical indicators and qualitative data on the trends and principal causes of variations in international and domestic food prices and agricultural inputs, and on the development of production and the regional agrifood trade.

Thanks to the Institute's cooperation efforts, public officials and stakeholders of the leading agricultural production chains involved in international agricultural negotiations are now better informed about the possible economic and social impacts of the agricultural trade agreements, and are better prepared to meet these challenges. IICA facilitated databases and general equilibrium simulation models to assess the possible impact of a Trade Promotion Agreement with the United States, with an emphasis on sensitive agricultural products. Internships were arranged in other Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) countries to enable officials to evaluate the application of policies and the results of the trade liberalization processes. In addition, a general equilibrium model was implemented to assess the cumulative impact of trade liberalization strategies, based on the experiences of Peru and Colombia.

IICA also prepared a profile to identify the opportunities and potential competition in the agrifood trade between the EU and the Andean Region. This document was made available to countries in preparation for the possible signing of an Economic Complementation Agreement, together with a quantitative model to assess offers of market access and determine opportunities and threats to the region's agricultural trade in the event of possible trade agreements with the United States, the EU and China.

With the aim of strengthening the public and private institutional framework for the development of agribusiness, officials and technical staff of the Andean countries' public and private institutions and representatives of the leading potato marketing organizations of Ecuador and of cacao of Bolivia, Colombia and Ecuador, participated in a training course on "Agribusiness Management in Associative Rural Enterprises".

In addition, IICA supported Colombia's agricultural sector in designing the Strategic Information and Communications Network of the Colombian Agricultural Sector (AGRONET). It also cooperated with the Ministry of Agriculture of Peru, through the Peruvian Observatory for Production Chains and Rural Territories, in the design of indicators for monitoring international trade and indicators for monitoring and assessing sustainable development in rural territories.

With IICA's support, the Ministry of Agriculture of Ecuador and the Inter-institutional Commission entrusted with the task of developing public policies and instruments to promote agribusiness, formulated an Agroindustrial Development Plan. The Institute likewise supported the Peruvian Agriculture Ministry in the drafting and application of a law to develop agricultural production chains, providing accompaniment and advice to formulate competitiveness agreements and strategic plans for the yellow corn- poultry-pork and cacao-chocolate production chains. In Peru, IICA also worked with the Antenor Orrego Private University in the design of a postgraduate program in rural business management with social responsibility. The Institute offered similar assistance in other countries, for example in the State of Portuguesa in Venezuela, where IICA worked to develop local capacities in agribusiness organizations linked to the dairy chains and the agro-tourism sector.

IICA participated in the process to establish the Learning Alliance on Production Chains, a forum for exchange, discussion and analysis that includes institutions such as the humanitarian organization CARE, the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), the International Potato Center (CIP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), IICA, the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) and the ministries of agriculture and production.

With regard to strengthening IICA's technical cooperation in the development of competitive agribusiness, the Institute's efforts in Colombia focused on the following actions: supporting the Rural Opportunities Program of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) in the development of rural micro-enterprises; supporting that ministry's Directorate of Production Chains in setting up a system to monitor the performance and impact of organizations linked to agricultural production chains; and assisting the National Training Service (SENA) in the design and implementation of the Technology Innovation Support Fund. In Ecuador, IICA provided technical cooperation to the following institutions and projects: to the Mazar Project to create a development fund for agroindustries and micro-enterprises; to MAGAP to design an agroindustrial policy and a development program; to the provincial government of Pichincha, in a project to develop products with territorial identity; and to the Organization of Ice Cream Producers of Salcedo.

In Peru, IICA's efforts focused on implementing a training program for government officials and leaders of the agricultural sector in the context of the country's decentralization process. In addition, the joint technical team of the CSD (a non-governmental organization) and IICA designed and

imparted the course on “Management of local agricultural production chains”.

In Venezuela, the Institute worked closely with the inter-thematic team that provided technical cooperation to the Yacambú-Quibor Hydraulic System in designing the Integrated Water Resources Management Project, with an emphasis on agricultural production chains and rural tourism.

Finally, IICA promoted efforts to develop and strengthen the business skills of more than 100 farmers’ organizations in the Andean countries, specifically in the area of agribusiness management, through cooperative rural enterprises. As a result, these organizations improved their competitiveness and increased their market opportunities.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

In the area of management of rural territories, IICA worked with more than 100 rural development institutions in the Andean Region, with the aim of helping to position the territorial approach to sustainable rural development as the frame of reference for the design and implementation of strategies, policies and investments to increase the competitiveness of agriculture and improve rural prosperity and food security.

Since 2005, the Institute has worked to consolidate its links with SGCAN, in response to the mandates of the Presidents of the Andean countries. Accordingly, IICA placed special emphasis on the Andean Rural Development and Agricultural Competitiveness Program and on the Integrated Social Development Program, and supported the implementation of the Andean Rural Development Forum: Toward a Community

Strategy for Rural Development, with the participation of the countries’ ministries of rural development and social welfare, as well as the Andean Food Security Project: Program for Indigenous Peoples.

IICA also supported and promoted the establishment of the Andean Rural Development Network and the Rural Territories Observatories in Peru and Colombia, for the purpose of disseminating lessons learned and successful experiences in rural development. Together with the various countries, the Institute defined criteria for selecting and delimiting Reference Territories. These areas will be used as learning spaces for the implementation, adaptation and validation of methodologies and tools for the application of the territorial approach.

With the aim of consolidating family agriculture, IICA developed tools to promote the diversification and competitiveness of small-scale production, methodologies for linking small farmers to markets, as well as agricultural production chains and instruments to help small producers gain access to financial services, with gender equity.

In the area of promoting opportunities and access to development for rural women and youth, more than 600 rural businesswomen from Ecuador, Colombia and Peru received training in business management through the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN). The participants were subsequently encouraged to form associations or consortia of rural businesswomen. In cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IICA designed training tools and organized training workshops on the application of a gender perspective with a view to incorporating this approach in micro-enterprise and rural credit programs executed by the governments of the Andean countries in association with IICA.

Through the Andean Regional Forum of Young Rural Leaders, which took place in Ecuador, more than 20 young rural leaders from the five Andean countries received training on topics such as leadership, climate change, food security and opportunities for repositioning the rural sector in the 21st century. In addition, two territorial youth meetings were organized, one in Portuguesa, Venezuela, and another in La Guajira, Colombia, to discuss the role of young leaders in promoting sustainable rural development with a territorial approach.

In the context of knowledge management for rural development, IICA strengthened its relations with regional universities that offer agricultural science courses, and jointly prepared and validated a proposal entitled "Universities and Territories".

Finally, in coordination with SGCAN, IICA promoted the systematization and dissemination of national experiences in sustainable rural development in the Andean countries, which enabled public-sector technicians and leaders of the Andean agricultural and rural sectors to increase their knowledge of this subject.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

At an Extraordinary Session of the Steering Committee of the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Technology Development for the Andean Region (PROCIANDINO), held in Bolivia in 2007, major changes were made to this Program and its activities were modified to respond to the great strategic challenges facing the region. Leadership groups were formed in each country, with each group focusing on a specific issue: in Venezuela: food security and sovereignty; in Colombia:

bioenergy; in Ecuador: agro-biotechnology; in Peru: climate change and water; and in Bolivia: institutional development.

In addition, various activities were organized with the aim of improving local capacity in those issues. For example, in August 2007 the Fifth Meeting on Biotechnology: "Biotechnology as a tool for national development," took place in Bolivia with more than 100 representatives of public and private institutions, companies, NGOs and organizations working in the fields of biotechnology and biodiversity. In Ecuador, a specialized group in agro-biotechnology and biosafety management was established and, in November 2007, a Workshop on Biotechnology and Biosafety Needs and Opportunities in Ecuador, took place in Los Ríos Province. In Venezuela, IICA worked with staff of the IDEA Foundation to analyze biotechnology initiatives and the results of the IDB FONACYT Project.

In the area of institutional development, IICA organized the International Workshop: Toward the Construction of INIAF-BOLIVIA attended by representatives of PROCIANDINO, of the national agricultural research institutes (INIAs), the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Technology Development in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) and the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation in the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS).

A Meeting of National Coordinators of PROCIANDINO was held in Quito, Ecuador to approve a Medium Term Plan for 2008-2011. The coordinators discussed the Plan's technical-operational structure and decided to support the region's INIAs with a view to strengthening their participation in activities of the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO).

In Venezuela, IICA interacted with the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), the National Center for Agricultural



Research (CENIAP), the academic staff of the Central University, the Faculty of Agronomy and private-sector representatives. In Bolivia, the Institute supported the organization of a workshop to discuss the results of the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund's Call for Proposals 2008. And, in Peru, IICA supported several events organized by the National Agricultural Innovation Institute (INIA).

Finally, it is important to mention that IICA, together with the region's INIA and universities in some selected territories, designed a Project for the Diversification of the Food Supply for Vulnerable Populations through the Application of Biotechnological Tools to Native Species of the Andean Region.

e. Promoting Regional Integration

In 2008, the Institute assumed responsibility for the coordination and implementation of the Andean Alliance for Dialogue on Agriculture and Rural Life, an initiative that brings together leaders in the areas of technological research and innovation, agricultural health, food safety, financing, integration, rural development, university education, biotechnology and biosafety, agricultural production chains, sectoral policies and agribusiness, as well as leaders of organizations representing rural women, rural youth, farmers and indigenous peoples.

IICA Office in **Bolivia**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Bolivia

Juan Chávez Cossio¹

1. Introduction

This document presents the results of IICA's technical cooperation activities in Bolivia for the period 2002-2008, during which the Institute assisted the development of the country's rural and agricultural sectors in the different thematic areas of its actions. From 2002 to 2005, the most numerous requests for technical cooperation related to agribusiness and trade, with emphasis on international markets. Starting in 2006, the Government's policy was focused more on internal aspects; emphasis was placed on indigenous and peasant communities, and policies were established to ensure an increased use of natural resources and to achieve sovereignty and food security. To respond to these priorities, IICA drew up its National Technical Cooperation Agenda, resulting from a process of collaboration and participation by the public, private and academic sectors.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Bolivia

IICA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MAGDER) in the planning and implementation of the

Bolivian Agricultural Technology System (SIBTA). The system's organizational and institutional structure were reinforced with the establishment of a Permanent Secretariat under the responsibility of the Technological Development Policies Unit (UPDT), and with the entry into operation of its four Foundations for the Agricultural Technological Development of the Humid Tropics (FDTA): Altiplano, Valles, Chaco and Humid Tropics. In 2005, the study "*Diagnóstico de la situación de los centros de investigación y experimentación agropecuaria de Bolivia*" [Assessment of the situation of the Bolivian agricultural and livestock research and experimentation centers] was prepared, and the National Agricultural Research Network was designed, functioning within the framework of SIBTA.

IICA supported the organization of the MAGDER International Agricultural Negotiations Unit (UNAI) and helped strengthen its structure and its *modus operandi*. In addition, direct assessment was provided for discussions and analysis to establish the Bolivian position in the international negotiations within the framework of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). IICA also helped structure the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MACA), which substituted MAGDER, with a new, more dynamic approach to its actions, aimed at the analysis of national policy issues concerning international agricultural trade. The Agroindustrial Markets Unit established from this effort.

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IICA contributed to the design of the National System for the Conservation, Management, Use and Evaluation of the Genetic Resources of Bolivia for Food and Agriculture (SINARGEAA), a technological innovation instrument established to conserve and diversify the country's genetic resources and use them sustainably to promote agroindustrial development and food safety.

IICA supported MACA in the discussion, analysis and adaptation of the National Rural and Agricultural Development Strategy (ENDAR). This permitted: (a) increased inclusion of peasants and indigenous peoples in development programs; (b) generation of rural employment; (c) an increase in family income in rural areas, and (d) sustained sectoral economic growth in the country.

The Institute also contributed a proposal to restructure the National Plant Health and Food Safety Service (SENASAG), with re-engineering studies and studies on fees for service, and made recommendations to strengthen the National Food Health and Safety System (SAIA-Bolivia), based on the application of the instrument "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS).

IICA helped develop the methodology for the Sectoral Development Plan (PDS) of the Ministry of Environmental, Agricultural and Rural Development (MDRAYMA), and contributed to their dissemination, socialization, application, structuring and consolidation.

In addition, the Institute provided support for the conceptualization and implementation of the National Institute for Innovation in Agriculture and Forestry (INIAF), by providing MDRAYMA with information on the institutional models and experiences of the countries of the Andean and Southern Cone regions, such as the Cooperative Program for

Agrifood and Agroindustrial Technology Development in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR), the Cooperative Program on Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer for the Andean Sub-Region (PROCIANDINO) and the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation in the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS); by making suggestions and recommendations, and by forwarding documentation that was relevant for its creation and subsequent functioning.

IICA cooperated with SENASAG in the elaboration of five projects on the following issues: (a) South American camelids; (b) fruit fly control; (c) control of foot-and-mouth disease in Beni, Pando and the province of Iturrealde, in the department of La Paz; (d) eradication of Newcastle disease and avian influenza; and (e) food safety.

Each year, the document "*Situación y perspectivas de la agricultura y la vida rural en Bolivia*", [Situation and perspectives of agriculture and rural life in Bolivia] has been prepared and distributed, in compliance with the hemispheric ministerial agreements made at the meetings on improving agriculture and rural life.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA facilitated the participation of officials of the Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of SENASAG in the meetings of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

(SPS), which are held in Geneva, Switzerland, every year. This permitted exchanges between the participating delegations and between the delegations and the respective mechanisms. Support was also provided for the elaboration of the national reports of the country's delegates.

The Program for the Control and Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease was strengthened by supporting the participation of the livestock owners' federations (Santa Cruz, Beni and Pando) in a technical mission to the Pan-American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA). As a result, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) declared the region of Chiquitania (Santa Cruz) the first area free of foot-and-mouth disease with national vaccination. Based on a letter of understanding signed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and SENASAG, improvements were made to the capacity of the technical personnel and the equipment and, as a result, to the Service's performance in the Bolivian Chaco.

With the support of IICA, a proposal for the National Fruit Fly Control Program was prepared, and has been implemented with resources from the Prefecture of the Department of Tarija and also the Treasury Department.

IICA provided technical assessment for actions by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SENASAG to assist the exportation of products from the tropical region of Cochabamba to neighboring countries, especially in relation to complying with Argentina's plant health requirements when importing bananas from Bolivia. The training provided to their officials helped improve the country's position concerning health measures in import and export activities; for example, the "International Ruling on Phytosanitary Measures (NIMF-15)" for wooden packaging material was applied.

Support was also provided for implementing the Action Plan against Avian Influenza prepared by SENASAG, in coordination with the Ministry of Health and Sport (MINSAD), and officials were linked to the Project to Strengthen Health Systems for the Prevention and Control of Avian Influenza and Other Transborder Diseases, executed within the framework of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), financed by the World Bank (WB).

The System for Prevention, Control and Eradication of Pests and Diseases that affect National Agricultural Production was reinforced, and assistance was provided to SENASAG for the elaboration of plans for the national programs for: (a) prevention, control and eradication of avian influenza, and (b) prevention, control and eradication of fruit flies.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Together with the International *Rural Agroindustry* Research *Fund (FIAR)* and the Foodlinks initiative, IICA contributed to the execution of the project to increase exports of organic quinoa from Salinas de Garci Mendoza in Oruro, which opened up new avenues for marketing this indigenous product in the national market and in Europe. IICA also supported the establishment of the Bolivian Agreement on Quinoa Competitiveness, the operation of its Committee, and the organization of an inter-institutional technical team.

The Production Chains Information System (INFOAGRO-Bolivia) was brought into operation in partnership with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ); it analyzed the performance of 14 prioritized national production chains from 2002 to 2005 in order to facilitate decision-making by



producers, rural and industrial organizations, agrifood groups, and public policy makers and implementers. The INFOAGRO-Bolivia website receives an average of 56,000 visits each year.

Under the IICA/GTZ Regional Fund for Appropriate Technologies for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (FOMRENA), 16 projects were financed and support was provided to 16 local micro-enterprises and organizations involving 91 communities (2,525 rural families) distributed in 20 provinces of seven departments of Bolivia, with an investment of US\$226,811. Innovative – socially, economically and ecologically appropriate – technologies for the production, transformation and marketing of renewable natural resources were introduced, and 357 jobs were created directly, with the participation of more women than men. This highlighted the production capacity of women, stabilized the financial earnings of 69 families and improved the earnings of 342 families. Twelve micro-enterprises were able to link into the local market with 26 new products, four of which are currently being sold on the international market.

IICA helped generate a competitiveness agreement on the use of camelid fiber, among camelid breeders, shearers, buyers, sorters and carders, and enterprises and financial companies, to facilitate access to international markets. It also encouraged a competitiveness agreement between producers and micro-enterprises of dehydrated llama meat (charque) in order to explore national markets.

To support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship (MRREEC), the Bolivian Strategy for Access to International Beef Markets was prepared and published, with the participation of various institutions, such as the federations of livestock owners of Santa Cruz and Beni (FEGASACRUZ and FEGABENI), the National Meat Industries Chamber (CAIC),

SENASAG, the National Productivity and Competitiveness Unit (UNPC), the Bolivian Promotion Center (CEPROBOL), MACA and the Economic Development Ministry (MDE). Based on this strategy, the Bolivian Meat Institute (IBC) was established.

With funding from the Danish Cooperation Agency (DANIDA) and with MACA as the executing agency, IICA assisted in the development of the project to strengthen the institutionalization of agro-chains and made a technical and financial assessment of six of them. In this context, strategies and concepts aimed at developing agro-productive chains and greater competitiveness were socialized among professionals from the public and private sectors of La Paz, Santa Cruz, Potosí and Tarija. The activity was sponsored by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), FDTA-Humid Tropics, the Prefecture of the Department of Potosí, and Agro XXI, a non-governmental organization (NGO).

In partnership with MACA, the database of Bolivia's international agricultural trade has been published each year in accordance with the Common Andean Nomenclature (NANDINA) and with information from the National Statistics Institute (INE). In 2007, IICA published "Bolivia's foreign trade statistics 1992-2006," as an important component of the Export Information System (SIEX) implemented by the Deputy Ministry of Foreign Trade (VCE), with support from INE.

The study on the identification of alternative markets for Bolivian oil seeds was conducted with the participation of MRREEC and MACA, and also the Association of Oil Seed and Wheat Producers (ANAPO), the Oil Seed Competitiveness Committee (CCO) and a large number of national associations and enterprises. Apart from identifying potential new markets

for Bolivian oil seeds, the process led to agreement on a new agenda of shared responsibility for the chain. 85 potential markets were identified.

IICA supported the execution of the project to modernize organic cacao production in the Alto Beni, under an agreement with the *Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center* (CATIE) that benefited more than 1,000 peasant families of the Alto Beni. In coordination with MDRAYMA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), it helped formulate the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Andean Regional Program ACCESO (a mechanism to support cacao exports in the Andean countries), a joint initiative with USAID, the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), IICA and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), designed to improved the competitiveness of cacao in Bolivia. In this context, the institutional framework for the cacao chain was enhanced by promoting periodic meetings of the key actors, by means of a coordination committee that promoted the participative elaboration of the Strategic Plan for Bolivian Cacao, and a study on cacao production technologies in the country.

Four associations of small-scale peach (*durazno*) producers in Cochabamba (ASORICA, ASPAVAL, AFRUTOCHI and AGROVAL) were strengthened, by improving their productivity (production, post-harvest, marketing and diversification), by means of the project to support the production and marketing of peaches in the Valle Alto of the Department of Cochabamba (Phase I and Phase II). In partnership with FDTA-Valles, competitiveness was improved and 400 families benefited directly.

Together with the Rural Research and Promotion Center (CIPCA), support was provided for the establishment and operation of the Camelid Technical Committee, in which

actors such as MDRAYMA, the Water Ministry (MINAGUAS), the Ministry of Development Planning (MPD), the National Association of Camelid Producers (ANAPCA), and their departmental associations, national and international cooperation agencies, and universities met periodically and formed three working groups: (a) programs and projects; (b) policies and regulations, and (c) fairs and training events.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development in the region north of La Paz was elaborated by using a wide-ranging collaborative effort with the municipal governments and the producer associations in response to a request by the Agricultural Development Service of the Prefecture of that department. Based on the territorial approach, support was provided to the Commonwealth of Municipalities of the Tropical Area North of La Paz to make the necessary conceptual and methodological adjustments to its Comprehensive Sustainable Development Plan, and its personnel received training.

With the Prefecture of the Department de Potosí, the Departmental Plan for Agricultural and Rural Development was formulated, and support was provided to the Production Promotion Department for the process of institutional streamlining. Also, technical assistance was initiated to organize the primary sector of the quinoa chain.

In partnership with the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), and under the IDB Program to Strengthen Technical and Technological Training, two training programs were organized to generate employment and establish businesses for rural women alpaca fiber sorters. The programs were



conducted with the company, ISQANI, in the provinces of Saavedra and Camacho in the Department of La Paz, and 40 women (families) benefited directly, and another 120 indirectly. The training included topics relating to business management, industrial safety, gender and social abilities, and fiber sorting and processing (with support from Peruvian teachers); it was complemented by technical visits to textile companies in Arequipa.

IICA supported execution of the project to promote camelid-breeding in the Andean Highlands (*Altiplano*) of Bolivia (UNEPICA), financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which permitted increasing the income of breeders, local craftsmen and small-scale enterprises involved in the production of South America camelids in the Bolivian highlands. It also assisted the project for rehabilitating and streamlining the production of organic banana for export in the Alto Beni, financed by CICAD, under an agreement with the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP), which reinforced ten organizations and benefited 400 peasant families.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA, together with other international cooperation and finance institutions, was a member of the Committee to support the Bolivian Agricultural Technology System (SIBTA), which met on a quarterly basis to analyze the conceptualization and implementation of the system's new institutional framework under the 2001-2005 Multi-annual Plan, the Regulations of the Competitive Fund for Innovation (FCI), and the regulations of the Common Fund to Support SIBTA (FOCAS), as well as the structure and legal framework of the FDTAs, and including their strategic and operating plans. It also helped monitor the

Project on Applied Technology Innovation (PITA) and the National Strategic Innovation Projects (PIENs) executed by the four FDTAs.

In partnership with the Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education (FRADIEAR), the Forum for Dialogue and Integration of Superior Agricultural Education of Bolivia was established, which led to the creation of the Bolivian Association of Superior Education in Agricultural Sciences (ABESCA) and the Andean Federation of Associations of Superior Education in Agricultural Sciences (FAESCA). Each year, support is provided to ABESCA to hold its national forum and to participate in FRADIEAR. Both activities have been held without interruption.

The Bolivian Agricultural Documentation and Information Network (RIDAB) was established, coordinated by the Bolivian Center of Agricultural Documentation and Information (CIDAB), as an affiliate of the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC), to connect the agricultural libraries of the country with appropriate operating systems so as to facilitate the exchange of information and documentation at the national level. 12 libraries of the faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Science of Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, La Paz, Oruro, Beni, Potosí, Sucre and Tarija participate in RIDAB. The FAO and CIPCA libraries were also incorporated. In this context, support was provided for the establishment of the Bolivian Chapter of the Inter-American Association of Agricultural Librarians (AIBDA).

Support was provided for the annual meetings of the Bolivian Biotechnology Network (REDBIO-Bolivia) and an assessment of the situation and legal framework of biotechnology and biosafety in Bolivia, as an input for the IICA hemispheric

program on these issues. In addition, IICA helped strengthen the inter-institutional links between the organizations involved in biotechnology research and development in the country, linking them to this Network, and connecting the Network to the IICA Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program. Recently, a process was initiated with MDRAYMA, the Pairumani Center for Phytoecogenetic Research (CIF-Pairumani) and REDBIO-Bolivia to improve Bolivian society's perception of the development potential of genetic resources and biotechnology, providing information on these topics to journalists from the scientific area and to educators.

IICA supported the reinforcement of the Bolivian Animal Production Association (ABOPA) with conferences and their respective proceedings.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Through FOMRENA, support was provided to:

- The Integrated Agricultural Producers Association (ASIPA) to improve the process of dehydrating heart of palm produced by the "Pilón Lajas" Project; its entry into the market was facilitated through the sub-product, "instant heart of palm soup."
- The Association of Masetene People, from the indigenous municipal district of Santa Ana, in the Department of Beni, for a process of smoking and dehydrating fillets of pacú, sorubim (*surubí*) and tarpon (*sábaló*), which are sold mainly to La Paz restaurants.
- The Jardín de las Delicias and Surutú Communities, where grain transformation processes were initiated by bringing

a traditional water mill into operation, which mills 50% of the corn and other grains produced in the communities. In addition, the people no longer have to walk several kilometers to use a mill.

- The 7 Estrellas Producers Association of the Alto Beni area, in the Department of La Paz, which currently produces 20 types of dehydrated aromatic and medicinal organic plants and markets them efficiently on the national and international market.
- The Integrated Producers Association (AIPAC-AB), of the community of Cascada in the high tropical zone of the Department of La Paz, which has made progress towards consolidating its export markets for special coffee, owing to improvements in the quality and homogeneity of its production.

The CORACA-Protal Association, of the Department of Cochabamba, which has been legally established and operates as a peasant communal enterprise that produces and markets dehydrated chili (*locoto*), owing to the construction of a new dehydrator that reduced wood consumption by 55%, and diversification of the offer of local products by member communities (Qori Mayo, Totolima, Mayca Monte and San Julián). The products sold include: chili powder, cream of honey, propomiel, propolis, pollen and beeswax, and they were exhibited at the XVI International Agricultural and Related Industries Fair, AGROEXPO 2007, held in Bogotá, Colombia, with the support of IICA.

The results of these initiatives were published in 2006, in the document "*Sistematización de las experiencias más relevantes del Proyecto IICA-GTZ FOMRENA*" [Systematization of the most relevant experiences of the IICA-GTZ FOMRENA Project], in



summary, support was provided by the project principally for: (1) transformation and marketing of promising agricultural products and handcrafts incorporating added value; (2) development of eco-efficient technological innovations in traditional production systems; (3) management of renewable energy and liquid waste, and (4) sustainable use of soils, water, forests and local biodiversity.

IICA contributed to the elaboration of the national regulations to promote ecological agriculture in Bolivia (Law No. 3525), within the framework of the meetings of the Bolivian National Ecological Production Council (CNAPE). It also took part in the inter-institutional meetings organized by MDRAyMA and provided technical input to develop each of the articles of these regulations.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

The strategic partners of IICA in Bolivia include public and private, national and international organizations involved in agriculture and rural development. They include principals, partners and suppliers, and the first two are the most relevant for the Institute's technical cooperation efforts. Our principals are ministries of agriculture, and of foreign affairs, and currently they are the Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship (MRREEC) of the Multinational State of Bolivia.

The strategy of reinforcing IICA's relations with its strategic partners is based on the search for common objectives, aligned with national demands and in accordance with principles of reciprocity, commitment, continuity, mutual recognition and transparency, within a framework of complementarity and interaction, in order to achieve a final product that is greater

than the sum of the individual capacities of each organization. We seek to take advantage of our capacity to enlist support — owing to IICA's institutional nature — in order to link national institutions with each other and with international entities, and also to coordinate the latter with each other.

In this way, we are able to combine actions and processes that existed in isolation and give them greater cohesion and complementarity, as well as to align them with national needs, so as to produce the corresponding economies in resources and an increase in the probability of impact. As examples of this, we can cite:

- Participation in CAS-SIBTA, several meetings of which were held at our offices.
- Participation in the Inter-institutional Rural Development Group (G-DRU), in which representatives of public and private, national and international organizations involved in rural development meet periodically to examine important issues in this area, and generate proposals to guide the Government and to improve the functioning of the group itself.
- Promotion of the establishment of the FAO/PAHO/IICA Inter-Agency Group and participation in the group, which is supporting the process to develop a proposal to obtain IDB financing of US\$10 million for the period 2009–2014.
- Promotion and support for the participation of MACA in the implementation of actions of CAS, a ministerial consultation and coordination forum of the regional actions of the countries of the expanded MERCOSUR, which generate almost a quarter of the global production of food.

- Establishment of the National Cacao Committee under the ACCESO Program, as a technical committee that brings together the principal actors of the production of cacao in the country to analyze problems and take participative measures to resolve them so as to improve the chain's competitiveness at the national level.
- Constitution of the National Committee to Enhance Education in Eco-production (CONFEE), which assembles universities, producer organizations and non-governmental organizations to promote and implement activities related to human resource development and research in the area of national eco-production.

5. Modernization of the Office

The IICA Office in Bolivia has ample premises, ceded indefinitely by the Government at the end of 1999, with an auditorium and an additional hall, with capacity for 300 and 100 persons, respectively. Both, together with CIDAB, which brings together the libraries of the former Bolivian Agricultural Technology Institute (IBTA), MACA and IICA, compose the *Casa de la Agricultura* of Bolivia, under the responsibility of the Representative of the Institute. CIDAB has more than 65,000 volumes at this time and has attended approximately 5,000 users, including professionals, consultants and students from La Paz and other localities.

Over this period, an average of 30 events linked to agriculture and rural development (on topics such as technological

development policies, production chains, camelid livestock, policies and strategies for agriculture, and food security) have been held each year. Around 5,000 national experts and professionals have taken part in them. Wireless audio equipment and equipment for video conferences is now available.

The Office improved its internal communications and its relations with the other IICA offices in the hemisphere, and inserted its cooperation actions within the 2006-2010 National Technical Cooperation Agenda, which facilitated the planning, programming, execution and monitoring of the activities. This agenda was subject to periodic adjustment based on the mandates that emerged from the Executive Committee and from the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), in the Institute's 2006-2010 Medium Term Plan. The annual action plans were prepared on the basis of these instruments and on the internal demand of the country, in a two-way planning process (from the bottom up and from the top down) and by holding national participative meetings. These instruments facilitated the Representative's activities and his annual reporting (as of 2006).

The progressive changes in institutional positioning, in keeping with the changes in the environment that occurred over this period, resulted in changes in the Office's organizational structure and functions in order to comply more efficiently with its task of providing technical cooperation. This resulted in the rationalization of the staff and now there is a team of four national experts in the areas of rural development and agri-business, agricultural health and food safety, technology and innovation and, since the end of 2008, food security and territories. Consequently, we can respond to most requests efficiently, promptly and continuously.

IICA Office in **Colombia**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Colombia

Jorge Caro¹

1. Introduction

IICA cooperation actions in Colombia in 2002-2008 were critical for the agricultural sector and the rural milieu. The Institute lent its technical and management skills, its infrastructure and its inter-American reach. It built partnerships and conducted strategic projects that served as the framework for national policies to make agriculture more competitive and boost the development of rural communities. As part of its transparency policy, IICA felt it was vital to report on results achieved nationwide, and therefore made its accountability process more robust. The report presented herein is a summary of the main results that IICA achieved during this period.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Colombia

During the 2002-2008 period, IICA supported the work of the national government to accomplish three key objectives: a) make agricultural production more competitive, as a strategy for sustained growth in the sector; b) protect farmer income in the midst of trade liberalization, and c) reduce rural poverty.

Committed to these goals, the Institute worked alongside national institutions at every step to carry out programs and projects of strategic interest: a) an irrigation and drainage workshop, with the insurance program *Agro Ingreso Seguro* (AIS); b) Rural Opportunities and Agro-production Chains, a project with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR); c) Income Generation, a project with the President's Office for Social Action and International Cooperation (ACCIÓN SOCIAL); d) Seed Capital for Displaced Populations, a project with the Colombian Rural Development Bureau (INCODER), and e) Agroindustry workshops, with the National Vocational Service (SENA).

IICA made the strategic decision to support the MADR in dissemination, analysis and feedback of sectoral policy. Its objective was to make more information available to producers, businesses, trade union leaders and local governments on MADR programs and projects, and to measure the impact these investments have had on development in the agricultural sector and on the quality of life for rural dwellers. Similarly, the MADR and IICA joined forces with the National Council of Secretariats of Agriculture (CONSA) to consolidate it as a forum for discussion and coordination of national and regional policies designed to promote the development of agriculture and the rural milieu.

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3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA was involved at several different levels of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System, including the Informal Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the National Committee of Codex Alimentarius. In this connection, IICA supported the process of formulating and consolidating a national agenda on SPS, quality and safety as part of the negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) with the United States.

Under the Initiative for the Americas in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (2004-2008), IICA supported the active presence of all the countries in the hemisphere on the World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS Committee, the world's highest-ranking decision-making body on this subject. In 2008, IICA in Colombia supported a workshop to share a common vision for applying the Performance, Vision and Strategies instrument to WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, with the participation of the National Planning Department (DNP), the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA), the National Bureau of Drug and Food Surveillance (INVIMA), the Colombian National Confederation of Consumers and the MADR. This workshop measured how much progress had been achieved by the National SPS System and identified high-priority actions that should be undertaken to further the process of modernization.

IICA helped set up the Center for Phytosanitary Excellence (CEF), a project developed in conjunction with the ICA and the United States Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

(APHIS), with resources from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The CEF facilitates exports of fresh produce from Colombia to the United States by conducting preliminary risk studies or assessments. *Pitahaya* and *uchuva* (golden berry or cape gooseberry) have already received APHIS approval. IICA also worked on a project to implement the Center for Excellence in Pest Control (CEMIP).

It supported the ICA in identifying national databases on pests and diseases as part of its work to strengthen its Risk Analysis (RA) office. IICA took part in activities to train regional epidemiologists on geographic information systems (GIS) and assisted in setting up a laboratory for veterinary drug residue analysis.

In partnership with private universities, the Institute lent its support for a training course targeting official inspectors of beef, pork or poultry slaughterhouses, an activity that is critical for strengthening the INVIMA.

Under cooperation agreements with territorial agencies, trade union groups and private organizations, IICA supported development programs for suppliers, teaching them how to implement and certify good agricultural practices (GAP), and helped create business alliances to strengthen the relationship between suppliers and marketers. Together with National Federation of Poultry Producers of Colombia (FENAVI), IICA helped develop a GAP protocol for poultry production.

It held workshops to raise awareness and provide training in GAP, good manufacturing practices (GMP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), targeting small and medium-scale poultry producers and fishermen participating in INCODER projects, and micro-enterprises from the MADR Rural Opportunities Program. Participants learned

to implement quality management systems for products and byproducts from fishing, honey, fruit, vegetables and *panela* cane sugar.

As part of the “More investment for sustainable alternative development” (MIDAS) program funded by USAID, GAP was implemented with small-scale producers in the Boyacá department. Onion bulb producers belonging to the ASOROA Association earned NTC 5400 certification, and *gulupa* (purple passion fruit) producers belonging to the ASPROGULUPA association were certified under the GLOBALGAP (Global Good Agricultural Practices) standard. IICA also worked with producer groups to set up formal associations, which eventually received the country’s first collective GAP certifications granted to small-scale producers.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA, interested in making the Colombian agricultural sector more competitive, combined efforts with the MADR to create an institutional framework for agricultural production chains. Along these lines, it provided ongoing advisory assistance for designing and implementing an Observatory of Agro-chain Competitiveness in Colombia. This tool proved its usefulness by providing information and analysis to public and private sector agents committed to boosting competitiveness in agriculture. Similarly, the Institute took part in drafting Law 811 of 2003, creating chain organizations in the agricultural, fishing, forestry and poultry sectors, and setting their main objectives.

One of IICA’s overriding objectives was to strengthen agricultural and agroindustrial chains. In this direction, it supported the negotiation and formalization of national and

regional competitiveness agreements, and provided advisory assistance for operating chain organizations. In 2008, with an eye to obtaining instruments for documentation, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the operation of production chains, the MADR and IICA developed an information system on the management and performance of chain organizations. The purpose of this tool is to streamline verification of compliance with commitments undertaken in the competitiveness agreements and to monitor implementation of the regulatory framework set forth in Law 811 of 2003.

As part of its strategy for cooperating with the MADR, since 2006 IICA has been supporting the design and implementation of the insurance program *Agro Ingreso Seguro* (AIS). The purpose of this program is to make the Colombian agricultural sector more competitive and to offset any negative impact that producers may experience as a result of the strategy for globalizing the Colombian economy. IICA held tenders for irrigation and drainage projects under the AIS Program, for the purpose of cofinancing irrigation projects and building and rehabilitating irrigation districts.

With cofinancing from the MADR, these bidding processes led to 120 projects for building or rehabilitating irrigation districts, benefiting 23,913 families and providing the means to irrigate 50,439 hectares of land. Irrigation systems were installed on 234 plots benefiting 1648 families, and irrigating 25,737 hectares.

IICA encouraged small and medium-scale producers to take part in processes for learning better business practices, associating with other farmers, and building production linkages. It also took part in programs such as the Project to Support Development of Rural Micro-enterprise (PADEMÉR) and Rural Opportunities Project under the MADR and the



International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Both projects serve the objective of fighting poverty by instilling business skills among rural dwellers, improving their ability to compete and introduce their micro-enterprises onto the market, thus increasing access to jobs, income and property for low-resource families.

Under the Project to Support Production Partnerships, IICA helped the MADR consolidate organizational mechanisms to encourage the establishment of diverse business alliances between private enterprises and small-scale farmers, making it possible to implement participatory, sustainable, replicable production projects. These demand-driven projects open opportunities for cooperation on an equal footing between the state, the private sector and rural communities to generate opportunities for employment and income.

With the participation of the Association for Rural Development (ARD) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), IICA carried out a methodological consensus-building process to implement Provincial Centers for Agribusiness Management (CPGA) in four regions of the country. In this project, IICA supported the initial implementation of a model for comprehensive rural technical assistance promoted by the MADR through the CPGAs. The objective is to equip territorial entities to lend services that include innovation processes in support of primary production, product processing and adding value. Other areas of emphasis include management of organizations, market penetration, the production chain approach and access to financial services and agricultural policy instruments.

IICA supported the development of free-trade negotiating skills for discussions within the WTO and other regional and international mechanisms. It worked alongside Colombia's FTA negotiations with the United States by continuously publicizing

information and analysis on the status of negotiations. Together with the MADR, it developed a methodology for evaluating what type of impact of the FTA with the United States might have on land under cultivation, production, and farmer income for rice, sorghum, corn, wheat, barley, soybeans and beans.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

As part of its commitment to support farmer and community organizations, IICA contributed to the adoption of Law 731 of 2002, Rural Women, helping to develop and process the text and lending a hand as it was regulated and disseminated throughout the country. The purpose of this law is to improve the quality of life for rural women, especially low-income women, and it creates specific measures to bring about greater equality between men and women. IICA also helped set up the Development Fund for Rural Women, involving credit mechanisms for women heads of household.

The Institute carried out a broad cooperation initiative with the Ministry of National Education as part of the Project for Rural Education (PER), whose purpose was to improve access to primary and secondary schooling using flexible teaching models. In the departments of Meta and Huila, IICA supported rural online educational institutions and promoted the development of productive educational projects, teacher training, reformulation of institutional educational models, and building regional networks to carry out programs for expanding coverage and improving the quality and relevance of education for the rural sector.

The Observatory of Rural Territories was set up with the support of IICA and the Andean Development Corporation

(CAF). Its purpose is to help improve the design, formulation and implementation of development policies for the benefit of rural economies, in which agriculture, in the broad sense, is the centerpiece in the transition toward establishment of competitive, sustainable territories. The Observatory made significant progress in compiling databases on rural development policies, territorial indicators and documented experiences. It also developed methodologies for analyzing policies, experiences and territorial indicators.

In support of the National Alternative Development Plan (PLANTE) put forward by the President of Colombia, IICA provided advisory assistance for implementing integrated production projects in conflict zones. The purpose is to consolidate lawful, profitable, environmentally sound production activities to mitigate the conditions that had first led to the establishment of illegal crops. The Institute's work focused on building up social capital and promoting farmer organization through production projects as stable, lawful sources of employment and income.

It operated in the framework of the program Municipal Alternative Development Areas (ADAM), whose objectives are to strengthen institutions and consolidate rural development areas in municipalities selected on the basis of vulnerability to illicit crops. A project was set up with small-scale producers in southern Tolima to rehabilitate land and introduce cacao crops using an agroforestry model that includes taking ownership of production processes, organizational strengthening and establishment of marketing channels.

Experiences developed with cacao cultivation in the municipalities of Planadas, Ataco, Rioblanco, Chaparral, San Antonio and Rovira became a landmark of territorial development. This made it possible to move ahead with a model that offered technical assistance and training, social

and business strengthening, business plans, access to credit, clean production and post-harvest management, as well as expanding the membership of the Tolima Cacao Association (ASOCATOL).

In 2007, IICA began lending technical cooperation to ACCIÓN SOCIAL to implement the component "recovering nonproductive assets" of the income generation program. The purpose is to improve the quality of life for the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of the Colombian population and to help them develop production and organizational skills. These processes include not only physical restoration of assets, but also a process of technical and social support for beneficiary farmer communities to help them design and implement production projects that will make effective use of rehabilitated assets. In 2008, 55 nonproductive assets were restored, benefiting 18,864 families.

Also with ACCIÓN SOCIAL, IICA implemented the project "Thrifty women in action," whose purpose is to instill business skills and promote saving habits and production initiatives among women living in situations of social vulnerability and belonging to the poorest families. In the first phase, the project trained around 6000 women, who opened savings accounts and gained access to special incentives in recognition of their efforts. The project also counseled women in developing associative and individual business plans. At present, the second phase of the project is being prepared (2008-2009), and the goal will be to serve 15,000 women in 15 departments of Colombia.

IICA operated the Supplementary Investment Subsidy (SIC), part of the Comprehensive Land Subsidy (SIT) granted by INCODER to peasant farmers and displaced populations. This subsidy consists of seed capital for installing and carrying out production projects set up on land for the settlement of peasant

farm populations that are particularly vulnerable or have been displaced. The project, which began in 2007, benefited 2540 families on 124 rural plots.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA supported the MADR in developing the Project for Transition in Agriculture, upholding the policy for science and technology in agriculture and the strategy for strengthening the national SPS system. This work was done in order to prepare the agricultural sector in the field of technology and health so it will be equipped to compete on national and international markets. In 2005, the Government was granted a World Bank credit for US\$30 million to implement this project over a four-year period. Of these resources, US\$22.5 million were allocated to support innovation and technological developments for production chains, and US\$7.5 million were used to strengthen sanitary and phytosanitary processes.

The Institute also provided technical cooperation for the design, implementation and operation of competitive funds to cofinance initiatives for innovation, and agricultural technology development and transfer. This support began with conceptual review of public policy for innovation and technology and also entailed operational procedures, technical oversight and evaluation. One example is the MADR National Program for Agricultural Technology Transfer (PRONATTA), which financed 635 projects covering 159,000 direct beneficiaries. An estimated 51,000 families adopted new technologies and raised their income by some 4.3 million pesos per year.

IICA also worked with the MADR to oversee operation of the Competitive Fund for Science and Technology. As a result of the four tenders opened from 2004 through 2007, 268

projects received cofinancing for technology innovation in 24 agricultural production chains priority-ranked by region.

As part of the work with SENA, IICA supported the design and implementation of a fund to cofinance projects for small and medium-scale agroindustry; the objective of these projects is to introduce new technology to improve competitiveness. Under the first tender (2007-2008), support was extended to 12 projects in production chains for dairy, meat, horticulture, fisheries and animal feed. Beneficiary projects receive assistance to implement technologies for product preservation in cold chains and climate controlled settings, quality control in the post-harvest and processing links (GMP, HACCP) and improved packaging and crating.

With funding from Colciencias and technical support from the Brazilian Agricultural Research Institute (EMBRAPA), IICA took part in forward-looking analytical exercises for four production chains: cacao, tilapia, forestry, and milk and dairy products. These exercises produced assessment and forward-looking analysis of each chain, along with research agendas.

Programa Acceso conducted a variety of activities in Colombia, including implementation of a project to incorporate biotechnology into cacao crops, working with small-scale producers in the Department of Santander. Thirty producers from the ASOMUCARI association received training in early grafting and selection of the best cacao trees. With the participation of farmers, high-yield trees were selected to be used as grafting material and to set up cloning gardens that will produce vegetative material.

Under the Hemispheric Biofuel Program, documents were prepared on the production and use of ethanol and biodiesel in Colombia. At the same time, with support from the Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the

Andean Subregion (PROCIANDINO), the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation in the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS), the Colombian Agricultural Research Institute (CORPOICA) and the Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project, in 2008 IICA organized a seminar on agroenergy in the Andean Region and Mesoamerica—current status and exchange of experiences. The seminar provided an opportunity to share developments in science and technology in the field of agroenergy. Methods were also developed for operating three networks to exchange knowledge among research centers on *Jatropha*, castor beans and sweet sorghum for producing biofuels.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

With financing from the European Commission and in partnership with the Amazon Scientific Research Institute (SINCHI), the Government of the Department of Guaviare, the municipal mayors of San José del Guaviare and El Retorno and farmer associations in the region, IICA began a long-term project whose purpose is to foster sustainable management and use of timber and nontimber resources from the humid tropical forests in the northern Amazon of Colombia, using a model for strengthening local organizations.

Moreover, in cooperation with the MADR, the Institute produced and distributed a brochure entitled “Taking care of the environment—everyone’s responsibility.” The brochure was written to promote environmental protection among micro-enterprises included in the Rural Opportunities Program and was geared toward awakening community interest in learning about and applying appropriate practices in production and household processes, and thus helping to conserve the environment.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA worked closely with national institutions to carry out programs and projects of strategic interest. It partnered with such entities as SENA, INCODER, the ICA, CORPOICA and territorial institutions including the Department of Huila, in addition to the MADR and ACCIÓN SOCIAL, which saw IICA as a trusted cooperation agency able to respond to their needs and carry out projects consistent with long-term agricultural and rural development policies of Colombia.

The Institute also built partnerships with other cooperation agencies and organizations, including the World Food Program (WFP), the CAF, IFAD, ARD and USAID, working closely with them in such fields as food security, agribusiness, micro-enterprise, quality management systems and rural development.

In 2008, in the municipalities of Anapoima and La Mesa of Tequendama Province and in Soacha, specifically in the sector of Cazucá, IICA, in partnership with the WFP, conducted a study analyzing recent experiences and expectations of local residents faced with rising food prices. The study also analyzed the impact of rising prices on the main economic activities, income level and food security in these territories.

With the cooperation of the CAF, it implemented the Observatory of Rural Territories, resulting in methodologies and information useful for policy analysis and decision-making by stakeholders in the rural sector. IICA also worked with the IFAD strategy to fight poverty in Colombia by financing the Rural Opportunities Program.

In addition, the Institute worked in partnership with ARD Colombia to participate in projects offering employment and



income alternatives to small and medium-scale producers under alternative development programs funded by USAID in Colombia.

5. Modernization of the Office

As part of the modernization strategy for its work in Colombia, the IICA office undertook a number of activities to build a participatory planning and strategic management process to ensure that interventions in Colombia were consistent with the Regional Agenda. Cooperation activities reflected the Institute's own strategic priorities as well as the needs of Colombia's rural and agricultural development policy.

This long-term national policy, in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, the domestic agenda *Visión Colombia 2019* and the National Development Plan, set the directions along which IICA in Colombia structured its technical cooperation services. The goal has been to make agricultural production more competitive as a strategy for sustained growth in this sector, protect farmer income in a context of trade liberalization and fight rural poverty.

As a result of this process, "inclusive competitiveness" was selected as a strategic priority. It means creating and strengthening human, organizational, business and

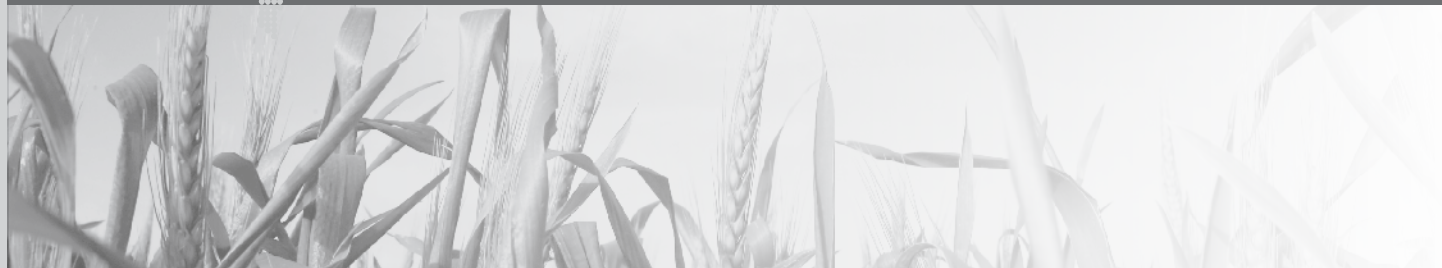
institutional capacities associated with agriculture and rural life, in order to take a stand and persevere in a changing environment, performing effectively and with social and environmental responsibility.

It was also clear that IICA in Colombia should operate on the basis of a comprehensive project management model, beginning with identification and negotiation, proceeding with design of the plan of operation, setting up management and implementation committees, and finally, wrapping up and documenting the experience. All this begins with a perspective of cooperation that combines technical, operational and administrative work.

This process of ongoing improvement went hand in hand with the implementation of the SAP, the information system that helps streamline accounting and financial processes and provides a reliable source of information for decision making. The approach led to continual growth and change, making IICA stronger and better able to respond to the needs of the country and carry out cooperation activities that will have a real impact on the quality of life for rural communities.

The smooth operations of the Institute in Colombia were rewarded whenever such entities as the MADR, ACCIÓN SOCIAL, SENA, INCODER, territorial agencies and other cooperation organizations looked to IICA as a trusted partner for carrying out strategic projects. All this clearly revealed the satisfaction of its allies and positioned IICA as a highly respected technical partner.

IICA Office in **Ecuador**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Ecuador

Miguel Ángel Arvelo¹

1. Introduction

This document is a summary of the results achieved by IICA in Ecuador over the period 2002-2008, as a result of the implementation of the Institute's National Technical Cooperation Agenda in this country, prepared on the basis of the Institute's new technical cooperation model, and in response to the strategic guidelines and priorities established in the Medium Term Plan (PMP) for this period.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Ecuador

IICA provided technical assistance to support the functioning of the Advisory Councils established by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; in particular, assistance to implement a mechanism to coordinate the actors in the potato chain and to prepare of a strategic plan for the coffee chain.

The Institute also contributed to the process of developing the 2007-2020 State Policies for the Agriculture Sector. In this regard, it designed an inventory of policies, which were then systematized; the contents of the respective document

were updated and validated; the strategy and instruments to implement it were elaborated, and the policies of the 2007-2011 National Plan for Reactivating the Agricultural Sector in the Sierra region were aligned with it.

Support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP) to establish the Center of Agricultural Studies and Policies (CEPA), a technical unit for analysis, information and monitoring that recommends strategies to apply to structural or circumstantial situations related to the development of the agricultural sector. The center was created by Ministerial Resolution No. 193.

IICA also supported MAGAP in the dissemination of the 2007-2011 National Plan for Reactivating the Agricultural Sector by holding training workshops for farmers; adapting the MAGAP structure to the requirements for implementing this Plan; strengthening the technical, administrative and service areas; conducting the 2007 National Consultation of Leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life, in order to hear the opinions of key actors on the future of agriculture and the rural sector, and in the elaboration of the 2007 National Report on progress and challenges in the implementation of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreement, Guayaquil 2005."

In addition, IICA held the First Andean Forum for Young Leaders in Agriculture and Rural Life to encourage the new generations to promote agricultural development. The 28

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young people from the Andean countries who participated shared ideas and put forward proposals on strategic issues relating to sustainable development to improve agriculture and rural life.

The “Procedures Manual of decentralized areas of responsibility for the agricultural sector” was prepared, in association with the National State Modernization Council (CONAM).

IICA collaborated with MAGAP in the elaboration of an organizational restructuring proposal, which included the design or redesign of the technical, administrative and financial procedures in order to improve the Ministry’s performance.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA designed and implemented a training program on food safety emphasizing systems for hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) for 23 professionals, using virtual methods.

Support was provided for the implementation of the Phytosanitary Inspection Program of Banana and Other Export Musaceas (SANIBANANO), which seeks to acquire and administer the amounts paid by exporters, who are the direct beneficiaries of the service. A tariff was defined for each lot of boxes to be exported; mechanisms were designed to examine and reject products that do not comply with the Ecuadorean standards; a differentiated and preferential scheme was designed for the Southern Cone, in order to reduce rejects to this destination, and the Banana Quality

Inspection Information System (SIICABA) was established, which permitted systematizing the documentation on the location of producers and zones with phytosanitary problems, and also to speed up the delivery of pre-certificates of phytosanitary inspection.

IICA provided technical assistance to strengthen the Program to Eradicate Foot-and-Mouth Disease, by preparing and implementing the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Information System (SIFAE). The system manages information on the Foot-and-Mouth Disease Vaccination Program that operates in four provinces and eight local offices of the National Commission for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (CONEFA). IICA helped train 150 local committees and 400 vaccinators and cattle owners in the management of this information system, as well as in the correct use of the vaccine and on other issues related to the disease, and it is collaborating with CONEFA to change the institutional image and in the production of materials to raise the awareness of cattle owners.

In coordination with MAGAP, execution of the Geographic Information System on Banana, Plantain and Other Musaceas (SIGBANANO) was undertaken. The program helps generate tools to identify the characteristics of the sector, to plan the procedures for the management, analysis and dissemination of results, and to update the national register of banana and plantain producers and exporters.

IICA contributed to reinforcing the Agricultural Health Service (SESA) by preparing the *“Matriz agropecuaria sobre el diagnóstico de los problemas sanitarios de los sectores agroproductivos”* [Agricultural matrix for diagnosing health problems of the agricultural production sector].

IICA supported trade associations such as the National Association of African Palm Growers (ANCUPA) and the

Ecuadorean Exporters Federation (FEDEXPOR) by providing training and obtaining external resources for projects on quality management systems.

It also supported the process of elaborating and implementing the SANIFLORES computer program, as well as subsequent training in how to use it. This program seeks to automate the inspection systems and the issue of a phytosanitary certificate for ornamental flowers.

Together with the Poultry Breeders Corporation, 700 producers and 100 veterinary students were trained in good agricultural practices (GAP); GAP were implemented on 23 farms; the poultry census of the Galapagos Islands was prepared; a kit to encourage the practice of GAP was conceived, and an information system was designed to automate the issue of the Guidelines for mobilization of poultry and swine.

To support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Integration (MRECI), IICA adapted the National Notifications and Information System to the Ministry's needs, including management of the National Fisheries Institute (INP) notifications.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA contributed to the elaboration and approval of Inter-Ministerial Agreement No. 25, signed by MAGAP and the Ministry of Industries and Competitiveness (MIC), to prepare the National Agroindustrial Development Plan. The purpose of the plan is to design sustainability strategies and to help negotiate funds for executing projects and programs arising from the plan.

Led by the Cooperative Program for the Development of Rural Agroindustry (PRODAR) and the Cooperative Program on Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer for the Andean Sub-Region (PROCIANDINO) and with IICA's support, the project on Technological Innovations and Differentiated Markets for Indigenous Potato Products was prepared, in order to develop technological innovations and to promote differentiated markets that take advantage of the biodiversity of indigenous potatoes, and to help improve the quality of life of small producers from the high Andean regions.

To support the Prefecture of Cotopaxi, a project to assist small producers from the cacao production chain in the cantons of La Mana, La Matriz and Guasaganda in the province of Cotopaxi was prepared and approved.

A study was made of the elements required to establish a mechanism to calculate the minimum subsistence cost of a box of bananas for Ecuador.

IICA, together with the Regional Trade Policy and Negotiations Program provided technical support to conduct and publish the study *"Impacto de la dolarización en la competitividad del sector agropecuario del Ecuador: utilización del tipo de cambio efectivo real"* [Impact of dollarization on the competitiveness of the agricultural sector in Ecuador: use of the real exchange rate].

The Institute supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the design of an instrument to assess supply and demand in the trade negotiations between the Andean Community and the European Union, as well as for a comparative study on prices of sensitive products. The purpose of this study was to calculate the price differential between European prices internalized in the Andean market and domestic prices. Both served as inputs for the negotiating team on the Agricultural Committee.



After applying 45 questionnaires to organizations of small-scale farmers from the Ecuadorean Sierra to measure their level of entrepreneurial management and export capacity, a proposal for a project on Trade Inclusion for Small-scale Producers was prepared.

A technical assessment mission was organized to draw up a program of work and technical cooperation to guide the implementation of the national plans for food storage, domestic marketing and sovereignty, and to help formulate a proposal to generate policies and policy instruments relating to domestic agricultural trade, supply and storage of strategic basic foods, and food sovereignty. IICA prepared a report with conclusions and recommendations for the implementation of the policy.

IICA collaborated with MAGAP on the design of the Support System for Decision-Making on Imports, specifically with regard to granting licenses.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA collaborated in the formulation of micro-credit projects with the FONLOCAL trust, a credit fund for the rural sector. This fund was strengthened as a credit model for small and medium-scale farmers. In addition, IICA cooperated in the design of investment policies, strategies and programs for sustainable rural development, and promoted micro-credit for small rural enterprises and the marketing of agricultural products.

With the Saraguro-Yacuambi Project, IICA assisted in the re-appraisal of the indigenous culture. Its contribution focused

on the construction of a new vision of the communal productive systems, without destroying their traditional vocation of ensuring family and community food security. A market vision was introduced that resulted in the generation of surpluses and, consequently, improved the family income.

In the province of Cotopaxi, IICA contributed to the re-appraisal of products with a territorial identity relating to agriculture, agroindustry, crafts, traditions, clothing, tourism destinations, legends and customs. It supported the establishment of the Salcedo Ice Cream Producers Association.

IICA collaborated in the formulation of a training program on strategies to reinforce trade associations, for 20 training and technology transfer technicians accredited by the National Peasant Training Institute (INCCA) and by the Service Improvement Project.

Support was provided for the elaboration of the Program to Support the Province of Cotopaxi (PROCOTOPAXI), and its subsequent expansion to cover the provinces of Chimborazo, Sucumbíos and Manabí.

In the province of Cotopaxi, IICA helped enhance the management capacity of agribusinesses in the potato chain. The results are visible: around 30 producers/leaders are receiving training in the comprehensive management of this crop and are transmitting their knowledge to more than 600 producers in the province.

To support the province of Los Ríos, IICA defined an inter-thematic intervention strategy and drew up an investment program known as the Rural Pact for Change. IICA helped define provincial agricultural policies that became the coordinating element for public administration in the territory,

in the context of the process of decentralizing agricultural areas of responsibility.

IICA elaborated the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan of the National Institute of Peasant Training (INCCA). It also prepared the investment plan "*Minga* [unpaid, reciprocal labor] *contra la Pobreza*," which was very important for the management of territorial development plans by the Cotopaxi Provincial Council.

IICA provided technical support by supplying contents and programs for three workshops on the establishment of the Territorial Rural Development Network; their purpose was to improve the technical, institutional and managerial capacity of different actors committed to rural development, and to establish discussion, coordination, conceptualization, inter-institutional cooperation and policy formulation mechanisms so as to achieve a higher level of development and sustainable growth in Ecuador.

For the Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion (MIES), and particularly the departments of Rural Development and Community Management, IICA supported the implementation of a new model of institutional management based on the territorial approach to development. MIES now has new instruments for the transparent allocation of financial resources for social investment, at both the central level and in the 24 provinces.

The Competitive Funds Program was formulated and adapted as an instrument to promote territorial development in the Río Paute watershed.

In the province of El Oro, support was provided for the implementation of an investment program whose purpose is to help implement the strategy and achieve the objectives

defined in the Provincial Development Plan, in keeping with the National Development Plan.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA collaborated in the development of a database and a rural library for the Rural Information System (ECUARURAL). It also helped improve the academic quality and the accreditation procedures of the Faculties of Agricultural Sciences by establishing planning teams in each faculty. It provided assistance to the National Evaluation and Accreditation Council (CONEA) in the preparation of strategic technical cooperation plans designed to establish minimum quality standards for the accreditation of agricultural education.

The web pages of MAGAP and of the Cotopaxi Provincial Government were redesigned. Both institutions are trying to portray their performance transparently. It also supported and provided advice to 40 community leaders affected by the eruptions of the Tungurahua Volcano; a workshop was held to prepare profiles for emergency projects and an instrument was designed to manage credit for small-scale producers.

The team of the Tungurahua Provincial Department was strengthened by training and refresher training activities on irrigation management, elaboration of business plans, and management of productive projects.

IICA contributed to the successful operation of the Agro-products Markets Information System (SIMAE), which functions as a pilot project in Tungurahua, Manabí, Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, and whose purpose is to establish a methodology that can be applied to research, data collection, validation, publication, use and analysis of the prices obtained

in the markets. Among other actions, the support included the signature of agreements, the organization of workshops, and the development of software.

All the libraries of the Autonomous National Agricultural Research Institute (INIAP) took part in a comprehensive assessment of their services and, together with IICA, they elaborated a strategic and operational plan on management of agricultural information, as well as a project to reinforce their units, which was submitted to the consideration of the Elsevier Foundation. The main result of this exercise was that the libraries initiated a modernization and updating plan, took a course on virtual libraries and formed the Agricultural Libraries Network, together with the Faculties of Agricultural Sciences.

During an international seminar supported by IICA, 120 members of agricultural associations, associations of livestock owners and of pine-nut producers, professors, students, university students, MAGAP officials and INIAP researchers validated the progress made in agricultural research and in the generation of technologies for using pine-nut oil as a bio-fuel.

The Institute cooperated in the design and implementation of the institutional web page of the National Poultry Breeders Corporation, which now has a portal for the exchange of information.

The Regional Program for Diversification of the Food Supply for Vulnerable Populations, Using Technological Tools on Indigenous Products of the Andean Region was formulated with the participation of national, regional and hemispheric consultants and IICA experts in biotechnology, technological innovation, natural resources, projects, and knowledge management. The intention is to have access to sources

of funding that permit implementing the program or its components and, in this way, to contribute to enhancing the food safety and sovereignty of the vulnerable inhabitants of the Andean countries.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA contributed to the implementation of the Regional Fund of Appropriate Technologies for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (FOMRENA), designed to provide technical and financial support for innovative technological, economic and social development initiatives created by non-governmental organizations and groups of local producers in order to obtain financial benefits from biodiversity.

The project for the establishment of the Center of Excellence for the Management of Renewable Natural Resources was prepared and approved.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

With the support of the International Potato Center (CIP), two national competitions were organized and held, one on technologies for the conservation and transformation of the potato and the other on potato gastronomy.

IICA enhanced partnerships with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to support the activities of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee. An information system was established that permits managing information rapidly and transparently, and a web page and

the logo of the Ecuadorean National Committee was designed. Support was provided to the National Codex Alimentarius Committee to organize the National Congress to Socialize and Raise Awareness of the Codex Alimentarius.

Within the framework of the National Normative Harmonization Project, executed with the financial support of FAO and the SALTO-USAID Project, IICA prepared, concluded and validated the draft bills on animal and plant health with the official and the private sector; in addition, in the area of safety, the national guidelines on best agricultural practices and best animal husbandry practices were prepared.

Under a joint initiative between IICA and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the Institute applied the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument in order to describe the performance of the health services, to provide a shared vision between the public and the private sectors, and to define priority actions to improve the performance of these services.

MAGAP, in coordination with SESA and with the support of national and international organizations, such as FAO, IICA, the PAHO Pan-American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA), the Colombian Livestock Owners Federation (FEDEGAN) and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the USDA, held two workshops for livestock owners on the health control of bovines in Ecuador.

In conjunction with FAO, a methodology was designed and applied to evaluate small productive projects that had been approved by previous administrations and no longer responded to the technical criteria promoted by MIES today. This methodology permits identifying variables such as pertinence, impact, management capacity, appropriation, financial sustainability and equity in each project.

IICA formulated the structure for the procedures of the National Integrated System of Health, Quality and Safety (SISCAL) and the Agricultural Quality Assurance Agency (AGROCALIDAD). IICA assisted in the establishment of the latter, which replaced SESA, with resources from the Food Aid Program (PL480-USDA).

In coordination with the Official Health Service of Ecuador and with financial support from the Export and Investment Promotion Corporation (CORPEI) and APHIS, assistance was provided for the elaboration of the first Ecuadorean field manual for monitoring the fruit fly.

Within the framework of the SESA/APHIS/USAID PL-480/ IICA technical cooperation agreement, the Animal and Plant Health System was streamlined. To this end, projects to reinforce ten phytosanitary monitoring units were approved and implemented; the Center for Pest Risk Assessment was established; the health barriers in the Mariscal Sucre Airport were strengthened; nine animal health monitoring units were reinforced, and the Centre for Health Risk Assessment and Geographical Information Systems (CAR-SIG) was created. In addition, a pre-selection was made of candidates to start up the Norman E. Borlaug International Agriculture Science and Technology Program.

As a result of the activities of the joint GTZ/INIAP project, the National Agricultural Innovation System was promoted and established. In addition, a web page was created as a means of communication between the different participating institutions.

In partnership with the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the Dialogue for the Promotion of Agricultural and Agroindustrial Technological Innovations (DINNOTAG) project was promoted to facilitate a permanent dialogue between universities and the agribusiness sector.



5. Modernization of the Office

The technical team was reorganized and reinforced, and emphasis was placed on issues relating to the political institutional framework for agriculture and rural life, and territorial development. The Office now has seven local professionals, selected by competition, who respond to the priorities established in the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

In addition, 80% of the staff of the Office received training in two of the Institute's official languages (English and Portuguese) to satisfy the requirements of the users of IICA technical cooperation.

An excellent working environment exists and the participation of all the personnel in the activities of the annual Action Plan has had positive results, because it has motivated teamwork. Furthermore, a training plan has been implemented that is updated each year.

The computer equipment allows the Office to respond promptly to the country's requests for technical cooperation.

IICA Office in **Peru**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Peru

Freddy Rojas Pérez¹

1. Introduction

This report is a summary of the principal results achieved by IICA in Peru from 2002 to 2008. During this period, the Institute provided support to this country in the context of two National Technical Cooperation Agendas, one for the period 2002-2006 and the other for 2006-2010.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Peru

As part of IICA's efforts to simplify and streamline administrative procedures, 180 internal processes of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG), decentralized public institutions (OPD), and various programs and projects were improved.

IICA supported the establishment of the Observatory for Agricultural Production Chains and Rural Territories as a mechanism to facilitate dialogue, consensus-building and

coordination between public and private stakeholders. The Observatory provides valuable information on production chains and territories, as well as analysis tools, methodologies for identifying market opportunities and constraints, and other services.

The institutional framework of the country's higher agricultural education system was strengthened, thanks to IICA's technical assistance in establishing the Peruvian Association of Agricultural Faculties. This Association was subsequently incorporated into the Andean Federation of Associations of Agricultural Science Faculties and related subjects (FAESCA) and the Andean Regional Forum for Dialogue and Integration in Agricultural and Rural Education (FRADIEAR).

The Institute also promoted the creation and consolidation of discussion forums such as the Dialogue and Consensus Group on Rural Agroindustry of the Junin Region and the Learning Partnership on Agricultural Production Chains of Peru.

IICA prepared and produced a number of technical papers, including studies, analyses, conference and workshop reports, good practice manuals, synopses and lessons learned. These publications were shared with public and private-sector stakeholders of the agricultural sector.

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In addition, the Institute supported the Peruvian government in the organization of a consultation process to define strategic guidelines and priorities for agriculture.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

In the context of the Peru-Chile Binational Agreement for the Control and Eradication of the Fruit Fly, a quarantine protection system was implemented in the Peruvian departments of Tacna and Moquegua. Fruit fly populations were eradicated on both sides of the border, using the sterile insect technique. Arica (Chile) was declared pest-free in 2004, and Moquegua and Tacna (Peru) in 2007.

IICA supported the design of action plans in the areas of animal health, plant health, sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and food safety, based on the application of the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) tool. This led to the development of strategic partnerships for the implementation of joint actions by the public and private sectors. IICA also promoted the coordination of the health, production, fisheries and agriculture sectors for the purpose of preparing the Food Safety Law and its Regulations, as part of the process to apply and update the PVS in food safety.

The Institute provided Huaura Province with a study and a strategy to find solutions to water pollution and promote environmental health. It encouraged the active participation of local committees and health groups and strengthened the links between the health and education sectors.

IICA supported the participation of officials of Peru's National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA) and Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (MINCETUR) at meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS Committee, enabling the country to take a more active role in these sessions, and in the establishment of a National SPS Committee in the context IICA's "Initiative for the Americas" Program.

As part of a national project to promote good agricultural practices (GAP), IICA published four technical manuals on quality management and GAP, organized several information and training events and established demonstration parcels in the departments of Lima, Arequipa, Piura, Cusco, Junin, Ica and Tacna.

In partnership with MINCETUR, the Peruvian Exporters Association (ADEX) and MINAG, and in the context of the national strategy to implement the new regulations on protection against bioterrorism, IICA supported capacity-building and professional training efforts with public and private-sector technicians in the application of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) System in food processing.

IICA also contributed to the institutional strengthening of SENASA, helping to prepare its "Strategic Plan with a Prospective Approach-Phase I" and supporting the transfer of tasks related to animal and plant health to eight regions of the country, as part of a process to decentralize that Service.

In partnership with SENASA and the Regional Agricultural Authority of Lima, IICA promoted capacity-building for small farmers of the Inter-provincial Association of Committees for the Control and Eradication of the Fruit Fly in the Inter-Andean Valley of Huaura (AICL). The focus was on crop management, GAP and fruit fly eradication methods.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

With IICA's support, a study of nine production chains was carried out to determine the possible impacts of trade liberalization on agriculture, stemming from Peru's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States. At the request of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IICA prepared a proposal for the development of an extension model to improve the production and primary processing of coffee and cacao in the Peruvian jungle.

Together with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), IICA provided technical assistance to MINAG and to stakeholders of the hard yellow corn, poultry production and pork production chains, in formulating a National Competitiveness Agreement. In addition, IICA supported the preparing of the regulations of the Law on Chains and Conglomerates in Peru and the design of legislative decree that created the Compensations for Competitiveness Program, through the Learning Alliance for Agribusiness Management in Product Chains in Peru.

The Institute also contributed to curriculum development efforts in strategic topics to promote the competitive, equitable and sustainable management of agribusiness. It supported in-service training courses to update academic staff and the design of a course on "Rural business management with social responsibility" imparted at the Antenor Orrego Private University (UPAO). In addition, courses on "Management of local agricultural production chains" and "Agribusiness management in cooperative rural enterprises" were designed and validated.

Working with GTZ and MINAG, IICA prepared a document entitled "General guidelines for promoting and supporting

agricultural production chains in Peru." This text serves as the basis for technical training in this area, both for MINAG's General Directorate of Agrarian Promotion (DGPA) and for the country's Regional Agricultural Authorities (DRA).

IICA provided technical support to MINAG in the formulation of a Strategic Plan and a Competitiveness Agreement for the cacao-chocolate chain, with the aim of effectively positioning Peruvian cacao in national and international markets.

Efforts such as the implementation of 99 field schools for farmers (ECA), an internship and exchange of experiences in integrated crop management in Ecuador and activities such as the "Third Andean Regional Workshop" and the "Fifth National Meeting on Cacao", served to strengthen the capacities of stakeholders of the cacao chain in the regions of Huanuco and San Martin, enabling them to better identify market trends and opportunities.

IICA worked to develop the capacity of public and private-sector stakeholders in the design of public policies for agriculture through internships, the dissemination of studies and the organization of forums to discuss the impacts of trade liberalization. Among the experiences analyzed were those of Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, El Salvador and Brazil.

IICA also accompanied efforts to improve the organization and management of the hard yellow corn- poultry farming and cuy production chains, and the junco straw-crafts, dairy cattle -milk, avocado and vine-wine production chains in Huaura Province. This resulted in a technology model for hard yellow corn, the diversification of handicraft products, the expansion of the avocado production areas, an increased volume of milk production, the genetic improvement of dairy cattle and the expansion of pasturelands.



c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

In the context of IICA's 60th anniversary, an international conference on rural development with a territorial approach was organized. IICA specialists shared the lessons learned by Brazil, Colombia and Ecuador with MINAG officials and representatives of the Forum to Combat Poverty. A report on this event was published entitled "Rural development, a new vision of territory: lessons learned by IICA in Latin America and the Caribbean".

As part of the Rural Tourism Development Project, efforts were made to improve the quality of the food served by small gastronomic enterprises in rural areas of Santa Maria (Huaura); a "gastronomic route" was traced to showcase the region's traditional gastronomy and to boost tourism in this territory. In addition, a tourism office was opened in the municipality of Santa Maria.

In the context of the *Red de Pueblos* (People's Network) Project, financed by the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), the following results were achieved:

- Strengthened the institutional framework of 34 organizations of farmers, agroindustrial producers, craftworkers, and housing organizations of local cooperation networks; also improved the capacity of network members to design viable and sustainable rural development proposals with a territorial approach.
- Nine information centers were established: seven in the province of Huaura and two in the Junin region.
- In partnership with local institutions, IICA provided technical training to 500 farmers, agroindustrial and craft

producers, boosting their productivity, improving the quality and diversity of their production and increasing their incomes.

- Consolidated the Polyphonic Choir and the Symphonic Band of Huaura Province, and obtained funds from the provincial government to continue this initiative.
- A gender approach was incorporated into the legal instruments of peasant communities of the district of Sincos, in the region of Junin.

IICA supported Peru's Ad-Hoc Rural Development Group in the execution of a negotiated work plan. Two of its main achievements were the creation of the Peruvian Rural Development Network and the implementation of the electronic communications and information platform "e-CAN Peru".

A case study on the "Potential impact of international price increases in raw materials and foodstuffs on the Huaura Valley" was carried out as a contribution to the food security of the region's inhabitants.

In the context of the International Year of the Potato (2008), various events were organized to promote the benefits of this tuber, especially of the native variety. As a result, potato consumption in the city of Lima increased from 85 kg to 90 kg/per capita/year. This particularly benefited small-scale farmers.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

With the active participation of the networks of the Cooperative Program for Agricultural Technology Development for the

Andean Region (PROCIANDINO), training courses were organized to improve the capacity of researchers and technicians of Peru's National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA). With IICA's support, the National Commission on Organic Products (CONAPO) prepared a national proposal for the regulation of organic products in Peru. IICA also collaborated with the INIA's Genetic Resources and Biotechnology Program in the preparation of a National Assessment of Zoogenetic Resources of Peru and a National Agro-biodiversity Plan.

The Institute supported the work of an Andean regional project on "Tree tomato: a promising fruit for the diversification of Andean agriculture", financed by the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO), aimed at characterizing germplasm in 190 accessions in order to identify its agroindustrial potential.

IICA also supported MINAG's "genetic improvement program" in efforts to reactivate camelid artificial insemination posts and operate these as a self-managing national network. In addition, officials of the National Council for South American Camelids (CONACS) received training in camelid improvement techniques and the management of genealogical records. In partnership with the PROALPACA project, an international camelids fair was organized with the participation of Bolivia, Argentina and Peru.

In cooperation with USAID, IICA analyzed intervention models with the aim of promoting innovations in coffee and cacao production. This resulted in the publication of a proposal for a strategy to improve the coffee programs executed by USAID. In order to encourage the application of participatory extension methodologies, 32 demonstration plots were established in the context of the ACCESO Project and the Technology Protocol for Cacao Cultivation in Peru was published.

In partnership with MINAG, IICA also contributed to the design of a blueprint for tropical livestock production in the context of the Alternative Development Plan for the areas of Pozuzo and Palcazu.

Similarly, the Institute supported the implementation of MINAG's policy guidelines for the cultivation of oil palm in the regions of Ucayali and Loreto. Around 611,707 oil palm seeds were imported and planted, benefiting 740 palm growers in the areas of Neshuya, Aguaytia and Iquitos.

In coordination with IICA's Inter-American Biotechnology and Biosafety Program (IBBP), videoconferences were organized to disseminate scientific information on the progress made in agro-biotechnologies in 2006 and 2007.

IICA also facilitated the participation of government officials at the Hemispheric Meeting on Liability and Compensation, at the Meeting of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and at the preparatory meeting. This helped the country to make informed decisions on the issues discussed.

With the participation of MINAG officials and civil society representatives, the "First study on the status of organic production in Peru" was prepared to assess the country's progress in this production system. IICA, in coordination with the Hemispheric Organic Agriculture Program, facilitated the participation of SENASA officials at the Annual Meeting of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture of LAC. As a result, Peru joined the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture in the Americas, and hosted the network's first meeting.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The Inter-institutional Program for Social Management of Water and the Environment in Watersheds (GSAAC), executed by IICA in coordination with MINAG, with funding from the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, worked in 32 selected micro-basins at national level and trained 300 facilitators through nine regional courses. Micro-watershed management committees and inter-institutional coordination bodies were established and consolidated in the regions, benefiting 40,000 families of water users, 190 grassroots organizations and 180 public and private institutions.

IICA contributed to efforts to restore the *amunas* (ancestral system of water conservation in Peru's Andean highlands) in the districts of Paccho and Huarochiri. As part of this process two documents were published: "Artificial water recharge systems: the Paccho-Huaurua *amunas*" and "Anthropological study of the *amunas* of Huarochiri".

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

In recent years, the Government has significantly increased the budget allocated to development initiatives in rural areas. In this context, IICA has strengthened its technical cooperation links with public and private organizations of the rural sector, to which it provides direct technical cooperation and project management services. For example, in 2008 IICA executed 21 letters of understanding and managed a budget of US\$44,291,227, which represented an increase of 491.44% with respect to the previous year.

The Institute also negotiated, designed and introduced a new cooperation model with the aim of consolidating its strategic positioning in the country's current agricultural scenario, achieving sustainable growth, enhancing the quality of its technical cooperation actions and improving its organization and participation in events and activities (such as meetings and workshops) to disseminate and strengthen its achievements, and its management of the knowledge generated through cooperation actions in its three strategic areas.

■ **Ministry of Agriculture of Peru:** During this period, MINAG was IICA's main recipient of cooperation services and strategic partner in the country. In addition to the growing number of MOUs signed in recent years, IICA's links with that ministry were considerably strengthened, as demonstrated by the achievements listed below:

- An agreement was reached to cancel the balance of the contributions owed by the Peruvian State to IICA, namely six annual quotas (1996-2001), thereby restoring the country's rights as a Member State of the Institute and ensuring its continued cooperation to the country's agriculture and rural development.
- IICA helped Peru to define its position in the context of the FTA signed with the United States, through discussions and analysis of policy documents and trade negotiations, initiated by IICA with the support of international experts. This process resulted in the preparation of an "Inventory of agricultural policies in the Andean Region" and of a model showing the potential economic impact of the FTA. These inputs were included in a report that MINAG submitted to Peru's National Congress.
- MINAG officials increased their understanding of strategic issues related to the country's agricultural

and rural development through meetings, the exchange of experiences, internships abroad and videoconferences.

- A review was conducted of studies and strategic plans for seven priority production chains at country level. This enabled stakeholders of the yellow corn–poultry farming- and pork production chains to formulate a National Competitiveness Agreement, the first of its type in the country.
 - Consolidation of linkages in three production chains of national interest: cacao-chocolate, cotton-textiles-manufacturing and maize-poultry-pork.
- **Regional governments:** In the context of the Observatory for Agricultural Production Chains and Rural Territories, IICA signed technical cooperation agreements with six regions: Lambayeque, San Martín, Pasco, Cusco, Ica and Apurímac. Contact was also maintained with the regions of Piura, Cajamarca, Amazonas, La Libertad, Ancash and Junín.
- **Universities:** IICA regards the agricultural universities as strategic partners for the development of agriculture and rural life in different regions of Peru. The main achievements included the following:
- **La Molina National Agrarian University (UNALM):** A plan to establish a leadership team to oversee the process of formulating the Institutional Strategic Plan 2007-2011 and support with training activities. UNALM serves as the permanent headquarters of FAESCA and its Library has collaborated in the creation of IICA's "Jacobó Zender" document center.
 - **Pontificia Catholic University of Peru (PUCP):** In association with the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN-Peru), headquartered at PUCP, IICA promoted the exchange of inter-institutional experiences at hemispheric level. Through videoconferences, five global dialogues were organized on various topics: "Comprehensive policy analysis: reassessing the role of agriculture and the rural milieu in sustainable development," "Alternative training models for rural micro-enterprises" and "Gender equity in policies for promoting micro-entrepreneurs."
 - **Antenor Orrego Private University of Trujillo (UPAO):** IICA contributed to staff training efforts and to the strengthening of academic courses offered at UPAO on topics such as sustainable rural development, management of agricultural production chains and agribusiness development. A diploma in "Rural business management with social responsibility" was created as part of a process to strengthen UPAO's role as a promoter of agribusiness development in the region.

5. Modernization of the Office

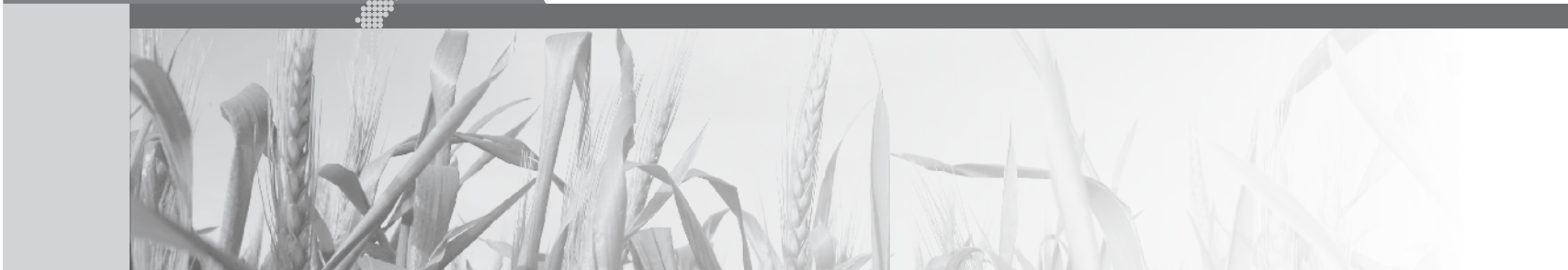
The Jacobó Zender Document Center was established and the IICA Office web site was designed and implemented, together with the publication INFOIICA-Peru. The Information and Documentation Unit was created to facilitate the implementation of education and training activities in the different strategic areas, as well as the planning and



production of printed materials and publications. More than 10 videoconferences and 15 webcasts were organized with countries such as Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Argentina and Uruguay, thanks to the purchase of videoconference equipment.

IICA made every effort to continuously computerize the information. A new cable network was installed along with a new infrastructure. In 2007 the Internet bandwidth was increased to 2 Mbps, allowing up to five external connections at a time during videoconferences. Security cameras were also installed and connected to the Internet line. Similarly, new security systems were introduced for the *software* together with new work programs for IICA's users, including Office 2007 and others. Finally, the Office's administrative area was strengthened in view of the increased volume of external resources administered and in order to provide more effective support the Representative and contract the necessary staff in response to new demands.

IICA Office in **Venezuela**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Venezuela

Diego Montenegro¹

1. Introduction

This report offers a summary of IICA's technical cooperation achievements in Venezuela during the period 2002-2008, in the framework of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

The Medium Term Plans (MTPs) for 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 are the governing documents that reflect the new institutional mandates and the guiding framework for the strategic actions conducted by IICA during that period. The National Technical Cooperation Agenda is a tool for action that ties in and articulates with the MTPs and with the outcome of the Special Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey (2004), at which the countries of the hemisphere agreed to promote a shared vision of agriculture and rural life through 2015 by endorsing the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, which construes agriculture in its production-trade, ecological-environmental, sociocultural-human and political-institutional dimensions.

Our commitment was to offer technical cooperation based on a process of ongoing dialogue and consultation with each and every one of our partners and beneficiaries and on the adoption of a management model that emphasized operational efficiency,

financial prudence, the building of alliances with international agencies, accountability and horizontal cooperation, with a view to supporting national efforts to promote agricultural development, food security and rural prosperity.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Venezuela

During 2002-2008 the Office supported the Venezuelan authorities in the implementation of the mandates issued by the Summits of the Americas, the resolutions arising from ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural life and the commitments of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA). Relations were strengthened with other international agencies in order to promote joint technical cooperation that would benefit Venezuela's agricultural and rural sectors.

In this context, IICA worked with the authorities and national-level partners on the following aspects: a) support for the Ministry of Agriculture and Land (MPPAT) in the process of ministerial meetings on agriculture and rural

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life; b) participation in the mechanisms for follow-up to the hemispheric summits process in order to fulfil mandates, including the preparation of the National Report on Progress and Challenges; and c) promotion of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and of the AGRO-Matrix as management tools among the authorities and staff of institutions working in Venezuela's agricultural sector.

The Directorate of Research and Legislative Development of the National Assembly and the ministries and bodies of the executive branch now have a set of methodologies for building public policies for the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and rural prosperity. One such is the report "Situation and outlook of agriculture in Venezuela", which analyzes the most prominent aspects of policies that affect the sector, the real contribution of agriculture to the economy and macroeconomic, sectoral, subsectoral and trade data that influence Venezuela's agricultural and agrifood sector.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Office helped to strengthen Venezuela's agricultural health and food safety, one of the areas in which IICA receives most requests for technical cooperation. The methodologies and instruments promoted were oriented towards the implementation of shared agendas, programs and projects, experience-sharing, strategic alliances, and intra- and inter-agency actions, with a view to optimizing efforts and available resources.

Phytosanitary and zoosanitary programs were promoted in the framework of capacity-building activities with the Autonomous Agricultural Health Service (SASA). New regulations were established for the movement of livestock and livestock products and byproducts, and for the movement of vegetable material and related products and byproducts, and procedures manuals were prepared for brucellosis and tuberculosis.

Work was carried out to enhance the capabilities of the National Zoonosis Commission for preventing and controlling rabies and bovine spongiform encephalitis. In addition, IICA formed a strategic alliance with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and IICA, which helped to increase the human, technical and financial resources devoted to the Commission's program on vesicular illnesses and foot and mouth disease, upgrade its epidemiological surveillance units and improve evaluation and follow-up of sanitary programs.

Capabilities were also expanded for the prevention and control of other pests and diseases, such as encephalitis, pink mealybug, fruit fly and black sigatoka.

In follow-up to the commitments and obligations assumed by Venezuela as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), especially in relation to the implementation of the Agreement of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), IICA provided support for the modernization of SASA by means of strategic planning processes that helped to create a modern institutional structure in keeping with national policies. Part of this is the new governing body of agricultural health: the National Comprehensive Public Health Institute (INSAI), which replaced SASA.

The Office coordinated the participation of Venezuelan representatives in meetings of the SPS Committee held in

Geneva, in the framework of the program “Initiative for the Americas on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures” implemented under the WTO SPS Agreement.

IICA was actively involved in the National Commission for the Control and Eradication of Foot and Mouth Disease (CONEFA) and in the National Plan for the Prevention of Avian Influenza and Pandemic Influenza. The Institute also carried forward a variety of efforts to coordinate the formulation of national and regional plans aimed at preventing and controlling those diseases.

With the support of IICA and other international agencies, Venezuela became the first country in the Andean Region to propose the establishment of a National Integrated Food Control System (SNICA). Venezuela has been one of the most active countries in reviewing and proposing standards and guidelines as part of the activities carried out to strengthen the National Codex Alimentarius Committee and its technical subcommittees.

In order to consolidate SNICA, IICA worked to strengthen the areas of health inspection and auditing, as well as the agro-production chain, by formulating standards and guidelines on good agricultural practices (GAPs) in different segments and implementing projects to institute quality and safety management systems in fruit, vegetable and dairy chains.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

The Institute strengthened the capabilities of the agricultural public sector for engaging with the international agricultural negotiations and marketing and finance mechanisms. The

work carried out ranged from actions at the national level, such as fora, consultancies, proposals for the strengthening of agro-production chains and policies for increasing the public component of agricultural finance, to local actions in the states of Monagas, Portuguesa, Lara, Sucre and Zulia to upgrade the structure and performance of small-scale producers. Policies, standards and strategies promoting production diversification and articulation with markets were a prominent area of work.

IICA contributed to expanding the capabilities for analysis and advice-seeking of public technical groups associated with the Venezuelan agrifood sector. The Institute held fora and training workshops and disseminated information on trade policy, the WTO General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the guiding principles of the Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean (ALBA) and the implications of the international negotiations on agriculture for Venezuelan food security.

With regard to financing for agriculture, the work carried out by the Institute included support for the Yacambú Quibor water system, the design and set-up of small-scale local financial funds and support for the Portuguesa State Governor’s Office in setting up the Portuguesa Single Development Fund (FUNDESPORT). The capabilities of the Agricultural, Fisheries, Forestry and Related Development Fund were upgraded in order to provide better financial services to the agricultural sector. A number of studies were conducted, including: “Analysis and evaluation of the selection and operation of technical assistance firms” and “Profiling of producers targeted for agricultural financing”. Support was also provided for the establishment of reciprocal guarantee funds and cooperation was undertaken with the Agricultural Products and Inputs Exchange (BOLPRIAVEN) to strengthen the capabilities of brokers and operators.



Capacities for agrifood chain management and analysis were upgraded in the states of Bolívar, Monagas, Lara and Portuguesa through training, planning activities, technical assistance, agricultural outreach and technology transfer conducted from within rural communities. Emphasis was afforded to the generation of value added, the organization of local stakeholders for production and marketing, the establishment of rural enterprises and the diversification of rural household income through agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The simultaneous focus across various issues made this a highly rewarding experience. Work was carried out with the dairy, coffee, cocoa, fruit and vegetable sectors, with the involvement of local stakeholders, state governors' offices, mayors' offices and other public bodies, such as SASA (now INSAI), the Venezuelan Agrarian Corporation (CVA), the state units of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land (UEMAT) and the Ministry of Health (MPPS).

Thanks to the support of IICA, the states of Portuguesa and Lara now have methodologies for promoting rural tourism as a non-agricultural activity that adds value to the land. The institute carried out work on the tourism product chains or circuits approach and promoted efforts to add value to traditional agricultural activities, conserve the environment and preserve rural culture as ways to improve the quality of life in communities.

IICA cooperation helped to raise awareness on the part of institutional stakeholders as regards rural tourism, the identification of resources and opportunities in the milieu, socioeconomic characterization, the construction of prospective scenarios, the formulation of objectives, projects and management indicators the importance of participating in national and international tourism fairs and starting up the Information System for Rural Tourism in Portuguesa. The

491 participants in the workshops identified 298 natural and cultural resources in the 70 communities involved that could be used to develop rural tourism.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA's technical cooperation focused on the concept of rural development with a territorial approach, which engaged communities, the public and private sectors and academic authorities, and inspired efforts to manage natural resources efficiently and harmoniously with a view to sustained growth.

IICA worked intensively to promote and design the Integrated Water Resources Management and Territorial Development Project in the Yacambu-Quibor region, steering economic and social development projects in the areas affected by the large-scale works to regulate water and transfer it from the upper basins of the Yacambú River towards the Quibor Valley in the state of Lara. Sixteen institutions, 71 Venezuelan professionals, eight Venezuelan consultants and six international consultants, 21 IICA professionals and 782 community stakeholders participated in the formulation of the project.

The capabilities of the Foundation for the Development of the Central-Western Region (FUDECO) were strengthened. A methodology was provided to the Foundation for designing the Rural Development Plan with a Territorial Approach for the area of influence of the Yacambú-Quibor project in the northern semi-arid zone of Lara state, in order to characterize and delineate the territory and to lay the foundations for establishment a network of institutions and a team for promotion.

In addition, the Plan for the Strategic Development of Expanded Agriculture was made available to the State Governor's Office of Monagas. Support was provided to the expansion group and to the municipal agricultural offices in Monagas state for the organization of producers, marketing and commercialization, and for the strengthening of rural women's capacities.

The National Assembly is now in possession of a conceptual basis on which to generate instruments for upgrading the design and implementation of legislation and public policies in different territories across the country. Support was also provided for the organization of technical discussions on "The new development model for rural territories in 21st century socialism", which addressed such issues as rural development and food security and sovereignty.

With the support of IICA, the State Governor's Office of Portuguesa acquired methodologies for developing territorial management processes, building technical capacities and disseminating information, with a view to upgrading the management capabilities of local stakeholders. Strategies were also formulated to drive development in specific territories and promote prosperity in communities, the consolidation of family agriculture, opportunities for women and young agricultural leaders and knowledge management for rural development.

Given the importance of agricultural data for the sector's development, IICA promoted a series of information systems for expanded agriculture, including: Infoagro Zulia, Infoagro for dual purpose livestock, Rural Tourism in Portuguesa, Management of Agricultural Digital Libraries and the Venezuelan Agricultural Information and Documentation System (SIDVen), which operates as a national node of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for Latin America and the Caribbean (SIDALC).

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA assisted Venezuela in its efforts to promote policies and processes of technical and institutional innovation aimed at introducing new know-how and technologies into agriculture. Technical and administrative cooperation was provided for the Agricultural Technologies Program (PTA) and implemented by the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), with financing from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). IICA also helped to strengthen INIA's capabilities for consolidating institutional reform, increasing investment and building up its capacity to respond to the demands made upon it.

IICA helped to strengthen the country's institutional structure in the field of agro-biotechnology and biosafety by collaborating in efforts to set up the National Biotechnology Network, form the INIA technical team working on the impact of climate change on biodiversity, and coordinate with the Biosafety and Biotrade Office of the Ministry of the Environment (MINAMB) to implement and follow up cooperation and horizontal cooperation activities held to present successful experiences from other countries.

The Institute promoted integration between INIA, the Faculty of Agronomy of the Central University of Venezuela (UCV) and the National Center for Biological Diversity of MINAMB for a joint approach to work on native species with potential for contributing to food security and sovereignty.

Support was provided for upgrading the capabilities of the staff of the National Agricultural Technology System to formulate and implement projects under consortium arrangements, through a strategic alliance between IICA and the Regional

Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO). A number of project profiles were submitted to FONTAGRO, including “Proposed zoning project” and “Crop yield response capacity to climate change”.

IICA coordinated with the Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Andean Subregion (PROCIANDINO), the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agrifood and Agroindustrial Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) and the Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics (PROCITRÓPICOS) to form a platform that was made available to INIA for promoting research, technological development, innovation and horizontal cooperation. This helped to strengthen the National Research System by endowing it with a tool of agricultural innovation for sustainable development of the rural milieu.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA strengthened its strategic alliances with Venezuelan agencies to further the promotion and organization of technical events concerning global environmental changes and their implications for agriculture and rural welfare. The Institute also helped to build the capacities of the Environmental Institute of the State of Lara (INDALARA) and INIA by means of workshops on good agricultural practices, the rational use of biodiversity, environmental services, joint sustainable management of underground and surface water resources in the Quibor Valley, knowledge management and estimation of the impact of climate change on Venezuela.

The Institute supported the Ministry of the Environment and INIA in preparing the study “Establishing an ecological balance

in the Píritu and Unare lakes area”, which aimed to determine the status of the environment in that basin. In partnership with the Rafael Rangel National Institute of Hygiene and the Organization of American States (OAS), IICA also promoted capacity-building for adapting agrifood systems to mitigate the impact of global climate change, particularly its effect on human health.

The Institute helped to improve the capabilities of the Foundation for the Development of Science and Technology (FUNDACITE) of Trujillo for the integrated management of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable rural development, with an emphasis on water resources.

IICA assisted the Standing Commission for the Environment and Land Use of the National Assembly in obtaining the technical data needed for preparing the Law on the Comprehensive Management of Socio-Natural and Technological Risks. A number of other subjects were addressed with the Commission, such as the impact of that legislation on the rural milieu and its contribution to prevention and adaptation measures that could mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture and thus strengthen food security.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

With regard to technology and innovation, in partnership with IDB, IICA implemented the Agricultural Technology Program, which was aimed at supporting capacity-building in INIA. An alliance with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), affording emphasis to the organization of courses, workshops, technical missions and studies on the Codex Alimentarius,

and to diverse issues including good agricultural practices, food safety, control of foot and mouth disease and measures to reduce potential public health risks from highly pathogenic avian influence in Venezuela.

The ties between IICA and the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) served to consolidate support for the Yacambú-Quibor water system in the formulation of the Integrated Water Resources Management Project.

IICA also worked with the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and the Rural Development Training and Innovation Foundation (CIARA) to carry out the Project for the Development of Poor Rural Communities (PRODECOP) and the Project for the Systematization of Successful Experiences with a Gender Focus (PREA).

In 2006, in the framework of the Twenty-Ninth FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Caracas, the Director General of IICA, Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, and the FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, José Graziano da Silva, formalized a cooperation agreement to join forces on issues of food security, agricultural health, food safety, rural development and knowledge management. Also with FAO, IICA promoted development of the work of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee, cooperated in international agricultural negotiations, commemorated the International Year of the Potato, held activities to promote food security and supported the development of rural education.

In the framework of the agreement signed between the two institutions, IICA and the Latin American Economic System (SELA) worked together to support the Directorate of Research and Legislative Development of the National Assembly, INIA and the Foundation for the Development of the Midwestern Region (FUDECO) on a number of knowledge management events.

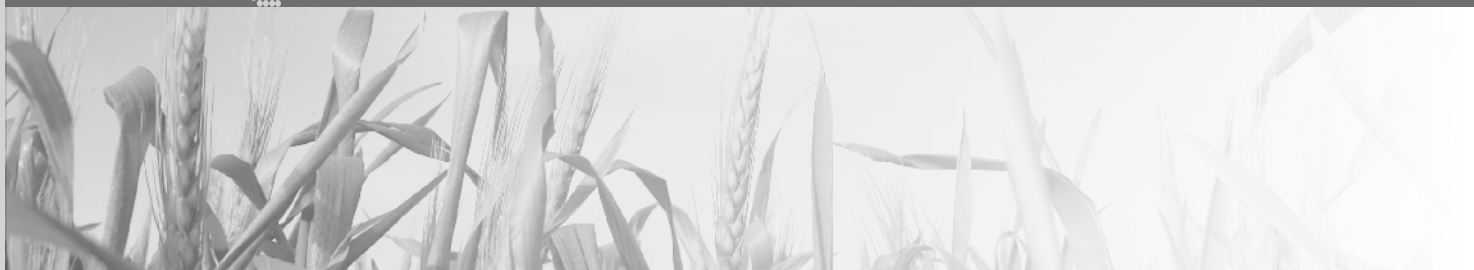
As part of efforts to develop Venezuela's vesicular disease monitoring and control program, IICA coordinated with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to provide support for emergency units, for the preparation of technical missions and for the implementation of a joint program of work on biosafety in live fowl markets.

5. Modernization of the Office

The IICA Office in Venezuela has the human, technical and administrative resources to provide efficient technical cooperation to fulfil the demands and priorities that arise and thus benefit the country's rural and agrifood sectors. Efforts have been made to achieve a greater presence in the mass media and to promote and disseminate the activities of IICA through printed and electronic bulletins, the Institute's website and participation in national and international fairs and events.



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the **Caribbean Region**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Caribbean Region

Trevor W. Murray¹

1. Introduction

This report highlights the results achieved in the Caribbean Region under the Institute's technical cooperation agendas and medium term plans (MTP) covering the period 2002-2008.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Caribbean Region

The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and IICA helped support the articulation of regional agricultural policy with resources and technical advice. The Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) was developed as a result of this program. Through CaRAPN, a number of results were obtained: the development of a website to provide a platform for dialogue; information exchange; and the generation of research and several information products.

Following the 2004 Conference of the Heads of Government (CHoG), IICA managed the administration (logistical organization and documentation) and technical requirements for implementing the CHoG decisions. IICA facilitated the Regional Technical Briefing Meeting that developed the specifics of national consultations to address the key binding constraints. IICA provided the services of its national offices and technical staff to assist the countries with the national consultations, the Regional Agricultural Policy Workshop and the Meeting of the Forum of Ministers.

The program undertook an extensive review of the status of country actions and progress made with regard to each of the KBCs that was presented to a special Agriculture COTED meeting (2006).

IICA facilitated the dialogue, managed information on national agricultural policies through the development of an Agricultural Policy Inventory and prepared a technical discussion paper entitled "Implementing a CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy: Issues, Options and Process." A discussion paper was also prepared to "determine the Region's agricultural and food

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requirements (demand and supply) 2005 and 2015,” as part of the Jagdeo Initiative’s interventions.

Recognizing the special difficulties experienced by the OECS countries and the urgent need to develop response strategies, IICA and its partners assisted the OECS Secretariat in developing an agricultural policy and strategy for the subregion.

Given that the framework for articulating national policy differed from country to country, under the AGRO Plan the Institute undertook an extensive process of promotion and capacity building among the Member States with respect to the Agro-Matrix. As a result of seminars conducted in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia and Suriname, ministry of agriculture officials, and stakeholders are now familiar with the main pillars of the development strategy.

Direct technical support provided to the Ministry of Agriculture of Dominica resulted in the drafting of a National Agriculture Policy Framework (2007 to 2025). IICA assisted Suriname officials in the use of the Agro-Matrix framework as a key aspect in the conceptualization and planning of activities, for the development of hinterland communities in Suriname.

Situation and outlook reports provided information on agriculture in the region. As part of its hemispheric mandate, IICA upgraded the Performance and Prospects for Agriculture report. A more comprehensive Situation and Outlook Report (S&O, 2003) was prepared as a background paper for ministers of agriculture regarding the repositioning of agriculture.

Support was provided to Member States through local IICA offices to prepare S&O reports for agriculture. The assistance provided to the Bahamas (2005) and Dominica (2006) built upon existing national reports.

Two regional workshops supported by the CTA and one in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reviewed in detail a set of indicators developed by a joint IICA-ECLAC hemispheric group, to measure progress towards the 2015 goal of sustainable development of agriculture and rural life.

As a result of the Agro-Matrix and promotional efforts, Member States became more familiar with agriculture’s role in the summit process. These activities also enhanced the participation of ministry of agriculture officials in the preparations for the 2007 ministerial meeting on agriculture.

Based on the experiences with promoting the tool in the Caribbean a resource book, “Agro-Matrix, more than a concept,” was prepared to document the contribution to the IICA dialogue and to develop best institutional practices and technical knowledge management platforms.

Informing and enhancing knowledge through print media has been a central part of the regional program. Over the period, fifteen issues of “AgriView,” the program’s main print media, were prepared and disseminated to stakeholders.

The “In a Nutshell” series was also another information product published by the program. The ten issues covered good agricultural practices (GAP), the importance of agricultural policies, food safety, food and nutrition security, entrepreneurship in agriculture and regional agricultural policy, among others. A “Critical Issues, Options and Perspectives” booklet entitled “Managing Hazards, Reducing Risks and Increasing Investments in Agriculture (2007)” was published and disseminated to stakeholders.

Encouraging and facilitating networking and inclusive dialogue has been a major plank in the support provided. In addition to

the publications, several forums were organized that promoted knowledge of IICA's interventions, the situation of agriculture in the region and critical issues facing its development.

IICA contributed a number of technical papers, including "Poverty Reduction Strategies: WTO, Sugar and Bananas, the experience of the OECS countries," at the 2003 Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) Policy Dialogue - Technical Meeting on Poverty Alleviation and Food Security Strategies in the Caribbean; and "Issues, Options and Prospects for Caribbean Agriculture" at the 34th Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) Seminar in 2004, whose theme was "Agriculture and Rural Development."

Efforts were also made to engage the regional media through the promotion of two regional events (2006 and 2007) aimed at disseminating agricultural information in the mass media. As a result, agriculture stakeholders gained a better insight of how the media works and were able to identify the actions and timelines necessary to obtain more frequent and positive visibility of agriculture issues in the printed press, in particular.

The Agricultural Round Table (ART), in particular, succeeded in enhancing a deeper understanding by the media of critical issues for agricultural repositioning through dialogue, stronger networking and communication in agriculture.

The critical and interrelated issues discussed were: (i) Caribbean Agriculture in Global and Hemispheric Development Agendas; (ii) Agricultural Positioning in National Development Agendas; (iii) Regional Common Agriculture Policy and External Negotiations; (iv) Developing Agripreneurs and Building Competitive Value Chains; and, (v) Feeding Ourselves, Food Prices, Nutrition Crisis, and Food vs. Fuel.

The ART contributed to the strengthening of dialogue and partnerships as a vehicle to enhance the enabling environment and institutional framework for competitive business.

The Institute assigned a senior professional to the CARICOM Secretariat to provide technical support to the implementation of the Jagdeo Initiative through the:

- Strengthening of the existing Lead Country/Lead Agency institutional mechanisms, with the establishment of a Technical Management Advisory Committee (TMAC) for each of the constraints;
- Development of annual operational budgets for the TMACs and the elaboration of a Project Document as the instrument for accessing resources for reducing the financial gap in the aggregate budget;
- The elaboration of annual work programs for the TMACs; and,
- The provision of support for the preparation of working documents presented to the meetings of the COTED.

Another area of critical support worth noting is the efforts made to develop agrotourism initiatives throughout the Caribbean. In collaboration with the Organization of American States (OAS), IICA implemented a three-year project in seven member countries in the region (Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Dominica and Suriname).

The project assisted member countries in identifying the opportunities for developing the critical linkages of the agricultural sector and rural communities with the tourism sector.

3. Results Achieved

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

In promoting and supporting the development of capabilities and the modernization of agricultural health and food safety services in member countries, the following results were achieved:

- The development of options for the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) components of the trade negotiations and participation in the meetings of the SPS Committee of the World Trade Organization (WTO) allowed countries to better position themselves to participate effectively in world trade;
- The development of policies, strategies and functions required to address the SPS-related negotiations afforded greater facilitation of trade;
- The development and/or upgrading of agricultural health and food safety systems;
- The production of safe agricultural products, increasing trade and incomes;
- The management of pests and diseases, including invasive alien species, especially those of economic importance, to reduce loss of production and incomes; and,
- The enhancement of the quality and quantity of the available human resources.

The Initiative of the Americas is a facility implemented with funds provided by USA, Canada and IICA. This initiative was

established to facilitate the participation of member countries in the meetings of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) in Geneva, Switzerland, and the standard-setting processes. Approximately 25 meetings of the SPS committee were held and all member states participated in these meetings.

Countries reported several benefits and achievements, namely:

- Opportunity to actively participate in an important international decision-making forum;
- Increased understanding of the benefits and obligations under the SPS agreement;
- Capacity building in member countries for the SPS agreement; and,
- Implementation of the transparency obligations of the SPS agreement with the establishment of national enquiry points and notification authorities in the countries.

In 2008, IICA obtained funding from the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) of the WTO to undertake a follow-up project to the SPS Initiative of the Americas. All of the 14 member countries in the Caribbean Region benefited. Under this project, assessments of the SPS systems in member countries were conducted and strategies were developed for addressing the gaps identified. Each country was provided with an assessment report and country agendas for follow-up actions.

In collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the Caribbean

Network of Chief Veterinary Officers (CaribVET), IICA launched the Veterinary Epidemiologist/Para-Epidemiologist (VEP) project in several countries of the region in 2008.

It facilitated the reinforcement of harmonized and sustainable epidemiological surveillance for tropical bont tick (TBT), tick-borne diseases (TBD), transboundary animal diseases (TADs) and other priority/emerging diseases. The project is being implemented over a three-year period.

The beneficiary countries were Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Strengthening of Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean (SAQS) was a €2.6 million subprogram in collaboration with the European Union/Caribbean Agriculture and Fisheries Programme (EU/CAFP). Launched in July 2002, the project increased the capacity of CARIFORUM countries to meet the requirements of the WTO/SPS agreement as well as strengthening Caribbean agricultural health services.

With the support of IICA, other results were achieved, including:

- Capabilities were increased by means of regional and national training workshops in collaboration with USDA-APHIS, CIRAD, FAO and the Caribbean Poultry Association (CPA) on avian influenza (AI) surveillance and preparedness, biosecurity and the mitigation of possible risks;
- Support for the staging of desktop and field simulation exercises in several countries, including Jamaica, St. Lucia, Guyana, Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago;

- Technical support for the development of national plans for prevention and emergency preparedness action;
- IICA and USDA-APHIS, in collaboration with the Centre for Naval Analysis, conducted workshops entitled “Country Response Plan for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza.” The workshops were used to analyze the countries’ AI contingency plans and offer recommendations for improvement. In addition, training was provided in the incident command system and other related emergency response strategies; and,
- IICA supported the FAO regional project for AI preparedness. IICA made a specific contribution with respect to risk communication. Two communication tools were developed - a 10-part radio series and a video presentation on avian influenza - that were distributed to the countries. The 10-part radio series, originally produced in Spanish, was translated into English and adapted for the Caribbean.

A series of assessment tools developed by IICA called “Performance, Vision and Strategy” (PVS) were applied successfully throughout the region.

IICA provided technical support for the application of the PVS tool for veterinary services in Jamaica. This resulted in the development of a proposal for the modernization of the veterinary services. Trinidad and Tobago asked IICA to apply the food safety PVS in its efforts to establish a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency. The SPS PVS tool was applied in all countries of the region as part of the IICA-STDF-108 project.

IICA provided support to member countries in addressing several emergency and emerging issues in the area of agricultural health and food safety. These include:

- Red palm mite in several countries in the Region
- The carambola fruit fly control program in Suriname and Guyana
- The control of classical swine fever in Haiti and the Dominican Republic and rabies in Haiti
- Anastrepha fruit fly control in Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Haiti
- Citrus tristeza virus control and management in Dominica
- Black sigatoka and moko diseases of bananas
- The giant African snail
- Lethal yellow of coconuts in Nevis.

IICA has consistently provided training and capacity building for hundreds of technical persons drawn from both the public and private sectors across the region. The training opportunities covered a wide range of disciplines in agricultural health and food safety. Some of them were:

- In collaboration with USDA, FAO and the OIE, IICA conducted distance training for over 100 people on the international standard-setting process of the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and Codex Alimentarius;
- Training in the areas of good agricultural and manufacturing practices (GAPs, GMPs); hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP); quarantine inspection procedures and techniques; pest risk analysis and training for pesticide

control operators. Handbooks and manuals on GAPs were developed;

- Training in avian influenza preparedness and pest identification that allowed for enhanced technical capacity in the countries;
- In collaboration with the IDB, WTO, FAO and USDA, IICA provided training on the application of the WTO SPS agreement;
- Regional consultations were conducted on International Standard on Phytosanitary Measures #15 (ISPM #15), Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Materials in International Trade;
- Manuals on GAPs for several products and herd health management for small ruminant production were developed in collaboration with USDA/APHIS and the University of the West Indies; and,
- Food safety training was provided for agricultural health and food safety specialists. The University of Nebraska and all AHFS regional and national specialists participated.

IICA supported institutional strengthening in the Caribbean region as follows:

- The establishment of national agricultural health and food safety systems (NAHFSS) in several countries in the region and the development of a proposal for the formation of the Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA);
- The Coordinating Group of Pesticides Control Boards of the Caribbean (CGPC) was established as part of a strategy for improved use and management of agrochemicals. The CGPC comprises the pesticides control boards of Caribbean countries, each represented by the respective chairperson

or registrar. IICA operates the technical secretariat of the CGPC;

- IICA supported the efforts of several national agricultural health and food safety services to develop science-based regulatory mechanisms and technical capacities as well as sustainable institutional structures; and,
- IICA supported the work of the Caribbean Invasive Species Working Group (CISWG) and played a major role in the development of the Caribbean Regional Invasive Species Intervention Strategy (CRISIS).

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Given its mandate of building the competitiveness of small and medium-sized producers, in 2002 the Institute strengthened its efforts to help Caribbean countries identify and implement strategies for improving competitiveness.

The Institute facilitated the establishment of the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) in 2002. The association has a registered office in Trinidad and Tobago and national chapters in Jamaica, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Until 2006, the IICA Regional Agribusiness Program (RABP) served as the Secretariat for CABA, with support provided by the IICA Offices at the national level. In 2004, the RABP helped CABA to secure grant funding of US\$2.6 million from the IDB for a project entitled “Strengthen Market Access Opportunities for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Caribbean Region.”

The RABP undertook initiatives to strengthen the presence of critical commodity producers at the regional level, resulting in the formation of several regional producers’ associations. The most noteworthy were the Caribbean Pork Association, the Caribbean Hot Pepper Association, the Caribbean Herbal Business Association and the Regional Organic Movement.

The strengthening of the institutional framework for the involvement of youths and women in agribusiness was also an area of focus, resulting in the formation of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) and the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP).

Efforts were also made to strengthen relationships between agricultural societies within the Caribbean Region, culminating in the formation of the Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN), a regional network of 12 farmers’ organizations, in 2004.

IICA worked to promote the presence of agribusiness stakeholders at regional and national forums for dialogue, develop and execute programs to enhance their business capacities, and promote application of the CADIAC approach to building competitiveness.

The Institute facilitated the hosting of regional workshops to promote the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA) within the Caribbean. Since 2007, seven Caribbean countries have become members the MIOA. The Caribbean Region now has representation on MIOA’s Executive Committee.

In the 2002-2006 period, IICA provided strategic support to Caribbean Member States by lending further assistance to the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) to strengthen the trade negotiating capacity of the region in areas

such as sanitary and phytosanitary measures, intellectual property rights and food safety.

In collaboration with the CRNM, the Institute published weekly articles entitled “What’s Happening in the Negotiations” in national newspapers in some Member States in 2004.

Those weekly articles stimulated dialogue and similar newspaper contributions from articles written by national agencies. National seminars were also held on the international environment for trade and its implications for competitiveness and marketability of food products, enhancing understanding among stakeholders of the critical issues and the types of responses required.

A 2003 national seminar series, undertaken in the OECS countries, under the theme “Negotiating Agriculture - Understanding What’s at Stake,” targeted small farmers and processors, farmers’ organizations, extension officers and other ministry of agriculture staff.

The program continued to support CaFAN’s capacity-building efforts aimed at enhancing the knowledge of its stakeholders in the areas of trade negotiations. This included facilitating seminars and preparing brochures on the topic of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) from the perspective of the small farmer and facilitating CaFAN membership for regional workshops on trade policy.

Regional workshops, such as the one entitled “Promoting Greater Caribbean Competitiveness in National, Regional and International Agri-food Markets” were conducted as part of the Alliance activities, which promoted dialogue on trade issues at the regional level.

Supporting Member States and industry preparations for trade negotiations in collaboration with national and regional agencies was an important contribution to the Caribbean.

The contributions to the regional process included technical assistance and the facilitation of national and industry dialogue in the preparation of industry position papers, particularly in terms of tariff offers and other key-trade related instruments in the identification of sensitive industries.

Collaboration was undertaken with the Centre for Food Economics Research of the Department of Agricultural and Food Economics of the University of Reading, to facilitate the study “Incidence and Impact of Non-Tariff Measures on Caribbean Agricultural Exports to the US and EU Markets” (2002) on behalf of the CRNM.

As part of this thrust, the program participated in an IICA-team consultancy (2006) to develop an adaptive strategy for the Belize sugar industry. The purpose of the exercise was to assist the Belize sugar industry with the development of adaptive strategies to enhance its competitiveness following the reform of the EU sugar regime.

c. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The Institute prepared a framework document for IICA’s natural resource and environment management (NREM) strategy in the Caribbean Region. The strategy is informed by IICA’s Medium Term Plan (2006-2010), the hemispheric AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the Millennium Development Goals, insofar as the achievement of

economic growth, international competitiveness, equity and improved quality of life are largely dependent on the conservation and management of the environment and natural resources.

IICA supported the development of a comprehensive disaster management (CDM) strategy for the Caribbean, which was approved by the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) and, the relevant Council of Ministers of CARICOM.

d. Promoting Regional Integration

In an attempt to enhance the regional integration efforts, IICA provided support to the conceptualization, development and operations of The Alliance, which brings together in a single forum, the Ministers of Agriculture, the private sector and a range of other institutions supporting the agricultural and rural sector in the region, to discuss, debate and build consensus on issues of policy and strategy, as well as providing a platform to “showcase” aspects and advances in the region’s agricultural sector.

With the support of IICA, The Alliance facilitated the organization of stakeholders and their national chapters such as the Caribbean Agri-business Association (CABA), the Caribbean Council for Higher Education (CACHE), the Caribbean Network of Rural Women’s Producers (CANROP) and the Caribbean Agriculture Forum for Youth (CAFY). It

assists to highlight their importance and role in the agricultural and the rural sector and improved their visibility at the regional level.

A major contribution of the Alliance is the organization and celebration of the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), a major event that brings together the major stakeholders and networks in the sector, as well as showcasing specific aspects of agriculture in the region. In addition, the CWA facilitates one of the COTED meetings held jointly with the Alliance meeting, thereby strengthening policy linkages and coordination within the CARICOM framework.

In 2003, IICA formalized its support for the Alliance by signing a four-year Technical Cooperation Agreement with the CARICOM Secretariat (that was signed on behalf of the Alliance). The agreement provides in-kind and cash support (\$130,000/year) by IICA for the Alliance’s meetings and the implementation of various components of the Alliance’s work program.

The work of the Alliance resulted in the identification of Key Binding Constraints (KBCs) for the regional repositioning strategy. In 2004, IICA facilitated a regional policy workshop entitled “Developing Policies and Proposals for Alleviating Key Binding Constraints to Agriculture in the Caribbean” that led to the conceptualization of the Jagdeo Initiative and the preparation of a proposal entitled “Interventions to Alleviate the Key Binding Constraints to the Agricultural Sector in CARICOM Countries.”

IICA Office in Antigua and Barbuda



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Antigua and Barbuda

Julie-Ann Laudat¹

1. Introduction

Over the period covered by this report, the Institute supported a number of national programs and provided technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of rural communities and individuals in the public and private sectors to position themselves to deal with the challenges facing the agriculture sector in the new millennium. IICA consulted its clients and partners in Antigua and Barbuda to determine the needs of the agriculture sector, with a view to drawing up a National Agenda for its actions in the country. The work focused on two main areas: efforts to strengthen the various systems that support agricultural development, and the development of human capital. Training and education, improvement of information flows to the sector and assessment of the systems in place were the various channels used to achieve those goals. As a result of IICA's interventions, the country moved closer to achieving its objectives.


2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Antigua and Barbuda

IICA supported the implementation of the biannual Hemispheric Agenda as a mandate of the ministers of

agriculture for improving agriculture and rural life. The value of agriculture's true contribution to the growth and development of countries came into focus in the period 2002-2008. While lack of adequate data precluded the assessment of agriculture's true contribution to the economy of Antigua and Barbuda, the Institute facilitated the country's efforts to reposition the agriculture sector. The Institute provided technical assistance to the ministerial and alternate delegates in the run up to the three ministerial meetings held during the period. IICA also sponsored the participation of the ministers in the ministerial meetings. Antigua and Barbuda was represented at all three meetings - Panama 2003, Guayaquil 2005 and Guatemala 2007. These meetings were the forum at which the ministers determined the future course of agriculture, with the support of the ministerial delegates and national reports.

In 2003-2004, the President of Guyana put forward a proposal, now called the Jagdeo Initiative, in which he outlined some key binding constraints to the development of agriculture in the region. IICA promoted and supported the dissemination of information on this initiative and supported the country's actions in this regard. Individuals from both the private and public sectors improved their knowledge and understanding of the issues facing the sector through IICA publications on the topic. The Office provided support to enable representatives to attend several regional meetings on the Jagdeo Initiative. The acting Director of Agriculture attended the regional consultation "Consolidating Agricultural Information Systems

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in the Caribbean,” held in Trinidad in 2006. As follow-up, an agricultural officer attended the regional workshop “Building a Monitoring and Evaluation Agriculture Information System for Agro 2015 and Jagdeo Initiative,” which also took place in Trinidad in 2006, and the Media and Agricultural Policy Workshop held in October the same year, during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture in The Bahamas. The Institute also facilitated the participation of the Minister of Agriculture and a technical officer in the meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Agriculture, held in Jamaica.

The Office provided technical assistance and secretariat support to the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Wider Caribbean (The Alliance). Comprised of various private sector entities, the Forum of Ministers of Agriculture and other regional institutions, the Alliance is a true embodiment of regional and hemispheric integration. IICA provided support to the national constituents of the Alliance, namely, the Antigua and Barbuda Agricultural Forum for Youth, the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) and the Bethesda Rural Women Group, to develop and implement their work programs and to prepare projects for funding.

During the reporting period, through its hemispheric meetings of ministers of agriculture IICA developed the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, which formed the framework for the Institute’s actions in its member countries. IICA found creative ways to increase understanding of the plan and facilitated its dissemination, and held meetings with key technical officers to explain the plan and how it could be integrated into the work plan of the Ministry of Agriculture. The Agro-Matrix was also developed during this period as a tool for policy development, with two seminars being held to increase understanding of the matrix and how it captures the different dimensions of agriculture.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The outbreaks of avian influenza and mad cow disease have highlighted the importance of modernizing national agricultural health and food safety systems. Antigua and Barbuda is particularly vulnerable. Aside from being a small developing country, it is also a transit hub for air and sea traffic in the Caribbean and the flow of people and goods present numerous opportunities for the potential spread of diseases through humans, animals and plants. IICA supported the efforts to enhance the capacity of the agriculture health and food safety systems to meet these challenges, and to improve the capabilities of both public and private sector stakeholders for dealing with emergencies and emerging issues.

IICA developed a plan that outlined the framework required to deliver improved plant quarantine services to the country (Strategic Plan for Plant Protection in Antigua and Barbuda). In an effort to equip plant quarantine officers with the knowledge and skills required to respond to the increased demands of international trade, a plant quarantine workshop was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, with input from IICA and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). This effort was supported by other interventions aimed at strengthening plant quarantine services in the country, including a workshop entitled “Pests and Diseases of Citrus-Their Management and Control,” training in survey techniques for pests of quarantine importance and, in collaboration with the Caribbean Agriculture Research and Development Institute (CARDI), pest identification and management for selected crops. IICA also sponsored the participation of technical



officers in a Pest Risk Assessment workshop held in Trinidad and a citrus canker workshop in Trinidad.

To help IICA member countries comply with the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Institute collaborated in the implementation of a regional project - the Caribbean Agriculture and Fisheries Program - funded by the Eastern Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (EC-CARIFORUM). The project "Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services in the Caribbean" (SAQS) conducted a series of training workshops that greatly facilitated IICA's work in Antigua and Barbuda aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to comply with international agreements. This was directly in line with one of IICA's priority actions during the period. Both plant and animal health technicians at the Ministry of Agriculture and two private sector individuals benefited from this project. They took part in the following regional activities:

1. Plant health risk analysis workshop
2. Animal health risk analysis workshop
3. Regional plant quarantine workshop
4. Cost recovery mechanisms for agriculture quarantine workshop.

At the national level, IICA's actions greatly enhanced the capability of the Ministry of Agriculture to assess risks to the animal and plant health and food safety systems, and to improve the delivery of high quality quarantine services. This was achieved through a consultation entitled "SPS and Food Safety and Formulation of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Council." The Office provided technical assistance to the National Food Safety Committee as it held consultations to

discuss draft legislation on animal and plant health and food safety. This led to the establishment of the legal framework needed to modernize agricultural health and food safety systems in Antigua and Barbuda. The goal was to develop a framework for an integrated agricultural health and food safety agency that would cover all the different aspects involved in this area, thus making the system more efficient and providing better services to clients. This goal was further supported by a one-day consultation to develop an Emergency Preparedness Plan for Animal Health and the plant health emergency plan was revised. Furthermore, the Ministry of Agriculture was equipped with a computer system and software for risk analysis, which provided the machinery for technicians to assess pest risks to the country, using the skills learnt from their training in this area.

To help further strengthen the country's capacity to comply with international agreements, public sector officers in agriculture, trade and health increased their understanding and knowledge of the country's obligations stemming from such agreements by attending the March, June and October meetings of the WTO/SPS Committee from 2002 to 2008. The Institute provided them with assistance under the "SPS Initiative of the Americas," a project funded by IICA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). In separate but related actions, the Institute held a training activity in Trinidad to increase the participants' capacity to manage enquiry points for SPS properly and enable the country to meet its international obligations better; and sponsored the participation of a technical officer at the Ministry of Agriculture in the workshop "Dissemination of Software for Managing WTO Enquiry Points."

In collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture and the Pesticides Control Board (PCB), IICA hosted a meeting of project managers/chairmen of PCBs in Antigua entitled "Assistance to

Institutionalize Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) for Selected Commodities in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).” The project increased the economic competitiveness of the OECS through the production and trade of high quality food. The project was sponsored by IICA, the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC), the OECS PCBs and ministries of agriculture and River Doree Holdings (St. Lucia). As a result of this project, extension officers received training in GAPs to improve their technical expertise in this area, and the officers trained then held training sessions for farmers. The main beneficiaries of the project were farmers, extension officers, the Director of the Bureau of Standards and the Director of Agriculture, the latter as project manager.

The ability of food handlers to safely handle the food they offer for sale to the public was enhanced through a series of food safety training activities held in 2007 and 2008. This work was undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Central Board of Health. Over 4000 people received training and the safety of foods is expected to improve as a result.

To further promote the safety of food, IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture hosted the seventh (2002) and twelfth (2007) annual meetings of the Coordinating Group of Caribbean PCBs, held in Antigua. The PCBs regulate the importation, safe use and disposal of pesticides in the countries. IICA also provided technical advice to the national Pesticides Control Board for public awareness activities for the annual Pesticide Awareness Week, which takes place in September each year.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

The main focus of work in this area has been the building of the capacity and capability of local producers and processors to conduct competitive agribusinesses. The main priority actions in this area were efforts to provide agribusiness entrepreneurs with access to relevant information on the sector and an understanding of trade issues in the global market place, and to increase revenue streams for agribusiness enterprises.

The members of the Antigua and Barbuda Agro-processors Association enhanced their capacity to conduct their enterprises competitively thanks to the technical assistance and training provided to the group. Two workshops (Technical Barriers to Trade and Strategies for Survival of Agro-processing Enterprises in Antigua and Barbuda) were conducted in collaboration with the Chemistry and Food Technology Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. The facilitators were the IICA/Eastern Caribbean States (ECS) Representative and regional specialists, the Gilberts Agricultural and Rural Development Center (GARDC), the National Development Foundation (NDF), the OECS Export Development Unit, the Antigua and Barbuda Bureau of Standards and a number of individuals from the private sector. Both workshops looked at various aspects of the requirements of the market, the challenges and opportunities presented by trade liberalization, the CSME and standards for labeling and packaging. The findings of an IICA study entitled “Analysis of the Agro-Industrial Potential of Antigua and Barbuda” were also presented at the workshops. The report examined challenges to agro-processing, as well as opportunities and niche markets and the potential of various products. The agroindustrial entrepreneurs also enhanced their capacity to conduct competitive agribusinesses through training in food safety in agro-processing and good manufacturing practices,



and a strategic planning workshop. Through a partnership with CABA, facilitated by IICA, the Agro-processors Association was able to make significant progress with the process of becoming a legally registered group. As a registered entity, the group will be better able to access financing for its ventures.

The Institute supported and promoted agro-processors and their products through three competitions for the “IICA Most Outstanding Agro-processor Award,” held in 2006, 2007 and 2008 during the Annual Mango Festival. In 2006, the Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with several public and private sector partners, held the first Christian Valley Mango Festival. The main objectives of the festival were to promote greater utilization of mangoes and other fruits, and to showcase Christian Valley’s potential for agro-ecotourism. IICA provided technical advice on the planning committee for the festival and the processors’ competition, which have become annual events.

Individuals in the public and private sectors now have a better grasp of the nation’s commitments under international trade agreements and the input they can provide for the negotiations through training workshops. In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade, a seminar was held entitled “The WTO and the Implications for Agriculture in Antigua.” It included presentations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Two follow-up meetings were organized to prepare a list for the FTAA of products that Antigua and Barbuda regards as sensitive. IICA helped further enhance understanding of international agreements and how they impact the sector by holding a meeting for key technical officers at the Ministry of Agriculture, to pass on to them the knowledge needed to handle all the steps involved in achieving protection under TRIPS for three targeted crops. This was done

through dialogue with the Registrar of Intellectual Property in Antigua and Barbuda; the Technical Advisor on Intellectual Property/Agriculture to the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery; and the Consultant and Regional Coordinator of the Economic Development Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Through the establishment of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu in the Wider Caribbean (The Alliance), IICA provided a forum for discussion among the private sector, policymakers and regional institutions that support agricultural development. The Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA) is one of the components of the Alliance and a local chapter of CABA was launched in 2003. The President of CABA attended a meeting of the regional CABA held in Trinidad in 2003 and played an active role in the development of the CABA regional work plan. He also made a contribution to the annual meeting of CABA that took place during the Caribbean Week of Agriculture in Guyana. The local chapter has been working on increasing agricultural information flows to members of the agribusiness community, networking and endeavoring to influence policies for the sector. The latter was done by developing and disseminating a document entitled “CABA Looking Ahead to the Development of the Agribusiness Sector in Antigua and Barbuda.”

IICA supported the efforts of women and youth to enhance their skills and thus earn a more profitable living. This was achieved through a workshop entitled “Charting a Course to Higher Profits for Caribbean Entrepreneurs,” which equipped youths, agro-processors and producers with the skills needed to improve the management of farm enterprises. The training was part of a subregional project and a manual was produced for use in future training. Funding for the training was received

from the Caribbean Regional Inter-Scholarship Program of the United States Agency for International Development (CRISP/USAID).

The annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture has become an institution in the region and is now the premier event for showcasing agriculture in the region. IICA promoted the event and facilitated the participation of various representatives of the public and private sectors in the activities organized, including members of the youth forum and women's group. The Institute sponsored the participation of a Ministry of Agriculture technician and a farmer from Antigua in the Fifth Caribbean Week of Agriculture, held in St. Kitts, which included a workshop entitled "Agriculture and Tourism: Partners in Development." The main objective of the workshop was to share and exchange successes, experiences and lessons learned in the creation of agrotourism products and services, and to identify potential investment opportunities.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The focus in this area has been agribusiness entrepreneurs, especially youth and women, with improved technical capacity to create employment opportunities and increase their income earning capabilities. The local chapter of the Antigua and Barbuda Agriculture Forum for Youth was launched in 2003 and included a trade seminar, facilitated by the Ministry of Trade, entitled "Youths Facing the Challenges of Trade Liberalization and CSME," followed by a workshop on plant propagation techniques. IICA helped the group participate in several training workshops and subregional and regional meetings during the reporting period that strengthened the organization and its members' ability to make more money in

the sector. The workshop, held in St. Vincent during the Eighth Caribbean Week of Agriculture (2008), was entitled "Resource Mobilisation, Project Development and Management."

To develop the technical capacity to create employment opportunities and increase their income-earning capabilities, a group of women received technical assistance to form a group that was launched as the Bethesda Rural Women Group. The launch was marked by an Agro-festival in 2003, to celebrate World Food Day. Two years later, in 2005, the group was launched as the local chapter of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP). Since then, the group has organized training in dressmaking and breadmaking. IICA helped one member attend a strategic planning workshop held in St. Lucia and an institutional awareness workshop in Guyana. The main outcome of this workshop was the institutional strengthening of the participating groups.

Other agriculture sector groups assisted during this period include the Lettuce Growers Group, the Wadadli Herbs and Spices Cooperative, the Beekeepers Cooperative, the National Poultry Association and the Agro-processors Association. The training was designed to strengthen them and to develop strategies for their continuance and improved organization. Two workshops were held on group management and organization, which also included members of the Agricultural Forum for Youth. The Institute helped two members of the Small Ruminant Association attend a regional workshop in Barbados designed to develop the skills of the participants in various agro-processing enterprises using small ruminants, thereby expanding their income-earning opportunities.

In order to increase producer awareness of the issues affecting their livelihoods during the era of the globalization of markets



and the removal of barriers to trade, a workshop was held for members of the Wadadli Herbs and Spices Cooperatives entitled “Producers Facing the Challenges of Trade Liberalization and CSME.” IICA coordinated the activity with assistance from members of the CSME Unit of the Division of Trade, Ministry of Finance and the Economy. To further enhance the skills of producers in the sector and equip them to compete successfully in open markets, two project development workshops were held for farmers and agriculture technicians to enable them to develop better project proposals. Writing sound proposals will afford members of the agribusiness community greater access to financing for their enterprises.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Developing relevant skills and knowledge are necessary steps in the efforts to increase rural prosperity. Extension officers from several countries in the eastern Caribbean have developed their skills and strengthened their capabilities to deliver programs to farming communities on improved irrigation methods. In collaboration with CARDI, the Ministry of Agriculture, GARDC and the Government of Israel (MASHAV), IICA assisted with the coordination and logistics of two regional training workshops for extension officers, on pressurized irrigation technology and vegetable production. The training sessions lasted two weeks each and took place in Antigua. The facilitators of the workshop were from Israel and the training included field tours and demonstrations. Thanks to the activity, there is now a cadre of extension officers with improved technical abilities to assist farmers in their respective countries.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The sustainability of agriculture cannot be ensured unless the environment is managed in a manner that guarantees the livelihoods of future generations. As part of IICA’s mandate to promote the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and the prosperity of rural communities, training and support was provided to build capacity in sustainable production systems. IICA collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture in a conference entitled “Expanding Markets for Antigua and Barbuda Fresh Produce, Meeting Quality, Food Safety and Organic Production Standards.” Participants received training in improved crop production and the use of modern technology for organic production. Subsequently, an organic production group was formed. A number of meetings and workshops on organic production were conducted during the period, most notably an IICA/Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) - Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) project entitled “Diversification of Exports in the Caribbean through the Development of Organic Horticulture.” A demonstration plot for organic production was established and training in business management for organic producers conducted, to equip producers interested in organic production to understand the basic requirements of the system and to acquaint them with potential markets.

Another major intervention in the promotion of the sustainable management of the environment was a subregional workshop on organic fertilizer production and vermi-composting held in Antigua, focusing on soil regeneration for sustainable agriculture. Agribusiness entrepreneurs interested in or practicing organic production acquired new skills in this area through the training, which included participants from

three other islands. The workshop was a collaborative effort involving the Ministry of Agriculture, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Caribbean Development Bank and IICA. The facilitator for the training was from the China Agricultural University in Beijing.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA strengthened its relations with the following partners:

- The Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) has been an important partner in the provision of technical services to the agriculture and rural development sector of Antigua and Barbuda. An interagency cooperation activity with CARDI, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Gilbert Agricultural Rural Development Center (another partner in provision of technical services) and the Government of Israel (MASHAV) resulted in the successful coordination and implementation of two regional training workshops for extension officers held in Antigua, on pressurized irrigation technology and vegetable production.
- The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) is a valuable partner in the delivery of training to improve the agro-processing subsector. Through a series of training workshops, IICA enabled processors in Antigua and Barbuda to produce better quality products and manage their businesses more efficiently.

The joint efforts of the Venezuelan Consulate and Venezuelan Institute for Culture and Cooperation (IVCO) to improve

human capital are an important component of the actions to promote rural prosperity. Three students were awarded scholarships at the Simon Bolivar United World College in Venezuela with assistance from the Venezuelan Consulate and the Venezuelan Institute for Culture and Cooperation in Antigua. The students completed their training and are all now gainfully employed, two as agricultural science teachers in secondary schools and the other as a technical officer with the Veterinary and Livestock Division of the Ministry of Agriculture.

- The Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA), in collaboration with IICA, equipped producers and technicians to manage imported red fire ant by holding a seminar on the subject. Furthermore, the visit of bee experts contributed to the modernization of the apiculture system in Antigua and Barbuda. He provided technical assistance and training to beekeepers in the management of bee pests, especially varroa mite.
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and IICA, held a plant quarantine workshop to enhance the country's plant quarantine services and their ability to respond to the increased demands of international trade.

A project entitled "Strengthening and expanding rural income streams" was also carried out in collaboration with FAO. One agro-processor also increased her revenue stream after receiving training and some small equipment.

- The OECS Secretariat. Consumer demand for safe food led to an OECS Secretariat project funded by CPEC entitled "Assistance to Institutionalize Good Agricultural Practices



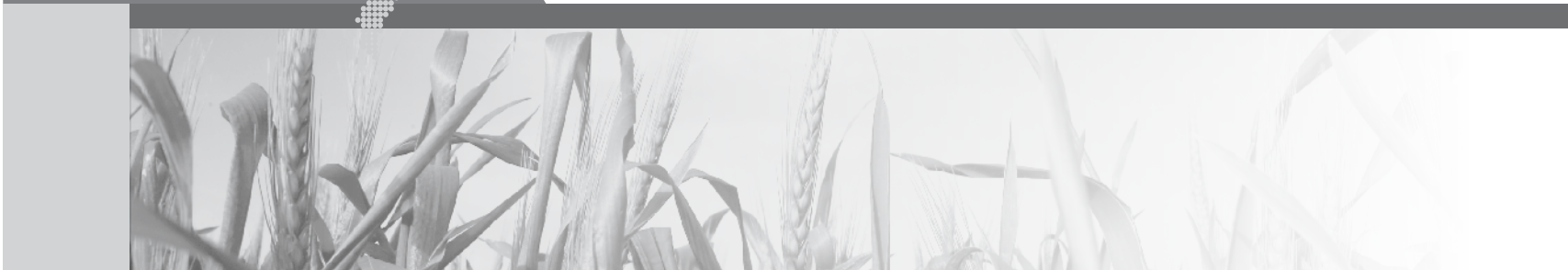
(GAPs) for Selected Commodities in the OECS.” The project strengthened the capacity of producers in IICA member countries to produce safe food and increase trade.

5. Modernization of the Office

In an effort to improve the image and efficiency of the Institute’s operations, the staff improved their ability to deliver high quality presentations to clients through training in multimedia presentations received at the GARDC. The staff has been able to use the skills acquired to train and pass on information by means of multimedia presentations to sector stakeholders. In addition, in the second half of 2007 the Office moved to new premises. In its improved and more comfortable working environment, the staff is performing better and providing enhanced, more efficient services to its partners and clients. Meetings are conducted in a better environment that stimulates creativity. The new Office has greatly enhanced the image that our clients and partners have of the Institute.

The purchase of office equipment and the upgrading of office furnishings have also improved the Institute’s image. This has also made for a more amicable working environment for staff, clients and partners and improved the output of documents and correspondence produced by the Office, as well as technical cooperation services.

IICA Office in The Bahamas



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in The Bahamas

Marikis N. Alvarez¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the achievements of IICA in The Bahamas during the period 2002-2008. A summary of the results achieved between 2002 and 2008 is presented for each strategic area, consistent with the institutional wording of the 2006-2010 MTP and the National Agenda for Technical Cooperation.

The results of the various initiatives have helped producers gain confidence in their approach to agribusiness. New linkages have been formed between distributors and field producers. These linkages and collaboration have helped improve the function of the internal produce market. The model is comprehensive in scope and includes a range of produce, and different production alternatives with different technologies. The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR) has put in place supportive policies and, with Bahamas Agricultural Industrial Cooperation (BAIC) providing equipment and IICA furnishing technical support, a public-private sector partnership is growing.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in The Bahamas

In 2006, through the national consultation process, our clients effectively articulated their priorities, which supplement and/or dovetail with the Medium Term Plan and goal-driven strategic plans.

Decision makers have participated in three consecutive Caribbean Week of Agriculture functions. They have also attended the Center for Leadership in Agriculture, where the Director General highlighted key challenges and new responsibilities for the Institute and governments. The decision makers and their delegation took part in high-level meetings and visited technology-generating sites of interest.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources also initiated the revitalization of agriculture in The Bahamas by reintroducing the annual agricultural trade show (Agri-Expo). The last two Agri-Expos have highlighted the national potential for import substitution and for improving food security.

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3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

In 2006, IICA collaborated with MAMR to develop guidelines on emergency animal health issues, in support of agricultural health, which were formally discussed by the ministry's professionals. The Institute continued to provide logistical support to the national and international meetings on sanitary and phytosanitary issues. IICA collaborated with a core group of past participants in the meetings on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) held in Geneva, in order to consolidate the focal group on SPS issues in the country. IICA contributed to the guidelines on emergency animal health issues, one of the Ministry's support documents for agricultural health, which was formally discussed by the ministry's professionals during the planning meeting in 2006. A request has been made to update this document to include preparedness for avian influenza (AI). IICA/Bahamas continued to collaborate with the ministry to facilitate information access.

IICA supported the participation of 15 participants in eight SPS meetings held in Geneva. The Institute has also hosted national follow-up meetings. In addition to SPS committee meetings, IICA supported the participation of ministry staff in the AI/OIE World Animal Health Information System Meeting.

In 2008, The Bahamas was the first Caribbean country to implement the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument for sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS). The Common Vision Session was attended by all relevant stakeholders. It was supported by a full contingent of technical

specialists from IICA and USDA. The stakeholders arrived at a consensus on major challenges and priorities, as well as the definition of a strategic vision.

The principal result was the creation of a focal point committee representing three ministries and the private sector. This committee has agreed to review existing legislation from different ministries as a first step towards developing draft legislation for a standards bureau. Several meetings have been held and key issues and strategy discussed and agreed.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

In 2002, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Local Government (MAFLG) and the poultry and pork subsectors expressed a desire to improve quality standards by taking steps to obtain Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) status. To accomplish this goal, a multisectoral committee was established on which IICA was represented. IICA conducted a study to help these industries move towards HACCP compliant status, with collaboration from MAFLG staff and producers and processors from the industries. The study documented the agricultural health status of the poultry and pork industries and put forward recommendations designed to lead to HACCP compliant status in these industries.

In addition, the committee designed an implementation matrix based on the report and made a presentation to the poultry committee, which was chaired by the MAFLG. The importance of the result was that a plan of action existed that was implementable. The matrix could be used by the MAFLG in discussion with potential donors to determine and rationalize the funding for the various activities.

Within the framework of “Facilitating Competitiveness and Global Trade,” a panel discussion involving both the Representative and the Regional Director was aired. The topic discussed was “The Repositioning of Agriculture in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).” The Institute was also involved in efforts to improve productivity in selected industries. To that end, proposals were developed and the methodology documented for undertaking a commodity chain analysis (CCA) of the tomato and cascarilla (Croton eluteria) industries.

A methodology for commodity chain analysis was adapted in 2003 from work carried out at IICA for use in The Bahamas. This methodology was employed in conducting a CCA for the tomato industry. The CCA was documented in 2004 and formed the basis of a pre-feasibility summary of the Bottled Tomato Project that was submitted to the MAFLG. The summary was taken into account in securing funding under the 2004/2005 budget for further work on the tomato project by the MAFLG.

The CCA for tomatoes was updated in 2005. The process, methodology and terms of reference (TOR) for conducting a situation and outlook study for the agribusiness sector were submitted to BAIC and agreed to. BAIC has also requested IICA's support for the development of profiles of industrial activity utilizing indigenous raw material and targeting the vast tourism market. The Institute secured the services of the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) and preliminary discussions were held with all parties, including the Ministry of Tourism. The Institute co-sponsored two events in this area in 2005. They were the Second Annual Abaco Business Outlook-2005 on the island of Abaco, at which a paper was presented entitled “The Prospects for Agri-business in The Bahamas,” and the

Eighth BahamArts Festival, the theme of which was “Utilizing Our Natural Resources.”

In 2006, IICA/Bahamas hosted two exhibitions, participated in radio talk shows and supported agribusiness training for members of the Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association (BAPA) and cooperative agents and leaders. Two workshops, one on new legislation for cooperative societies and the other on regulations and model by-laws, were conducted for cooperative officers and senior officers of the Bahamas Cooperative League Limited (BCLL). Following the training, the recommendations and other follow-up activities were implemented. In partnership with BAIC, support was also provided for the arts and crafts women's cooperative for training events and a trade show. Visits were made to the Family Islands to encourage the small ruminant producers and bottle tomato cooperatives to consolidate their operations and adopt an improved processing model for their cooperatives. A scaled-down version of the original plan has been agreed to and progress made to start. Regional support was obtained from the IICA Office in Miami, which provided a brief during the CWA about the requirements for fresh products exported to the United States.

The Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) was a significant event for agriculture undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR) in partnership with the Alliance and IICA in the Bahamas. Decision makers were able to gain a better idea of the scope of key issues from a regional prospective and get a first hand view of a small sample of the range of value-added products available in the region. In addition to producers and decision makers, young people and women involved in agriculture, the fisheries sector and Bahamian farmers contributed to the event. More than 200 people participated, representing 22 countries and 14 different organizations. The outcome of IICA's technical cooperation



was the establishment of agribusiness linkages among regional producers, while the lessons from the CWA were applied in the reestablishment of the National Agricultural Expo 2007.

The CWA presented an opportunity for some participants to visit representative farms and the fish industry in Abaco (Family Island). The last two days of the week were given over to the trade show and a culinary contest among chefs in The Bahamas, including a fish recipe competition and a demonstration of marine products of The Bahamas. The range of arts and crafts from Haiti and value-added products from Jamaica attracted a lot of attention. The trade show offered participants a good opportunity to learn about new aspects and products from the Caribbean region. After this interaction with regional CANROP members, the Bahamas National Chapter was set up (for women producers involved in arts and crafts).

In 2007, IICA assisted the Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association (BAPA) and its partners, BCLL and the Department of Co-operative Societies, to develop an agrotourism linkage project. This project succeeded in obtaining a Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) grant from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to encourage the transformation of producers' groups into consolidated clusters for competitiveness.

This pilot agrotourism project, which is being implemented by BAPA in partnership with BCLL, BAIC and IICA, supports private sector capacity building and clustering, to create vertical and horizontal linkages for competitiveness. Both the public and private sectors will be contributors. The objective of this project is to strengthen the linkages between the tourism sector and domestic agriculture production. In pursuit of this objective, the program will support the linking of producers into viable clusters, based on distinctive products related to

the comparative advantage of each Family Island niche in crops, livestock and services.

The program has helped participating farmers match their production to the projected demand of the hotels, restaurants and other related markets, while simultaneously contributing to sustaining livelihoods and food security. Cluster formation has been strengthened through training, the development of quality assurance systems, the implementation of good agricultural practices, risk management and the formalization of partnerships between agribusiness and tourism. The work drew on the lessons on competitiveness learned from the IDB-supported "Adopt a Farm" program and the program "Strengthening Market Access Opportunities for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the Caribbean Agri-Food Industry," and local vertically integrated market channels already established in The Bahamas.

The technical backstopping for this project was provided by a multidisciplinary team spearheaded by IICA, working in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Ministry of Tourism, BAIC, BCLL and the Agrotourism Center in Barbados. The team also included national officers (extension agents, agronomists), regional specialists and the other regional centers of excellence.

In partnership with BAIC, IICA provided support to the Arts and Crafts Women's Cooperative for a tradeshow and the launching of the Bahamas Chapter of the Caribbean Network for Rural Women Producers (CANROP).

The project design and preparation workshop was implemented with a team effort from the Bahamas Agricultural Producers Association, Bahamas Cooperative League Limited, the sustainable tourism entrepreneurial management and marketing (STEMM) project, the BAIC and the College of the

Bahamas (COB). They all selected participants and contributed resource persons to make presentations and share experiences, which enriched the workshop training. This training was well received and participants from organizations and cooperatives from the Family Islands that the training would help to strengthen their organizations. The training helped to clarify the procedures and process implemented to identify potential high-risk areas for better management and to adopt good practices.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Within this priority area, the emphasis has shifted to the adoption of the territorial approach as the methodology for empowering communities and improving the standard of living of rural populations.

The BAIC service centers, the MAMR network of packinghouses, the Gladstone Road Agricultural Research Station (GRAC) (which supplies piglets and animal feed services) and the Fish and Farm Store at Potters Cay (supplier of inputs) provide the Family Island communities with important services. This enables IICA to collaborate in market research and agribusiness service design and information sharing. For the past year, IICA has been collaborating with the Department of Cooperatives and the cooperative league to revitalize the Bottle Tomato Project with the women's cooperative group in Eleuthera. Providing the needed technical and managerial support and information will strengthen the Family Island businesses and communities. Over 500 artisans were trained by BAIC to fashion straw hats, bags, caps, mats, belts, dolls and other interesting items (for example, a combination of shell and straw made into wristbands). These are vibrant crafts for the

Family Islanders. There are several high-potential activities in which various Family Islands continue to have small but strong positions. These include small ruminants (sheep and goats), sod and vegetable production. IICA has provided training in project development and good agricultural practices to these target groups.

A weeklong activity was implemented under a partnership spearheaded by the Department of Cooperatives, working in close collaboration with IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, the Bahamas Cooperative League Ltd. and BAPA. The theme of the activity was "Building Capacity in the Agriculture Business Sector." The sustainable rural development and agribusiness specialists were the resource persons for the six days of capacity building exercises, while leaders from the various partnering groups also made important contributions.

Five workshop sessions were completed, on the following topics: 1) New Regulations and Issues in Supervision; 2) Agribusiness Entrepreneurs; 3) Group Management Forum; 4) Entrepreneurship and Investment in Agribusiness; and, 5) BAPA and Cooperatives Council strategies for group strengthening.

The joint Sustainable Rural Development (SRD) and Agribusiness Program mission from IICA was applauded by the partners and other participants as successful due to its impact in the following:

- The progress made with the draft cooperative regulations, which are now awaiting the Cabinet's approval;
- The workshops helped to clarify the regulations, which had implications for business success through closer working linkages among agro-enterprises, agribusiness



organizations and financial institutions, and the focus on developing core business ideas and proper modeling. This has paved the way for developing appropriate business plans and further training;

- Greater understanding of the impact that “new” technologies can have on local production of fruits and vegetables and the willingness of small farmers to invest in the technology, in order to gain a competitive market share in the BS\$300 million food market;
- Highlighting the need to work with successful models already operational, such as Goodfellow Farms, a successful agrotourism farm involved in direct marketing;
- An understanding of the importance of stakeholder analysis, which enables small producers and processors to access critical technical support and improve capacity for resource mobilization;
- The invaluable guidance, strategies and processes provided for improved group leadership, governance and effectiveness in delivering services to their members;
- The quality and relevance of the presentations; and,
- The opportunities provided to business managers and entrepreneurs for resolving technical and pressing operational problems.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Training workshops with school teachers, students and farmers resulted in students and teachers from New Providence and the Family Islands learning more about the importance of agriculture and the wide range of opportunities for them in agriculture, including hydroponics.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR), IICA conducted training on clean seed production of sweet potato cuttings. The introduction of an improved seed production system and other new aspects of agriculture were promoted. This has resulted in the accelerated production of sweet potato and cassava as a food security initiative.

IICA provided resource persons for training activities on greenhouse technology and hydroponics (for farmers and teachers). The rapid multiplication training was done on Cat Island and New Providence. A tissue culture facility has been established by the private sector at Lucayan Tropical.

The Finn H. Damtoft Agricultural Library was established in 2001, named in honor of the Representative who opened the IICA Office in The Bahamas in 1998. The library is managed in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources and has links with regional and international data banks (e.g., SIDALC, Agricola).

As part of the modernization initiative, the library renovation project started with the idea of reaching more people and becoming a more functional, user-friendly area. The upgrade at the library has facilitated a larger number of training activities and has been accepted into the Ministry of Education’s library system. In 2005, there were ninety visitors to the library. In 2006, the figure fell dramatically, increasing again slightly in 2007. The library usage figure has now increased to 165 persons. This increase is the result of school visits, seminars and workshops (SPS, OIE and CODEX) held at the library. Information requests at the Library: backyard farming, students doing agriculture projects (primary school and college), potential farmers for livestock and crops and hydroponics.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

A project developed for the North Abaco Fisheries Cooperative in 2004 was approved and funded by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) in 2005. The Institute monitored its implementation and prepared and submitted the required reports.

In 2006, the use of sustainable fishing techniques was promoted with the North Abaco fishing cooperative, in collaboration with the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) and MAMR.

IICA continued to work with North Abaco Fishing Cooperative (NAFC) to promote the use of sustainable fishing techniques. This is a collaborative initiative involving the NAFC, CFNI and MAMR. Having recognized the importance of using environmentally friendly, wooden slat traps and increasing awareness of the need to safeguard the marine environment, the NAFC remains committed to ensuring that its members engage in activities that are economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound.

Training workshops were held with the North Abaco Fishing Cooperative in Fox Town. The cooperative has initiated the process of constructing a fish processing facility. It plans to improve marketing of fish products and provide a series of complementary services to its members. The services will include ice distribution, packaging, input supplies and distribution services. Technical support was provided by IICA to facilitate the development of the proposal for the fish processing facility. The IDB has approved this proposal for an MIF grant.

The Grand Bahama Farmers Agricultural Co-operative Society Ltd. had discussed several expansion scenarios and approached the government for additional lands for the expansion program. The members agreed that a strategic plan was needed to better position the society and clarify the long-term goal. They completed the strategic planning process. The plan was based on the result of a two-stage, strategic planning exercise carried out in collaboration with BAPA, BAIC and IICA. The strategic planning exercise identified the following major priorities: development of business plans, technical training and assistance, organizational strengthening and acquisition of equipment and labor.

In 2008, within the framework of sustainable management of natural resources, BAIC and the Ministry of the Environment solicited support from IICA to address the issue of the improved management of pine forests in The Bahamas. In order to provide a proper response to this request, IICA's Director of Natural Resources completed a rapid assessment of requirements for a feasibility study.

The natural forest of The Bahamas consists of *Pinus Caribaeabahemensis*, which plays a strategic role in the ecosystem. It provides a watershed for the freshwater available, permits carbon sequestration and maintains soil biodiversity. It was suggested that the productivity of the forests could be enhanced by introducing management practices. Project profiles have been developed for consideration by the ministries and models of by-laws/legislation for forest governance provided.

A major impact has been the growing improvement of the clustering of cooperative groups of producers. The fish group has successfully obtained an MIF grant to strengthen the group and to transition from subsistence to an organized business model. There is renewed interest in sustainably managing The Bahamas pine forests.

IICA Office in **Barbados**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Barbados

Joseph Peltier¹ and Damien Hinds²

1. Introduction

At the start of the current administration, through dialogue with the national authorities, private sector, academia and civil society, IICA developed a National Agenda for Technical Cooperation in line with the Institute's new mandate. That mandate placed strong emphasis on transparency and accountability, and on the transformation of the agricultural sector into an agrifood sector, taking into account the full dynamic of linkages between farm-to-table activities and procedures. There was a shift in the strategic areas under which activities were executed between 2002 and 2003-2005, and a further shift for the period 2006-2010. This report summarizes the achievements of the IICA Office in Barbados for the period 2002-2008. After first looking at the repositioning of agriculture in Barbados throughout the same period, a summary of results is presented for each strategic area covered by the National Cooperation Agenda.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Barbados

IICA established the Agrotourism Linkages Centre in 2002, based on the recognition of the complementarity among agriculture, rural spaces and tourism, and the need to develop intersectoral linkages as an essential component of development strategies. The Centre's first action was to appoint an Agro-tourism Linkages Committee, charged with the task of developing projects that promote such linkages.

IICA assisted the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in updating its commitments stemming from the implementation of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the Jagdeo Initiative, and has since continued to support the MOA's preparations for regional and hemispheric ministerial meetings. The Office supplies background materials for the meetings and conducts a national survey highlighting the performance and perceptions of the farming community. The Institute also supported the MOA, specifically its Planning Unit, through the implementation of a workshop on the use of the Agro-Matrix as a methodology for planning and evaluating agro-rural development.

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3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Due to the importance of agricultural health and food safety to the population at large, IICA has always offered support to Barbados in this strategic area. In recent years, this has included:

- Provision of technical assistance and strategic direction as a member of the national committee, coordinated by the MOA and including the ministries of health, commerce, consumer affairs and business development, to establish the National Agricultural Health and Food Control Authority (NAHFCA). The establishment of NAHFCA will allow Barbados to achieve three critical objectives, namely: 1) to meet national demands related to food safety concerns; 2) to ensure the safety of tourism-related products; and, 3) to fulfill obligations under the agreements on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). To date, IICA has supported the committee with the preparation of a concept paper for the establishment of the NAHFCA and is awaiting Cabinet approval to proceed. The Barbados government has since secured funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) that will enable it to implement the provisions of the NAHFCA, including testing laboratories, the enabling legislation and regulations;
- Assistance to the Barbados government in fulfilling its commitments under the WTO/SPS agreement for the past six years, by providing funding to enable the country to attend the bi-annual WTO/SPS meetings in Geneva;
- Building the capacity of MOA officers by supporting their participation at regional workshops on plant and animal health and pest risk analysis under an EU-funded “Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Systems (SAQS)” project that ran from 2002-2004, as well as training in pesticide residue analysis in Canada, supported by IICA Canada;
- Supporting the Barbados National Standards Institute (BNSI) by having representation on the WTO National Codex Committee. This committee has commented on several aspects of food standards in Barbados, including the Food Hygiene Code and standards governing the production, processing, labeling and marketing of organically produced foods. IICA is also currently the chair of the Regional Technical Committee for Foods, under the aegis of the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ);
- Building the capacity of the private sector to mitigate any possible barriers to trade following the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York in 2001, by hosting a “Sensitization and Information Seminar” in conjunction with the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation and the MOA, as it related to U.S. Public Law 107-188: Public Health and Bio-Terrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002. As follow up to this action, the Office facilitated a seminar hosted by the Barbados Private Sector Trade Team (BPSTT) to discuss the impact of this legislation on Barbadian businesses in greater depth;
- Partnering with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to develop the Barbados National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan (NIPPP) for Avian Influenza;

- Building the capacity of targeted institutions by hosting refresher courses on CODEX Alimentarius and World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standards, for the benefit of government and private-sector stakeholders;
- A Veterinary Epidemiology Surveillance Project (VEP) launched to strengthen animal disease epidemiological surveillance capabilities in Barbados (a veterinarian assigned to the MOA is currently attached to this project);
- Assistance in determining the effectiveness of the SPS system by conducting an information gathering exercise under the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) project;
- Supporting the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in evaluating the operations of its Priority Solidarity Fund (FSP) in Barbados, which since 2006 has funded the activities of the Caribbean Animal Health Network (CaribVET); and,
- Building the capacity of MOA Officers, farmers and the hospitality sector on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), having completed videos for the English version of the HACCP course for the IICA Distance Learning Centre. MOA extension officers have been able to use the training videos to train farmers and agro-processors in the field.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Since 2002, IICA has worked in this strategic area continuously. The Institute had given priority to the development of

agrotourism as a strategy, given Barbados' predominant dependence on tourism, to diversify the island's agriculture while seeking to increase the relative importance of the sector and its contribution to the GDP, and at the same time improving the standard of living of agricultural entrepreneurs.

Under the Office's agrotourism program, the majority of the actions undertaken were facilitated by an OAS-sponsored, three-year (2006-2008) project costing US\$444,000, entitled "Strengthening the Tourism Sector through linkages to the Agricultural Sector." This project was regional in scope and involved seven countries, including Barbados, with the IICA Office in Barbados being the implementing agency.

During the period 2002-2006, the main achievement of the Office's agrotourism program was the leading role it played in the establishment of an Agro-tourism Centre and a National Agro-tourism Linkages Committee, comprising the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MAR); the Ministry of Tourism (MoT); the Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS); the National Cultural Foundation (NCF), the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC); and IICA. This committee was charged with shaping an agrotourism agenda for the island and planning activities that would lead to the establishment of agrotourism initiatives. Since its inception in 2002, the Committee has:

- Hosted an annual Plantation Breakfast to promote the culinary diversity of the Caribbean. This has become one of the main attractions of AgroFest (the annual agricultural exhibition), featuring the tastes of Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Guyana;
- Raised awareness of the use of local produce in the preparation of meals that enhance health and wellbeing.



The first year of the OAS-sponsored project focused on the execution of baseline studies of agrotourism enterprises in Barbados. Achievements in this regard included:

- Preparation of an inventory of agrotourism initiatives undertaken, with the initiatives categorized as being culinary, farm based or related to health and wellness;
- Publication of market-demand studies for specific crops;
- Publication of a document on success stories in agrotourism;
- Collection and dissemination of sample trade data among agrotourism practitioners, wholesalers and retailers and farmers and researchers;
- Design of agro-trade software; and,
- Documentation of these initiatives and preparation and dissemination of a promotional video.

The second year of the project concentrated on the business development of agrotourism enterprises. In this regard, IICA:

- Developed a national strategy and plans of action for agrotourism development in Barbados and the Caribbean Region; and prepared investment profiles and business plans on behalf of two entrepreneurs for agrotourism sites in Newcastle, St. John and Airy Hill, St. Joseph, respectively;
- Linked the respective investors with the Barbados Tourism Authority and potential funding sources;

- Presented the profiles at a regional investment forum together with 12 other profiles from the Caribbean Region, as they had good potential for success;
- Preparation of three manuals: “Cultivating Agrotourism: A guide for establishing Agrotourism Resources Centres in the Caribbean,” “Farmer/Hotel Partnership Tool Kit: A Practical Guide for Farmers and Chefs,” and “How to Guide: Developing the Culinary Tourism Product,” to assist entrepreneurs in making decisions for their agrotourism enterprises; and,
- Linked farmers with six hotels in Barbados to promote trade between the agricultural and hospitality sectors, which has resulted in increased use of local produce by that sector.

In an effort to create a more sustainable framework for agrotourism development in Barbados, the third year focused on developing community-based tourism. In this regard, IICA:

- Developed a community engagement strategy for Rock Hall, St. Thomas (the first free black village in Barbados) that provided a framework for mobilizing the poor, rural community in identifying the actions needed to increase incomes and food production, using the territorial approach;
- Created and launched an active Caribbean agrotourism website and portal to enable information to be continuously uploaded and accessed on all agrotourism activities in the region;
- Streamlined the allocation of partnering agencies in order to determine which agencies would be responsible

for particular policy actions to foster the development of agrotourism enterprises; and,

- Presented the results achieved over the three-year period at an accountability seminar and agreed, with the partners and the OAS, to develop an additional three-year project to include the remaining countries in the region.

During this period, IICA developed a strategy for the promotion of trade linkages between the agriculture and tourism sector in Barbados, with funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat. A diagnostic study prepared by regional consultants AGRICO was able to establish the baseline status of agrotourism-related business in Barbados that would lead to the implementation of a pilot farm-hotel trade partnership.

In the area of culinary tourism, IICA supported the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA) in promoting and staging an annual “Taste of Barbados” event, at which up to seven farmers and farmer’s organizations were partnered with hotel restaurants in the Best Big Bajan Bar-B-Que competition. Launched in 2006, this competition has since seen some of the farmer/hotel partnerships sustained.

Additionally, IICA prepared a catalogue of agrotourism products and services in the region with funds granted by the CDB that made it possible to promote regional goods and services and encourage networking within the region.

It is worth noting that over 20 actions were completed in Barbados under the agrotourism program, ranging from training in good agricultural practices (GAPs) to facilitate business between farms and the hospitality sector, to the preparation of two investment profiles for the development of agrotourism sites, resulting in:

- Increased trade in agricultural goods and services for the tourism sector and improved access to tourism marketing and promotion programs;
- Partnerships established between communities and the tourism industry;
- The introduction of new and unique agrotourism products and services, leading to an expanded and diversified tourism product mix beyond the triple “S” (Sun, Sea and Sand);
- Improvement in awareness and capability of stakeholders to comply with international tourism, safety and service standards;
- The development and promotion, along with targeted partners, of the utilization of local Blackbelly lamb by the hospitality and food service sectors;
- The branding of the Blackbelly Sheep as a signature product of Barbados and, working with targeted partners, the development of a logo that has been adopted as the official logo of the Barbados Blackbelly Sheep and is to be recognized as the intellectual property of Barbados;
- Supporting the development of the value-added potential of the Blackbelly Sheep industry by identifying the possible artisanal options for using the traditional waste of the carcass (i.e., the skins, hooves and horns of the sheep);
- The development of a Commodity-Chain Analysis and Action-Oriented Dialogue (CADIAC) Approach as a means of identifying critical issues affecting the competitiveness of the subsector;



- Initiating a two-month pilot project involving two of Barbados' top hotels, Sandy Lane and Coral Reef, to critically assess the challenges inherent in securing sustainability in the hotel-agriculture supply chain; and,
- The conducting of a study that identified major constraints to sustainability, including low levels of production to satisfy the potential demand by the hospitality sector for agricultural produce, as well as the island's level of agricultural production. The demand survey, which was disseminated to partners and stakeholders, was conducted for approximately one third of the hotels and restaurants on the island. It cited lack of consistency, availability and high prices as the main reasons for the hospitality sector's limited use of local produce. The island's main farming organization (BAS) used the results of the study to streamline a strategy for negotiating with key buyers, including hotels and supermarkets, to increase the presence of local produce on their menus and shelves.
- A framework was established for the development of a Commodity Distribution System to enable the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (BADMC) to restructure the marketing of locally produced commodities;
- Collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank to prepare a strategic plan for the development of an agro-processing facility on behalf of the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWIA), as that premier women's group has outgrown cottage operations since it secured major markets in Bermuda and Belize; and,
- Generation of an additional income stream for AWIA members by training them to produce smoked chicken and pork to meet growing local demand for these products.

Additional results to promote trade and competitiveness included:

- Increased capacity of small vegetable farmers in greenhouse technology, thanks to the facilitating of study exchanges to Dominica, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago;
- Farmers in Barbados linked with fresh produce imported into Canada, through a study exchange visit;
- The Barbados Herbal Business Association (BHBA) was set up in collaboration with the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), in order to identify business opportunities in the subsector;

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on Territorial Approach

Within this priority area, the emphasis has shifted since 2006 to the adoption of the territorial approach as the methodology for empowering communities and improving the standards of living of rural populations. In this regard, IICA:

- Enhanced the capacity of stakeholders and staff by hosting a visit by IICA/Peru in 2007, which made a presentation on the successful implementation of the territorial approach methodology in the Huaura region of Peru. The IICA team was accompanied by the children of the band and orchestra from Huaura that were created following IICA

Peru's territorial intervention. As immediate follow-up to this action, IICA and the MOA identified the Rock Hall Community, the first free village in Barbados, as a target community for the implementation of this methodology. In 2008, a Community Engagement Strategy Report was prepared under the OAS Agro-Tourism Project and several recommendations made. Interaction with members of the community (including community leaders and the Member of Parliament for the area) led to the identification, for future development, of an agri-tour at a large, high-tech pig farm in the community, and a tour or facility that encapsulates the heritage of Rock Hall;

- Participated in a series of town hall meetings hosted by the Rural Development Commission (RDC) throughout rural Barbados to refine its role in promoting the development of the rural sector. At those meetings, IICA articulated the importance of agrotourism to rural development as well as the preservation of agricultural land for its productive, as well as aesthetic, features. This partnership resulted in the revision of a draft rural development strategy;
- Assisted the RDC in identifying opportunities in support of rural enterprises targeted at women and youth producers, by sitting on a financing subcommittee;
- Helped the MOA to identify the principal constraints which farmers' organizations face in Barbados by designing a questionnaire that sought to elicit from the farming community their productive and technical capacities, their needs and constraints to their operations;
- Collaborated with the CDB's Caribbean Technical Consultancy Services (CTCS) Programme to provide technical support to AWIA for the formulation of its strategic plan. This plan has provided AWIA with the

technical analysis it needs to establish an agro-processing facility that will handle the additional throughput for its production of preserves, sauces, jams and jellies; and,

- Strengthened the capacity of the two local professionals at IICA and four AWIA members, in partnership with the CTCS program, through training in costing and pricing for medium, small and micro-enterprises.

The Institute was also an inaugural member of a network of bilateral and multilateral donors that also includes the CDB, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNICEF, OAS, CIDA, UWI, PAHO, CPDC and the British High Commission. The objective of the network is to assist civil society organizations in Barbados, and in other OECS countries, in building the capacity to conceptualize and manage environmental and sustainable livelihood projects.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

In this strategic area, IICA Barbados has played a seminal role in the promotion of greenhouse and complementary water harvesting technologies as a means of ensuring a more consistent supply of some of the most popular fruits and vegetables in Barbados. In this regard, IICA:

- Collaborated with the RDC to erect a commercial size greenhouse (30' x 100') and a 17,000-gallon ferro-cement tank for a small, landless farmer, on land leased by the Barbados Government under its Land for the Landless program. This result stimulated private investment of some US\$2,500,000 in three acres of greenhouses, the establishment of two research greenhouses at MOA headquarters, and breaking ground on a new government project where 12 greenhouses were equipped with



auxiliary water storage reservoirs. This project is designed to attract young people, offering training in preproduction, production, harvest and post harvest operations. It is being coordinated by the MOA with support from IICA, an integral component of the project;

- Developed a study in partnership with CDB, FAO and the MOA to evaluate the state of greenhouse technology, with a view to improving greenhouse systems and the potential for the adoption of rainwater harvesting technologies on the island;
- Planned and implemented a project on the grounds of the St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church designed to demonstrate that, with simple systems in front or back yards, households can produce significant levels of fruits and vegetables and hence reduce their food bill. The project utilized a small, convenient, 15' x 15' greenhouse, irrigated using rainwater channeled off the roof of a nearby school into two 1000-gallon tanks, and a 10' x 4' grow-box system using concrete blocks to create an enclosure filled with soil and compost. The project has trained parishioners and other families to produce a wide range of fruits and vegetables at their own homes, provided them with access to appropriate technologies, helped them to increase disposable incomes and generate savings from selling surplus production and encouraged them to share information and expertise on backyard production. Partners in the project include IICA, the Church, FAO, CARDI, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados (HSFB), the Barbados Diabetes Association and the Kiwanis Club of Bridgetown;
- Supported Harrison College, the premier secondary school on the island, in the establishment of a training greenhouse annexed to the science block at the school;
- Materially supported the 4H Foundation of Barbados for the erection of their training greenhouse at the Pine Basin; and,
- Disseminated information to the public by setting up demonstration greenhouse models at AgroFest and an exhibition hosted by the Ministry of Environment.

e. **Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment**

In this strategic area, IICA's main results revolved principally around its promotion of organic farming practices. Here, the Institute's main achievements included:

- Providing strong support to the MOA in designing a National Organic Plan and thereby establishing an organic agenda for Barbados. The three main components of the agenda included the establishment of the legislative framework to govern organic production, the creation of a policy environment that facilitates the production and marketing of organic goods and the research, training and certification needed to promote the transition to this form of farming, and compliance to standards. To date, the MOA has an agronomist leading organic research within its Agronomy Unit and draft national standards have been crafted governing the production and marketing of organic goods;
- Building the capacity of the island's organic group, the Organic Growers and Consumers Association (OGCA) by mounting a basic Organic Training Course through its Distance Learning Center that was made compulsory for those wishing to become producers and members of

the organization; obtaining a donation of a computer to assist the group in designing an organic audit trail and in their management; and conducting a needs analysis of the group to aid their strategic management;

- Initiating national and regional dialogue on organic agriculture by organizing a three-day regional symposium entitled “A New Vision for Agriculture: Organic Production - The Healthy Alternative,” with support from the British High Commission, UNDP, FAO, MOA and the OGCA. Some 13 member countries and 87 growers and practitioners participated from both the public and private sectors. Technical presentations were made by regional and international experts on legal issues, international certification, linkages with tourism, health and retail sectors, and innovations in technology. This result led to the eventual formation of the Caribbean Regional Organic Agriculture Movement (CROAM);
- Collaborating with the CDB, FAO, the Chinese Embassy and the MOA in equipping farmers, extension officers and other interested persons with the capacity to establish vermicomposting technology to boost vegetable production by hosting a workshop entitled “Soil Regeneration for Sustainable Agriculture,” facilitated by an expert from the China Agricultural University. A key recommendation of the workshop was the establishment of a Model China-Barbados Cooperative Farm, to produce vermicompost;
- Establishing, in conjunction with FAO and MOA, a pilot vermicomposting bin on a dairy farm in Morgan Lewis to manage the farm’s waste as well as to produce organic compost;
- Developing, in conjunction with the MOA, a project proposal for the establishment of a wind-row system

for composting chicken manure on a poultry farm in Barbados;

- Launching a peri-urban backyard gardening project at the St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic Church that utilizes strictly organic practices;
- Sensitizing students at several secondary schools by delivering lectures on “Organic Agriculture and Entrepreneurship;” and,
- Promoting the greening of Barbados by supporting the Ministry of Environment in its annual Arbour Day celebrations, including delivering a feature address.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA has forged several strong alliances with both public and private sector organizations as well as other regional, hemispheric and international organizations and universities.

Public Sector Partnerships:

IICA’s most important strategic partnership is with the MOA, which is the direct line ministry for IICA’s technical cooperation (execution of the MTP and the National Agenda); and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business, which is the direct line ministry for IICA’s political and diplomatic functioning in Barbados, tax-free and other benefits for local staff.

The other government agencies with which IICA has strategic alliances are: the Ministry of Tourism, with which there have been several collaborations on national agrotourism meetings, workshops and projects since 2002; the Ministry of Culture, which also collaborates on agrotourism activities; the Ministry of Health, which collaborates on AHFS issues; and the Ministry of Education, which allowed IICA to spread the message of the “new agriculture” in the public school system.

Private Sector Partnerships:

- SuperCentre Ltd: Initiated a primary school garden competition in which IICA offered technical support;
- Pine Hill Dairy: Supported IICA’s backyard gardening project by donating plastic drums to be used as container gardens. Supported the Plantation Breakfast with product sponsorship; and,
- Barbados Agricultural Society (BAS): IICA prepared a strategic plan for the restructuring of the BAS and has conducted a needs assessment for members of the organization. Supported the Plantation Breakfast with product sponsorship.

Additionally, several other organizations have supported IICA with the execution of the Plantation Breakfast, namely: HiPac Ltd, Trimart Supermarket, Brydens’ Distribution, Morgan’s Fish House, Lashley and Waithe Enterprises, the Trinidad and Tobago Association, the Guyana Consulate and the Jamaican Association of Barbados.

Other private sector partnerships arose due to IICA’s establishment of the Alliance. This Alliance provided the platform for regional networks of specific interest groups to

promote cooperative production, knowledge sharing of best practices as well as production and trade information, and advocacy among the groups. In this regard, IICA provided the necessary financial, technical and secretarial support to AWIA, BAFY and the BHBA for them to become sustainable.

Partnerships with Inter-American Agencies:

- PAHO: Collaboration on Avian Influenza Program; participation of IICA personnel in CFNI symposium at CWA 2007 and in Trans-Fats meeting; appointment of IICA Representative to First Advisory Committee on Tourism and Health (PAHO, Nicaragua);
- OAS: Execution of OAS-funded projects in distance education and agrotourism linkages; execution of distance learning project for five countries (US\$200,000); execution of three-year tourism linkages project (US\$444,000); celebration of Pan American Day; and,
- IDB: Explore collaboration on food safety project; and, celebration of Pan American Day.

Partnerships with UN Agencies:

- FAO: Collaboration principally on projects involving agricultural health and food safety organic production, greenhouse management and rainwater harvesting;
- UNDP: Collaboration principally on activities aimed at achievement of Millennium Development Goals, sustainable agriculture, and environmental protection; and,
- UNIFEM: Collaboration revolves around support for Women in Agriculture.

Regional Donor and Technical Cooperation Agencies:

- CDB: Collaboration principally in funding support for initiatives involving agriculture, mainly organic agriculture, the adoption of greenhouse technology and capacity building in rainwater harvesting;
- CARDI: Collaboration is principally on the development of the local hot pepper industry and in the production of organic inputs;
- CEDA: Collaboration is principally on the development of the local hot pepper industry and the promotion of agrotourism products and services in regional and extra-regional markets;
- UWI: Collaboration is principally through the hosting of interns to assist in implementing the Technical Cooperation Agenda;
- CSME: Collaboration principally on issues related to the Jagdeo Initiative and the national implications; and,
- CTO: Collaboration principally on information gathering and promotion of agrotourism issues.

Other Partner Agencies:

- McGill University: Collaboration is principally through the hosting of interns to assist in implementing the Technical Cooperation Agenda.

5. Modernization of the Office

Over the past six years, IICA has instituted several improvements in an attempt to provide a healthy environment for the staff, and the necessary tools and protocols for a pleasant and efficient interface with our partners and clients. These changes have resulted in the creation of a strong, close-knit administrative and technical team with a positive work ethic and a high level of service excellence.

IICA Office in **Dominica**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Dominica

Kent E. Coipel¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes IICA's achievements over the last seven years (2002-2008). It is intended to document the Institute's contribution to the development of agriculture and rural communities, in line with its National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Dominica

In collaboration with the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), the OECS Secretariat, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment, IICA sponsored and organized a two-day national workshop entitled "Understanding Critical Trade Issues in Agriculture - Realities, Expectations and Opportunities" to support the agricultural trade negotiations. The workshop attracted 48 participants from the public and private sectors. Private and public sector personnel were more proactive in regional and international trade negotiations and national

assessments were done to prioritize national comparative advantages and areas of weaknesses to guide the process.

IICA provided support to a workshop on globalization readiness organized by the Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce (DAIC) in collaboration with the Association of Eastern Caribbean Exporters (AECE). A framework for OECS trade policy was developed at the workshop, which was attended by 61 participants from the OECS countries.

The Institute organized and conducted a national consultation entitled "Strengthening Agriculture for the Sustainable Growth and Development of Dominica." The presentations made included "The Conditioning Environment (hemispheric, regional and subregional)," "Market Success: beyond WTO Access," "The Evolution of the Global Food Market" and "Challenges and Opportunities for Agricultural Repositioning." The consultation identified four major growth opportunities in agriculture - fisheries, convenience foods, non-food products (cut flowers and handicraft items) and health and wellness (ecotourism/agrotourism and organic herbs and spices). Inadequate institutional support, weak human capital and limited capability to implement agricultural health and food safety systems were identified as the key binding constraints to capitalize on growth opportunities.

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In collaboration with the Department of Extension - University of the West Indies (UWI), IICA organized and conducted a five-day national workshop on extension methodologies. The 30 extension officers who took part, drawn from both public and private institutions in the agriculture sector, were exposed to the latest methodologies for extension technicians.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment, in collaboration with IICA, hosted a two-day National Symposium on Agriculture to review the status of agriculture in Dominica and identify and consolidate investment opportunities for successful interventions in the sector. The event was attended by over 100 key stakeholders, including private and public sector officials. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet were on hand to formally endorse this initiative and reiterate the government's continued commitment to the development of the sector. A number of national, regional and international institutions were represented, including the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Between 2006 and 2008, the IICA Office facilitated and supported the preparation of the Report on the State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in Dominica by the Government of Dominica and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment. IICA formulated a policy framework entitled "Invest in Dominica - Secure Agriculture - National Policy for the Agriculture Environment (Agri-Eco) System, 2007-2025" and submitted it to the national authorities. In line with the hemispheric AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action, it was designed to enhance the expertise and capabilities of technicians of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and the Environment for facilitating the modernization process of the Ministry of Agriculture. IICA hosted several workshops to

assist these stakeholders to understand the processes involved in policy formulation and implementation.

The Office assisted the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Permanent Secretary in preparing for the meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) and the Forum for Leaders in Agriculture held in Costa Rica. Whilst in Costa Rica, the minister signed an agreement with IICA identifying the priority areas for further IICA assistance, including a strategic plan for the implementation of the policy, establishment of a Business Unit, the strengthening of the agricultural health and food safety system and an agricultural insurance scheme.

IICA facilitated and collaborated with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in the analysis of the impact of Hurricane Dean on the agricultural sector. This activity involved the use of the ECLAC macroeconomic methodology for estimating the socioeconomic and environmental effects of disasters in general and, in particular, the methodological framework for estimating the effects of disasters on the agricultural sector. The damage done to the sector was categorized under two broad headings (direct damage and indirect damage/loss).

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA was part of the management team involved in the implementation of the project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency/Caribbean Regional



Programme for Export Competitiveness (CIDA/CPEC), entitled "In-Plant HACCP Readiness Implementation and Human Resource Management Enhancement for Increased Competitiveness of the Agri-business Sector." The Institute made a significant contribution to training in good manufacturing practices (GMP) for exporters and agro-processors, and training in the inspection and audit of good agricultural practices (GAP). As many as 73 individuals from the public and private sectors received training under the project, including extension officers, farmers and exporters.

The Institute worked closely with the Ministry of Agriculture in Barbados to provide training in qualitative risk analysis for plant health. The individuals trained came from the private sector (importers, exporters and farmers' organizations) and the public sector (plant protection unit, including all quarantine officers, the Customs Department and the Bureau of Standards). Training was also provided in SPS and food safety issues.

IICA contributed to the efforts to enhance the capacity of quarantine inspectors and public health officers, through a training workshop on improved diagnostic and inspection services.

The Institute facilitated the attendance of technical professionals from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Trade in the following workshops and seminars:

- GAP training workshop in St. Lucia under the CPEC Project
- GAP training workshop in St. Kitts under the CPEC Project
- GAP meeting in Antigua

- Second meeting of Canada/CARICOM Alliance on Food Safety, in Belize
- Citrus canker workshop in Trinidad
- Meeting on FAO International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (FAO ISPM) in Trinidad
- Workshop on the giant African snail in St. Lucia
- WTO/SPS committee meeting in Geneva, Switzerland
- Traceability seminar in St. Lucia.

The training received over the years by officials with the Ministry of Agriculture and other affiliated agencies/institutions in the area of agricultural health and food safety is reflected in their approach to exotic pest and disease problems, relating to trading partners and the implementation of national pest risk plans.

IICA supported the establishment of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Coordinating/Steering Committee (NAHFSC). In the early stages of the work of the National SPS Committee (NSPSC), the Institute provided technical and administrative support. The results included the adoption of ISPMs as national standards, the preparation of Dominica's position paper for the 14th Session of the CODEX Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (FICS), and the preparation of the Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Plan for Avian Influenza. The IICA Office continues to serve on this committee.

The Institute provided support for the rationalization, development and upgrading of agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) systems in Dominica by actively participating

and providing administrative support to five regular meetings of the National Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NSPSC). The Office was also appointed to serve as the Chair of the National CODEX Committee, with responsibility for the overall management of the body, to support the work of harmonizing and rationalizing national AHFS legislation and standards for national and imported agricultural products sold in Dominica.

Under the CIDA-funded CPEC project, IICA worked with CARDI to initiate and develop GAP protocols for hot pepper, tomato, dasheen, sweet potato, plantain, mango and pineapple production.

The Institute sponsored Dominica's participation in 16 WTO/SPS committee meetings held in Geneva (altogether, 19 officials took part). As a result of this initiative, stakeholders in the agriculture and related sectors in Dominica increased their understanding and adoption of the operations and requirements of international standard-setting bodies. They now have a forum to analyze decisions and obtain national positions on relevant sanitary and phytosanitary issues and the decision was taken to establish a National SPS Committee.

Under its Agricultural Health and Food Safety Emergencies and Emerging Issues Fund, IICA approved a project in the sum of US\$13,700 to support the eradication/control of the citrus tristeza virus that was affecting citrus trees in Dominica.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA made effective contributions in enhancing the understanding of private and public sector stakeholders of developments in the multilateral trading system (WTO, FTAA

and CSME) and their implications for the local economy. Two national seminars were held, entitled "Negotiating Agriculture, Understanding What's At Stake" and "Market Access - Understanding What's at Stake." Terms of reference were developed for the establishment of an Inter Agency Forum on Agriculture/Trade, to enhance and guide the work of the National Trade Advisory Committee (NTAC) as it relates to agricultural issues and dialogue.

Along with the Export Development Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS/EDU) and the National Association for Youth in Agriculture (NAYA), the Institute obtained the services of the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) for the training of 25 agro-processors/agribusiness operators (the activity was entitled "Introduction to E-Commerce"). The three-day workshop enhanced the knowledge and skills of the participants with regard to the basic principles of e-commerce.

IICA sought mechanisms to expand linkages between the tourism and agriculture sectors by organizing and implementing a national seminar entitled "Linking Agriculture and Tourism - Challenges and Opportunities for Dominica Agri-entrepreneurs." The seminar demonstrated that for sustainable agriculture to be achieved greater emphasis had to be placed on agribusiness. The Institute organized and facilitated a presentation to 173 stakeholders entitled "Targeting Key Niche Markets for Dominica in agrotourism/farm tours." IICA also hosted a seminar to improve the technical capabilities of public technical extension officers in agrotourism at the La Plaine Agricultural Training Centre.

The Institute and the National Association of Youth in Agriculture (NAYA) collaborated with the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), a non-profit corporation affiliated

with the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS), in organizing and conducting the first Business Labs “Training of Trainers” Workshop, focusing on small and medium-sized enterprise development with emphasis on rural tourism. The workshop improved the capacities and capabilities of the members of a select group, to equip them to participate in appropriate Business Lab Training. There was one participant each from Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Guyana. Additionally, there were 15 participants from Dominica. The participants were trained as lead trainers, developing the Business Labs Rural Tourism content and a “learning by doing” entrepreneurial skills methodology that later will be adapted and replicated, training not only young entrepreneurs but also more trainers through its replication process.

IICA facilitated the attendance of technical professionals from the private sector and youth in the following workshops and seminars:

- An entrepreneur from the Nature Island Pineapple Producers Association (NIPPA) attended the Fourth International Pineapple Symposium in Mexico.
- The Institute sponsored a participant to an agricultural youth meeting in Barbados and the launching of the Caribbean Youth Forum in St. Lucia.
- One private and one public sector professional attended the launching of the St. Lucia chapter of the Caribbean Agri-Business Association (CABA).
- Six private and two public professionals/technicians attended the Caribbean Herbs Business Forum in Jamaica.

The Institute supported the establishment of the Agro-Processors’ Association of Dominica (APAD), whereby 34

agro-processors in Dominica built alliances with existing institutions like CABA and implemented joint procurement of inputs.

In collaboration with FAO, under a project entitled “Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams” IICA assisted a potentially viable enterprise, Nelly Chips, to gain greater access to the agrotourism market.

IICA supported mechanisms to strengthen private sector involvement in agricultural planning and development in order to diversify the agricultural product base and stabilize the decline in the sector. IICA supported the establishment and operation of the Dominica Agri Business Association (DABA Inc.), an umbrella organization of 13 other agribusiness associations. DABA Inc. serves as the local chapter of CABA.

A coordinated approach to the development of sustained linkages between agricultural and other economic sectors is being pursued in Dominica. IICA successfully implemented the OAS/IICA project “Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean” in collaboration with the Agro-Tourism Centre in IICA/Barbados. An inventory of existing and potential agrotourism products and services was developed and documented. Activities of formal and informal networks in support of agrotourism were also documented. Moreover, IICA facilitated the conduct of a survey to determine the quantity and value of agricultural products traded with the tourism sector. The project yielded an agrotourism strategy paper that supported the National Tourism Action Plan. Under the project, IICA supported the participation of a delegation in the Regional Investment Forum on Agribusiness Opportunities held in Barbados. This provided an opportunity for two businesses to attract investors and financiers to support their business proposals.



The Institute supported the establishment of the Dominica Herbal Business Association (DHBA), which functions as the local chapter of the Caribbean Herbal Business Association (CHBA).

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA implemented a project funded by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), entitled “Enhancing the Participation of Marginalized Youth in the Development Process of the Eastern Caribbean States.” Thirty-one participants successfully completed the program. The technical capacities of youth were strengthened to enable them to engage in economic development activities. In addition, they improved their entrepreneurial, social and computer skills.

The Nature Island Pineapple Producers Association (NIPPA) and the Dominica Foundation of Herbal Researchers and Practitioners (DFHRP) received technical support to develop industry profiles at a four-day workshop entitled “Project Identification, Formulation and Implementation,” conducted by IICA.

IICA supported the efforts of a group of 11 young women from the community of Paix-Bouche to establish a modern processing facility. The group received a solar/liquid petroleum gas dryer system and small-scale processing equipment and material.

The Institute supported the establishment of the National Association for Youth in Agriculture (NAYA). The group started out with 117 members (from secondary schools with

an agriculture program, unemployed youth interested in agriculture, and representatives from both the private and public sectors). IICA is committed to continuing to support the activities of the NAYA aimed at engaging more youth in agriculture. The Office was instrumental in the President of NAYA receiving a scholarship under the Caribbean Regional Intern/Scholarship Program (CRISP), funded by USAID, to pursue training in agribusiness.

IICA facilitated the implementation of three Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) small grants projects in fisheries, organic vegetables under greenhouse conditions and small-scale poultry production. The Office acted as the liaison between the grantees of the Small Grants Program and CFNI provided technical support and periodic monitoring.

The Institute provided technical support and guidance in improving the organizational and entrepreneurial capabilities of the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) in the conduct of a national seminar entitled “Opportunities for the Development of Rural Businesses for Women in Dominica.”

IICA provided technical support and guidance in the finalization of the Integrated Development Programme for the Carib Territory.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

A three-day national workshop took place entitled “Promoting the Development of a Sustainable Agro Processing Industry in Rural Communities in Dominica.” Implemented by IICA in collaboration with the Tobago House of Assembly, the Dominica Rural Enterprise Project (DREP), the Produce Chemist Laboratory, APAD and the Windward Islands Farmers



Association (WINFA), the activity focused on selected crops (dasheen, cassava, arrowroot, pineapple, mangoes and paw paw). Fifty-one private and public sector participants from the rural communities were exposed to marketing standards (product specifications, labeling and packaging), GAP, good manufacturing practices (GMP), traceability and the latest technologies involved in the processing of root crops and fruits.

In collaboration with the European Union Agricultural Diversification Programme, the Institute provided administrative and financial support to facilitate a one-week technical exchange visit by five technicians and four farmers to access information and technologies related to organic production, processing, marketing and certification in the Dominican Republic. The IICA Office in the Dominican Republic provided administrative and technical advisory services by experienced and knowledgeable staff from IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture, established organic farms, agribusinesses and institutions involved in the organic sector in the Dominican Republic.

The Institute promoted technologies for enhancing local production and competitiveness in the areas of organics by raising producers' awareness of the potential for expanding trade in targeted markets. In this connection, IICA collaborated with FAO. Twenty-two participants from St. Lucia, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines attended the workshop. The main facilitator for the above workshop was an organic fertilizer expert from the China Agricultural University who specializes in vermiculture. The workshop strengthened the skills of the participants in vermiculture and particularly addressed the issue of organic fertilizer production for the expansion of organic agricultural production in Dominica and placed emphasis on the technique of vermicomposting.

In collaboration with CIDA/CPEC and CARDI, IICA organized a two-day national workshop entitled "Developing the Foundation for an Organic Horticultural Industry in the Caribbean," which was held in 2003. The workshop highlighted the concepts of sustainability in food production, the principles of organic production, markets for organics (the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, local), international organic regulations, the certification process and relevant issues being debated by the international community. The formation of an Organic Producers Association spearheaded by IICA will facilitate the way forward with regard to the dialogue and advocacy needed to influence agricultural policy concerning the production and marketing of organic products.

In collaboration with FAVACA, the Institute trained sixteen participants in beeswax by-products using low technology and local products. The products developed from the training included beeswax leather polish, beeswax bath bar, beeswax tanning butter, beeswax lotion bar, beeswax saddle soap and beeswax soap scrub. Participants can now access information from other users of beeswax by joining the information forum at caribbeansoapers@yahoo.com.

In response to a request from the Nature Island Pineapple Producers Association (NIPPA) for assistance in identifying and developing strategies for development of a sustainable pineapple industry, IICA carried out an assessment of the pineapple industry in collaboration with CIRAD.

In collaboration with Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) and Texaco/Chevron, the Institute provided an emergency response to the Giraudel Flower Producer Group (GFPG) in the wake of Hurricane Dean. The village received a shade house and associated materials to ensure the supply of healthy seedlings to encourage the effective and sustainable rehabilitation of both vegetables and flowers in Giraudel.

IICA promoted technologies for enhancing local production and competitiveness in the areas of organic passion fruit, bananas and pineapples through the establishment of demonstration plots and provision of technical support. It helped the Nature Isle Pineapple Producers Association (NIPPA) obtain a grant from the Caribbean Agriculture and Fisheries Program and the Caribbean Regional Task Force (CAFP/CARTF) for product development, training and marketing research.

The Institute secured a total US\$95,000 from the IICA-CARDI Programme and the Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) to pursue the development and adoption of appropriate undercover system technologies by NAYA and Greenhouse Association members.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA supported the efforts of Clemson University in capacity building in applications of biotechnology for conservation and utilization of Dominica's rich biodiversity. Archbold Tropical Research and Education Centre (ATREC), on behalf of Clemson University, and the Inter American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), at the request of the Government of Dominica, organized and conducted a three-day national consultation on biodiversity prospecting and access to genetic resources and traditional knowledge. The consultation improved the awareness of the participants of the political, legal and technical issues related to bio-prospecting in Dominica by exploring a number of case studies on biodiversity prospecting from Costa Rica and Peru. Twenty-eight participants from public, private, traditional healer, indigenous and non-governmental organizations increased their knowledge and were encouraged to accept and participate in new technologies and processes adapted with an eye to expanding business opportunities

in the sustainable use of Dominica's genetic resources and traditional/indigenous knowledge.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA positioned itself through strategic alliances with other agencies to provide support to the private and public sectors, including NGOs, farmers and agribusiness organizations in policy formulation, strategic planning, trade negotiation, sector development and rural development. Most of the partnering established was associated with project implementation and capacity building/training. The major strategic partners and relations were as follows:

- Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM). Forty-eight persons from the private and public sectors gained a better understanding of agricultural trade negotiations through a workshop entitled "Understanding Critical Trade Issues in Agriculture - Realities, Expectations and Opportunities."
- OAS. The development of a proposed Agrotourism Strategic and Action Plan for Dominica and two national consultations undertaken to forge business opportunities within the agrotourism subsector under a project entitled "Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agriculture Sector in the Caribbean."
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Capabilities of a youth group in Paix Bouche strengthened through training workshops on



- food technology and standards, as well as the provision of agro-processing equipment and material.
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). One member of NAYA received agro-processing equipment to produce plantain chips and training in food technology, labeling and packaging and food safety under a project entitled “Strengthening and Expanding Rural Income Streams,” as well as a number of assignments involving the strengthening of agricultural health and food safety.
 - IICA supported and promoted the development of a national agricultural information system in collaboration with the Caribbean Agribusiness Marketing Intelligence Development (CAMID) network through the technical assistance project of the Food and Agriculture Organization and CARIFORUM.
 - OECS Export Development Unit (OECS/EDU). Training workshops to strengthen the capabilities of agro-processors with regard to GMP, GAP and food standards; to strengthen the capacity of the national laboratory to undertake diagnostic work for major foodborne illnesses; and to promote the modernization of fresh produce export legislation, under a project of the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Program for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) entitled “In-Plant HACCP Readiness Implementation and Human Resource Management Enhancement for Increased Competitiveness of the Agro-business sector in Dominica.” IICA also collaborated with OECS/EDU in conducting a workshop on e-commerce, market access and agricultural negotiations. In addition, the Institute facilitated the establishment of APAD and provided logistical support to the Dominica Foundation of Herbal Researchers and Practitioners.
 - Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). Research and development of appropriate greenhouse technology for vegetable production in Dominica. The Institute also developed a draft data collection sheet to facilitate the design of a production forecasting system in pineapple production systems of Dominica; and hosted a two-day national sensitization workshop entitled “Developing the Foundation for an Organic Horticultural Industry in the Caribbean.”
 - FAVACA. Sixteen participants (six rural women, five young beekeepers, two participants from the Division of Agriculture and three participants from the private sector) trained in beeswax by-products using low technology and local products.
 - IICA collaborated with CRISP/USAID and CIDA/CPEC in the implementation of two five-day workshops for rural women and youth involved in agriculture. Both workshops strengthened the participants’ managerial and entrepreneurial skills with a view to enabling sustainable agribusiness development.

5. Modernization of the Office

During the period 2002-2008, the staff of the IICA Office in Dominica strengthened its skills in the areas of proposal writing, webpage development, project development and management and team building, and was thus able to provide more efficient technical cooperation to the national leaders of agriculture and rural life.

IICA Office in the Dominican Republic



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in the Dominican Republic

Víctor Del Ángel¹

1. Introduction

This Management Report of the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic briefly summarizes the results of the technical cooperation actions carried out during the period 2002-2008. These efforts were implemented in the context of the 2006-2010 Medium Term Plan and the National Technical Cooperation Agenda, in response to the needs defined by the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA) and other stakeholders of the country's agricultural sector. The report also describes the results of our institutional relations with strategic partners and the internal modernization processes that took place during the period.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Dominican Republic

The IICA Office coordinated and facilitated the reform and modernization of the country's agricultural sector and, as part of this process, prepared the following documents: "Policy framework for the agricultural sector," "Proposal for the institutional reform of the sector," "First draft of a plan for Medium and Short-Term Measures," "Proposal for an Animal

Health Protection Bill," "Proposal for a Plant Protection Bill," "Proposal for the modification of Law on Seeds," "Study on institutional duplication in the sector," "Proposal on elements to be included in good agricultural and livestock management practices in the General Law of the Secretariat of State for Agriculture," "Law for the Protection of Plant Breeders Rights," "Proposal for the establishment of the Biosafety Commission and the Biosafety Act," "Proposal for a Framework Law for the Agricultural Sector," "Bill of the National Agricultural and Forestry Research System (SINIAF), and "Bill on Weights and Measures".

In addition, IICA provided support for the proposal of the "Agricultural Health and Food Safety Law," the "Law on Seeds" and the "Law of the National Agricultural and Forestry Research System." It also assisted local technicians in the formulation of the "National Quality System Law" and the modification of the "Law on Metrology," the "Law of the National Tobacco Institute," the "Law of the National Grape Institute," the "Regulations of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Best Livestock Management Practices (BMP)," the "Proposal for the Dominican Institute of Agricultural Health and Food Safety (INDOSAIA) and the "Proposal Law on Agricultural Insurance."

The Institute strengthened the capacity of the country's agricultural institutions, disseminating important information

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through different technical assistance services and training activities provided to the Dominican Network of Document and Information Centers (RECDIA).

With a view to strengthening the training of the country's agriculture, forestry and rural development professionals, IICA supported the Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) in a review of the education and training curriculum.

Similarly, efforts were made to strengthen the knowledge and negotiating capacity of the different stakeholders of national agriculture in topics of vital importance to this sector (such as the Free Trade Agreement between Central America-Dominican Republic and the United States, DR-CAFTA, and food security) through the organization of two international seminars on agrifood policy.

IICA supported the SEA's participation in the processes of the Ministerial Summits, making available and updating the "Report on the State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life" and the document "Progress and Challenges with respect to Meeting the Commitments of the Summits of the Americas with regard to the Agricultural Sector".

Similarly, it supported efforts to reposition the country's agriculture through the organization of the "National Consultation of Leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life" in 2007, and the preparation and subsequent updating of the "Study on the True Contribution of Agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product."

In addition, IICA provided technical assistance for the preparing of a proposal for a public extension service, and participated actively in the "Technical Commission on Agricultural Extension Services and Training Policies".

Efforts were made to develop the leadership skills of young people in the country's rural areas, and improve their knowledge of topics such as agribusiness and agricultural health, through the implementation of the First National Forum for Young Leaders of Agriculture.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA worked to improve the country's capacity to produce safer foods of better quality through the implementation of training activities on topics such as GAP and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, aimed at professionals in agriculture.

In support of national efforts to combat classic swine fever (CSF), IICA helped the General Directorate of Livestock (DIGEGA) to negotiate and secure resources from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in order to continue with the Program for the Control and Eradication of Classic Swine Fever.

It also supported the national efforts to implement the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) by facilitating the participation of local officials in meetings in Geneva and conducting the "National Consultation for the establishment of the National Council for Agricultural Health." This process resulted in the presidential decree that created the National WTO/SPS Committee.

In the area of agricultural health, IICA organized a number of national and regional seminars and workshops on a variety

of topics to improve the country's institutional and technical capabilities. It also provided equipment to the San Cristobal Multi-purpose Laboratory with the aim of strengthening the country's capacity to manage and control exotic pests.

The national legal framework for agricultural health was further strengthened with the drafting of the following laws and bills: a proposal to create a National Plant Protection and Surveillance System; various legal mechanisms for implementing the WTO/SPS measures; assistance in planning the infrastructure and operational framework required for the application of GAP and BMP; the drafting of laws on: 1) phytosanitary protection and 2) animal health protection; and the drafting of "Regulations for the Registration of Veterinary Establishments and Medicines," which were approved through Decree 521-06 and are currently being implemented by DIGEGA/SEA.

Other initiatives in the area of agricultural health included a project proposal for the Control and Eradication of Classic Swine Fever (CSF), which is being executed by DIGEGA; support for an animal health campaign to combat this disease; the implementation of a campaign for the control and eradication of CSF and the creation of the Executive Committee for the Control and Eradication of CSF, through Executive Decree 607-06; the drafting of the Monitoring and Emergency Response Plan for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in the Dominican Republic. Finally, in partnership with the General Directorate of Livestock (DIGEGA), IICA carried out a first simulation of the introduction of AI into the Dominican Republic.

In order to contribute to the improvement of veterinary establishments and medicines, IICA implemented two course-workshops on the registration of veterinary establishments and medicines, in which 100 veterinarians were trained as pharmacists and accredited by the SEA. In addition, regional

emergency response plans to deal with animal health emergencies were strengthened with the implementation of four training workshops, attended by 120 technicians and leading producers of the regional Animal Health Defense Groups (GDS).

The Dominican Republic obtained a US\$1 million grant from the World Bank for a project to prevent avian influenza, to be executed by the SEA with IICA's support. The Institute also prepared preliminary plans and profiles and organized one-day training sessions to strengthen DIGEGA's "System for the control and registration of veterinary establishments and products." Similarly, the national "Meat Inspection System" was strengthened through the training provided to public and private sector veterinarians in the application this system. IICA also supported the SEA in a project aimed at consolidating that System.

b. Promoting Trade and Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA worked to strengthen the negotiating and decision-making capabilities of SEA officials for the negotiation of trade agreements (Free Trade Area of the Americas, FTAA, DR-CAFTA) by providing technical support and training to the negotiating teams. The Institute also carried out market studies for sensitive products with export potential, and prepared and updated documents analyzing the impact of the trade agreements on national agriculture.

The development and competitiveness of local agricultural production chains was improved through the identification of opportunities, weaknesses and the potential of different agricultural products. Fourteen market surveys were carried out on sensitive products with export potential.

Local agricultural trade systems were strengthened through the organization of “Discussion Groups on agriculture and livestock production”, in which all the stakeholders of selected production chains participated. The country’s export capacity was reinforced through the implementation and monitoring of the first and second “Agro-export Platforms.”

Furthermore, efforts were made to strengthen the links between the agricultural and tourism sectors through the execution of a pilot project on agro-tourism; the competencies of the SEA in relation to information systems; and the production skills of farmers in the border areas, through the execution of a border development project that included training activities and the design of business plans and associativity schemes.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA provided technical assistance to families in rural communities located on the border zone, in the organization and implementation of the “Milk Bank” project. It also prepared a plan to assess the situation of rural areas on the border with Haiti, with a view to designing a bi-national fundraising project to obtain external resources to generate employment in the area.

The Institute provided technical assistance for the implementation of the international seminar on “Gender and sustainable rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean,” organized by the Office of the First Lady. This Office also received support in the organization of other international seminars. In addition, IICA provided technical support for the design of “Rural Development Consortia”

- mixed institutions operating at a territorial level – with the aim of executing projects to benefit rural communities in different regions of the country. Finally, IICA promoted the “Rural Development Strategy with a Territorial Approach,” and prepared a “Profile for a Rural Development Program” to be implemented in the country with the support of local institutions and international organizations.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA contributed to the strengthening of the Dominican Institute for Agricultural and Forestry Research (IDIAF) by designing and funding the project “Research on non-destructive methods and molecular markers for determining the optimum date to harvest five varieties of avocado.” It also provided technical support for the reorganization of IDIAF’s operational structure.

In the area of biotechnology and biosafety, the country enhanced its capacity through its participation in regional mechanisms, with the support of IICA and of national institutions such as the Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology and Industry (IIBI) and IDIAF, which participated in the actions of the Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program (HBBP) coordinated at IICA Headquarters. A survey was carried out to identify and assess the country’s needs and priorities in the area of biotechnology, with the aim of formulating a national plan and establishing mechanisms for the management and safe use of agro-biotechnologies.

The institutional and regulatory framework of the National Agricultural and Forestry Research System was strengthened with the elaborating of the “Bill for the National Agricultural and Forestry Research System (SINIAF)”.

The technical staff of IDIAF and of the National Council for Agricultural and Forestry Research (CONIAF) also received training in the application of a methodology for improving public agricultural research institutions.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA carried out a number of actions to strengthen the country's capacity to implement sustainable agriculture, including:

- Technical assistance for the establishment and consolidation of the National Organic Agriculture Program (PRONAO) and the National Organic Farming Council (CONAO);
- Technical support to enable the Dominican Republic to join the European Union's "Third Country List";
- Support in establishing the National Registry of Organic Operators and Certification Agencies;
- Training activities in organic agriculture directed at hundreds of farmers throughout the country; and,
- Dozens of educational tours and visits in which agro-entrepreneurs visited successful organic compost projects and sustainable farming initiatives.

At the same time, reforestation efforts in the border areas were consolidated through the implementation of the Milk Bank project, an initiative that provides communities with milk in exchange for planting a specific number of trees in the project's area of influence.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

The technical cooperation efforts carried out during the period 2002-2008 were implemented with the support of various local institutions and international organizations, whose financial and technical contributions enabled IICA to expand its actions throughout the country.

IICA's principal strategic partner was the SEA, with which the Institute implemented actions of crucial importance to the agricultural sector, including: the Project for the Reform and Modernization of the Agricultural Sector, the two versions of the Agro-export Platforms, the Agrifood Chains Project, the Project for the Modernization of Agricultural Extension Services and various international seminars and training activities related to organic agriculture and agricultural health.

Through these actions, IICA strengthened the agriculture sector's institutional framework, improved its competitiveness in external markets, promoted the consolidation of local production chains, designed strategies and policies to help the country meet the challenges of open trade and respond to various crises and food insecurity. Finally, local agriculture was re-oriented toward more sustainable and environment-friendly practices.

The following results were obtained with the support of other strategic partners:

National Competitiveness Council (CNC): Strengthened the export capacity of local agro-entrepreneurs (Agro-Export Platform Project) and improved the integration and competitiveness of local production chains (Agrifood Chains Project), through projects financed in part by the CNC.



Junta Agroempresarial Dominicana- JAD (Dominican Agribusiness Board): Improved the associativity of groups of local producers through the technical support provided to the JAD's clusters network.

Center for Exports and Investment of the Dominican Republic (CEI-RD): Strengthened the export capacity of local agro-entrepreneurs through the joint execution of the Agro-Export Platform Project, and promoted the application of GAP through joint training activities.

Project to Support the Transition to Competitive Agriculture (PATCA): Strengthened bilateral relations between Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the area of agricultural health through the organization of several technical meetings with authorities of both countries. Support for these efforts was provided by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The PATCA project promoted the application of GAP and BMP in livestock production, through a joint "Proposal for regulations for the application of good agricultural practices (GAP) and good livestock management practices (BMP)". This initiative involved the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), the International Regional Agricultural Health Organization (OIRSA) and the JAD.

Dominican Institute for Agricultural and Forestry Research (IDIAF): Strengthened the National Agricultural and Forestry Research System through the modernization of this Institute.

Office of the First Lady: Promoted women's participation in rural economic development processes through the technical

support provided to the Business Development Program for Rural Women (PADEMUR).

German Cooperation Agency (GTZ): Promoted the country's entry into the European Union's List of "Third Countries" by facilitating two preliminary audits of the Organic Agriculture Monitoring System, whose recommendations prompted modifications in the presidential decrees (819 and 829-03) that form the basis of the legal framework for the country's organic agriculture.

Embassy of Mexico in the Dominican Republic: Supported national efforts to implement sustainable agriculture through training and technical assistance services provided by a Mexican specialist in organic agriculture.

Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE): IICA provided technical support for the training of the country's professionals in topics related to agriculture, livestock production, silviculture and rural sectors.

Finally, the Institute promoted discussions for the formulation of strategies and policies to enable the country to meet the challenges of open trade, deal with various emerging crises and address the problem of food insecurity. IICA organized two international seminars, in 2007 and 2008, with the support of the following organizations: the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank (WB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Center for Intellectual Capital and Competitiveness (CECIC), the Center for Agricultural and Forestry Development (CEDAF) and the Dominican Agrarian Institute (IAD).



5. Modernization of the Office

From 2002 to 2008 the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic underwent a comprehensive modernization process, with the aim of increasing its capacity to meet the needs of the country's agrifood and rural sectors. The Office's overall management and administrative procedures were improved with the creation of databases and the codification (bar codes) of fixed assets, among other actions.

At the same time, modern information and communications technologies were implemented, together with other important actions such as: a) the installation of a communications platform with a virtual private network (VPN) to improve the transfer of audio, videos and files, through the Internet Protocol (IP); b) the installation of modern computer equipment, servers and data security systems and new computer programs, which were subsequently updated; and c) the creation of a Videoconference Center.

These modernization efforts significantly increased the degree of satisfaction among our clients and partners and, in addition, improved the Institute's image.

IICA Office in Grenada



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Grenada

Cosmos Joseph¹

1. Introduction

During the period 2002-2008, IICA's contribution to Grenada's agricultural and rural sector was based mainly on the Institute's National Technical Cooperation Agenda (NTCA), which was prepared in 2002, through a consultative process. However, IICA has also implemented activities in response to special requests from the Government of Grenada. Many of the priorities identified in the NTCA were addressed by IICA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture as well as a number of other agriculture sector stakeholder institutions. This report is a summary of results obtained through the implementation of IICA's national technical cooperation actions as well as a number of ad hoc activities.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Grenada

The focus was on improving the sustainability of the agricultural and rural sector. IICA therefore sought to encourage and support greater youth involvement and, through a value chain approach to the sector's development, to highlight the agribusiness concept that tends to be more attractive (and

rewarding) not only to young people, but also to women and men seeking to improve their living standards. Efforts were also directed towards assisting in the sector's modernization. To this end, the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) was increased, with support provided by IICA in conducting a Management Audit of the Ministry of Agriculture (in 2002). This was done with a view to drawing up a re-structuring/re-engineering plan for the Ministry.

IICA helped organize young people, women and agricultural entrepreneurs into entities through which much of its technical cooperation was channeled. Thus, national chapters of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY), the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) and the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), components of The Alliance, were formed in 2002, 2004 and 2005, respectively. They were subsequently strengthened and positioned to provide effective support to the national authorities' efforts to address some of the key binding constraints to the development of Grenada's agricultural sector. For example, through IICA's technical and logistic support, the national chapter of CANROP obtained substantial grant funds and implemented projects that have significantly enhanced the livelihoods of its members. The national chapter of CABA implemented a Farm Labour Programme, with significant government funding that allowed for the purchase of needed tools and equipment as well as a vehicle. Some of

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CABA's members and a number of young men and women were employed through this program.

To support the modernization of the agricultural and rural sector, IICA implemented actions aimed at ensuring that the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and other key stakeholders developed a better understanding of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and its implications for the sector's development. Thus, MoA technicians were able to improve their capacity to implement the Government's agricultural development policy more effectively and to adopt the AGRO-Matrix as a useful planning tool. Consequently, assistance provided by agriculture support agencies was better coordinated, and the benefits derived were maximized.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Based on direct technical support, as well as relevant training opportunities and documented agricultural health emergency preparedness plans provided by IICA, Grenada's capacity to deal with emergency and emerging agricultural health and food safety issues was greatly enhanced. Training in plant quarantine and other related areas, provided by IICA, also enabled plant protection personnel to achieve major improvements in their management of exotic pests and diseases of quarantine significance, and to satisfy US requirements for the export of fresh fruits of the *Annona sp* to that country. (IICA facilitated an assessment/survey that yielded favorable results and led to Grenada being declared free of "internal feeders" of the *Annona sp*.)

With IICA's technical cooperation, Grenada greatly improved the level of implementation and coordination of agricultural health and food safety activities, due to the establishment and operation of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety (NAHFS) Committee. Comprised of representatives of a broad cross-section of stakeholder institutions. This was highlighted especially during the outbreak of avian influenza, when, because of its broad-based composition, the NAHFS Committee swiftly developed and implemented a comprehensive educational and public awareness program that targeted poultry producers, importers, distributors and consumers island-wide. The ultimate aim is the establishment of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Authority, which, in due course, should become financially self-supporting.

A local supermarket offers premium prices for produce received from farmers known to have adopted Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs). Therefore, a number of farmers increased their capability to produce safe foods by taking part in a series of IICA-sponsored GAPs training courses. This initiative was supported by the MoA and the Grenada Bureau of Standards (GDBS), both of which collaborated with IICA in conducting follow-up field activities. Some agro-processors also increased their capability to produce safe, value-added products, through application of the principles of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), acquired as a result of their active participation in relevant workshops and seminars, organized by IICA in collaboration with the GDBS and the MoA.

The level of operational efficiency of the local Pesticides Control Board (PCB) was enhanced through the Board's adoption and use of a Pesticides Database developed through IICA/PCB collaboration. The database was designed, using

the Microsoft Access 2000 platform, to facilitate effective monitoring of the registration, licensing, and use of pesticides in Grenada.

Grenada increased its capability to fulfill its international obligations under the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO). This was made possible by the financial and technical support provided to Grenada's participant at the quarterly WTO/SPS Meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland. Because of the establishment of a local SPS Committee and the local distribution of relevant IICA publications, a wide cross-section of agriculture sector stakeholders also became more aware of SPS issues and their implications for international agricultural trade.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Agriculture sector stakeholders' awareness, knowledge and understanding of global trade issues were enhanced through their participation in agricultural trade seminars and workshops facilitated jointly by IICA and Grenada's Department of International Trade. At those sessions, the facilitators gave very informative presentations, and there were lively group and plenary sessions on issues relating to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO).


Many small-scale agricultural entrepreneurs, especially in the areas of agro-processing, herbs production and beekeeping, were able to make their products more competitive through increased production efficiency and improved packaging facilitated by IICA's ongoing support in capacity building and the sourcing of grant funds for project implementation.

A number of agricultural entrepreneurs (mainly rural women and young people) improved their information and communication technology (ICT) skills by participating in a series of relevant training sessions organized by IICA. These sessions dealt with (1) introduction to computer applications and (2) the use of ICT in managing agricultural enterprises. They were facilitated by local ICT firms, contracted by IICA, as well as overseas consultants whose services were made available through a formal arrangement between the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) and IICA.

The entrepreneurial capability of selected farmers and agro-processors was greatly enhanced. This was made possible through a series of relevant workshops, organized by IICA and facilitated by qualified personnel from the National Development Foundation of Grenada (NDFG).

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA supported rural women, youth and agricultural entrepreneurs, and helped organize them into the national chapters of the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP), the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) and the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), respectively. Membership of two of these groups (CANROP and CABA) has grown significantly. All three groups, through their representatives, participated in overseas meetings of the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu (The Alliance). They have also participated in workshops and other technical events held annually in different Caribbean IICA Member States, during Caribbean Week of Agriculture. Since their formation in 2004 and 2005,



respectively, the national chapters of CANROP and CABA have been lobbying the Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, and have gained considerable economic benefits for their respective groups.

With support from IICA, the Grenada Association of Beekeepers (GAB) increased its membership from 14 to 45, established a functioning secretariat and successfully organized a number of national honey shows. The association also participated in the London Honey Show, winning the top prizes in the categories open to foreign participants. Grenada's honey has been popular among local hotels, and on the local and regional markets.

Through the staging of a highly publicized Agro Tourism Sensitization Workshop (organized by IICA) and the subsequent formation of an Agro Tourism Linkage Committee, national awareness of Grenada's agrotourism potential increased. This awareness resulted in the implementation of a number of successful agrotourism ventures by private sector individuals.

The supply of locally produced fresh fruits, vegetables and pork to the hotels increased significantly. This was the result of meetings held between farmers and hoteliers. The meetings were organized jointly by IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Grenada Board of Tourism. The report on these meetings outlined a number of recommendations aimed at improving the supply of high-quality products in the hotel industry.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Technologies for the transformation of two locally grown fruits (mangoes and golden apple) and a locally grown root crop (cassava) were successfully introduced to local agro-processors, through activities organized by IICA. Some of the agro-processors were trained to process mangoes and golden apple into chutney, kuchela and pickles, which are all in demand by local hoteliers. Others were trained to produce 13 different products, regarded as "health foods," from cassava roots. Expertise for the cassava processing activity came from Guyana, through IICA's logistical support and funding provided by an external funding agency (OXFAM). Cassava processing equipment (from Trinidad) was made available through funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), based on a project proposal prepared by the national chapter of CANROP, with IICA's assistance. Use of this equipment resulted in increased efficiency in the processing of cassava.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The technical feasibility of organic cocoa production in Grenada was established through a relevant consultancy conducted by IICA, at the request of the Grenada Cocoa Association.

Local capabilities in organic agriculture were developed through local technicians' participation in relevant overseas short courses sponsored by IICA. Two members of the local chapter of CANROP also benefited from participation in overseas courses in organic agriculture.



4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During the period under consideration, IICA Grenada implemented two livelihoods projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), respectively. Both projects provided tangible benefits to a number of vulnerable rural groups and individuals. They focused mainly on capability and capacity building. Thus, in addition to training provided in the areas of technical and social skills enhancement, two revolving loan fund facilities, offering loans at relatively low interest rates, were made available to individuals trained to start small businesses, as follow-up to training received. Loan funds provided under the UNDP project and UNESCO loan funds were (and are still being) managed jointly by IICA and the Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA) while those provided through the UNESCO Project are being jointly managed by IICA and the National Development Foundation of Grenada (NDFG).

IICA Grenada also jointly implemented projects with two other strategic partners - the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Caribbean Agricultural Development Institute (CARDI). The IICA/FAO cooperation instrument was entitled "Assistance to reduce vulnerability to food insecurity and livelihoods security in rural and farming communities through strengthening and expansion of rural income streams." This subregional project resulted in the strengthening of linkages between the agriculture and tourism sectors, and significant improvements in the livelihoods of a number of rural agricultural entrepreneurs. The first of two IICA/CARDI projects, implemented under the IICA/CARDI agreement,

strengthened CARDI's vegetable seedlings production capability in support of Grenada's agricultural diversification program. The second project (2008-2010) will enhance Grenada's goat rearing capability, and will complement the country's Goat Development Programme, designed to promote a strong goat meat and cheese industry.

After Hurricane Ivan devastated Grenada's agricultural sector in 2004, IICA joined with two of its strategic partners (FAO and the Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) and supported the Ministry of Agriculture in providing the Government of Grenada with a comprehensive assessment of the damage done to the sector. Approximately two weeks after the hurricane, the assessment report was presented to the Grenada Cabinet of Ministers. The report formed the basis for the discussions and decision-making with respect to the short, medium and long-term rehabilitation efforts, as well as the identification of the range of policy, programs and projects best suited to the long process of recovery and reconstruction of the agricultural sector. In addition to the assessment report, a plan of action for the rehabilitation/revitalization of each of the key subsectors was prepared and presented to the Government. It is important to note that the documents prepared became the main reference source for all other agencies interested in supporting efforts to rebuild Grenada's agricultural sector. Furthermore, the methodology used to assess the hurricane damage to the sector was adopted by other countries and agricultural support agencies.

Because of its strong rural base, the Grenada Community Development Agency (GRENCODA) has been one of IICA's strategic partners, which has been of great assistance in helping to focus IICA's technical assistance towards the more vulnerable groups and individuals in the rural communities.



5. Modernization of the Office

The performance of the Office staff was enhanced through administrative and technical training to improve their knowledge and capacity to respond more efficiently to the demands and priorities of the leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life in the country. IICA also acquired equipment to improve the efficiency of its operations.

IICA Office in **Guyana**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Guyana

Ignatius Jean¹

1. Introduction

This 2002-2008 management report on IICA's actions in Guyana is derived from the National Agenda for Technical Cooperation (NATC) and the Office's annual action plans (AAPs) and 2002-2008 annual reports. The Institute supported the achievement of the results of the NATC and the AAPs focused on the key strategic areas of the repositioning of agriculture and rural life, agricultural health and food safety (AHFS), sustainable rural development, facilitating competitiveness in agribusiness, and the promotion of technology and innovation. The actions executed included technical support services to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and its agencies and the private sector (including producers' groups, processors and exporters); capacity-building through training courses, workshops and seminars; technical support to various agencies and groups through project preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and the dissemination of information, the sensitization of major stakeholders and efforts to create awareness of the implications of global changes in agricultural trade and aspects of agricultural health and food safety.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Guyana

The MoA designated its Deputy Permanent Secretary as the IICA Liaison at the Ministry and established a MoA/IICA Technical Committee. This committee has facilitated, among other things, the review of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda, the sharing of information of mutual interest, and efforts to raise awareness of the Jagdeo Initiative and to develop implementation strategies for it.

With the support of IICA, the country has increased its attendance and participation in hemispheric and regional processes, such as meetings of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), etc., thereby enabling the national authorities to better understand these forums while giving more opportunities for the exchange of information on agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

The country made progress towards assuming its lead role in the repositioning of agriculture by hosting activities aimed at removing the Key Binding Constraints under the Jagdeo Initiative, and IICA made a significant contribution to those efforts by organizing events such as: i) the meetings of the CARICOM Council on Trade and Economic Development

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(COTED); ii) the Fourth CWA, which included a major agricultural exhibition that brought together regional and local producers, processors and marketers; iii) the Regional Conference on Finance for Agricultural Development, aimed at increasing the flow of finance to agriculture; iv) the High-Level Regional Bio-energy Conference; v) the Regional Investment Forum, in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat; and, vi) the International Beekeeping Congress.

IICA assisted in addressing one of the Key Binding Constraints of the Jagdeo Initiative (i.e., an unorganized private sector) through active promotion and support in establishing four local chapters of the Alliance for Sustainable Development (The Alliance) in the country: the Rural Women's Network (RAN), the Guyana Agribusiness Association (GABI), the Guyana Forum for Youth in Agriculture (GOYA) and the Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE).

The GOYA has undertaken several initiatives with the assistance of IICA, including membership outreach programs at institutions of higher learning - e.g., the University of Guyana (UG) and the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA) - and, in a few rural communities, entrepreneurial activities such as beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, pig rearing and poultry production. IICA also gave technical support to the GOYA in preparing project proposals for financing and with the formation of the GOYA Cooperative Credit Union to enable their members to access financial resources to fund their projects.

The RAN and IICA provided technical support and training to women's groups in many rural communities, particularly in the area of agro-processing. The RAN is closely linked to the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (MAA) and has become integrally involved in support programs to women in Amerindian communities in the hinterland of the country.

With the support of IICA, the RAN strengthened institutional ties with the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP), which resulted in economic and cultural exchanges between Guyanese women and similar groups in Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia and Dominica. IICA also supported the RAN's participation in the Third Congress of Rural Women in Spain.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting of Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The emergency preparedness of Guyana for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was tested through simulation exercises organized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in collaboration with IICA, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the MoA. Because of this, the country now has a contingency plan for HPAI.

The country's agricultural health and food safety systems were strengthened with support from IICA's Initiative of the Americas, through participation in the meetings of international organizations such as the World Animal Health Organization (OIE) and CODEX Alimentarius, and under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The country has now increased its technical capacity to adopt and implement international guidelines and standards for trade in agrifood products.

The Standards and Trade Development Facilitation (STDF) Project and the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS)

Consultation were implemented by IICA in collaboration with the USDA. IICA prepared and submitted the reports to the national authorities for consideration.

Several small rural agro-processors have adopted good manufacturing practices (GMPs) through technical training and support from IICA. One such group is the Pomeroon Women Agro-Processors Association (PWAPA), which has advanced from homemade, handmade products to a more sophisticated small factory facility, complete with a few small machines, a solar dryer and GMPs in place.

IICA collaborated with the USDA/APHIS in providing technical and material support to the MoA's pest surveillance programs, particularly along the country's borders. This resulted in the country reducing significantly the prevalence of carambola fruit fly (CFF) and pink hibiscus mealybug (PHMB).

Following the severe floods of 2005 and floods in subsequent years, IICA provided vital veterinary supplies and technical support in the treatment and rehabilitation of livestock.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Through IICA's support for the participation of technicians and officials in international forums, such as WTO-SPS in Geneva, USDA/APHIS meetings in Florida and CaribVET Network, the country has enhanced its experience and technical expertise to treat international trade agreements, public health conventions and negotiations.

The MoA, the Ministry of Tourism, Industry & Commerce (MoTIC) and the Guyana Tourism Authority (GTA) have

accepted the agrotourism inventory and strategy documents produced under the IICA/Organization of American States (OAS) Agrotourism Project; three agrotourism community investment profiles were developed and are being considered for financing - St. Stanislaus College Association Farm (SSCF), North West Organics (NWO) and Lake Capoey Village.

As part of the implementation of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation Project, IICA assisted the Tri-Lakes Communities (Mainstay, Capoey and Tapakuma) in the Essequibo Region to become a model for promoting community tourism through the application of linkages among agriculture, heritage, the natural environment and tourism.

Guyana's accession to the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA) in 2007 was facilitated by IICA. This has enhanced the capacity of the New Guyana Marketing Corporation (NGMC) to improve its market information systems, thereby enhancing the export trade thrust in non-traditional agricultural commodities.

In 2002, IICA collaborated with the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) in managing the Mabaruma/Hosororo Organic Cocoa Project, which was funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Among the deliverables were: income generation and employment in the identified communities through the rehabilitation of 80 acres of abandoned cocoa fields; planting of 6000 cocoa seedlings; increased yields of cocoa from less than 900 kg (2002) to over 4000 kg (2004); finding market access to a niche European market for the commodity; and the formation of the Mabaruma/Hosororo Organic Cocoa Growers Association (MHOCCA). By the end of the project, cocoa from the area was classified as "organic in transition."

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Technical assistance provided by IICA for the modification of imported technology used for the processing of cashew nuts at St. Ignatius enhanced the occupational health and safety of the workers in the processing plant.

During 2002-2003, owing to difficulty in marketing coffee, the Wakapoa Coffee Processors Association (WCPA), with assistance from IICA, diversified its activities to include cassava and honey production.

A major feat for IICA was that it prepared and submitted a project entitled “Supporting the Expansion of Income-Generating Activities in Region 2, Lake Communities in Guyana” to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. This project was approved and received funding of US\$195,000, making it possible to improve the standard of living of the Amerindian population of the Lake Communities in Region 2 through the sustainable use of community resources. The Tri-Lakes Communities, having experienced a fair measure of success with the implementation of agriculture initiatives, particularly organic pineapple production, diversified their income-generating activities by linking their agriculture, heritage and natural environment as a tourism product. The implementation of an agro-tourism component in the Tri-Lakes Communities resulted in IICA receiving the “Agro-tourism Development Initiative Award” from MoTIC and the GTA in 2008.

In collaboration with agencies such as the Poor Rural Communities Support Services (PRCSS), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the MoA and

the NARI, IICA provided technical support to women agro-processors in rural communities, particularly the PWAPA. The training of the PWAPA has assisted in raising their brand profile, thereby creating an increase in demand for their products in the domestic market.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Through assistance and technical support from IICA, the SSCF established a training centre that promotes technology and innovation in agriculture, including a fifteen-acre pasture accommodating a herd of forty dairy cattle; a dairy processing facility to demonstrate modern methods of manufacturing dairy products, including yogurts and cheese; a shaded hydroponics vegetable unit; a humus production unit using vermiculture techniques; and an aquaculture unit to demonstrate integrated production of fish (tilapia) and ducks. The training centre at the SSCF was renamed the Héctor Muñoz Agricultural Training Centre in memory of the late IICA Emeritus Professional who pioneered the initiative.

A leading private-sector microfinance organization in the country, the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED), has adopted biogas and hydroponics technologies that were reintroduced into the country by IICA. IPED is actively promoting the adoption of these technologies among its clients through training programs facilitated by IICA, and through financing and importing plastic digesters, UV plastics and shade material for their clients’ projects.

Several rural women’s groups have adopted modified hydroponics systems after participating in training courses organized by IICA.

With technical and material support from IICA, the Kuru Kuru Training Centre (KKTC), a national technical-vocational training institute, established a hydroponics facility that has made the KKTC self-sufficient in vegetables for its 200 students.

The Ministry of Education (MoEd) has enhanced the technical capacity of 42 teachers of agricultural sciences through the training provided by IICA in vegetable production using hydroponics systems, as well as training of over 400 secondary school students who traverse the coastal regions of the country.

The Government of Guyana (GoG) has recognized that agroenergy has an important role in the country's future development. IICA assisted the GoG in hosting the High Level Agro-Energy Meeting in Guyana through promotion among Member States. Other partners included the IDB, CTA, CARICOM and UNDP. At that meeting, the GoG declared that the development of biofuels would be aggressively pursued for both export and domestic consumption. An Official Policy on Bio-fuels is currently under development by a Presidential Committee (Working Group on Bio-fuels/Agro-energy) that reports to the Office of the President (OP).

With the support of IICA, a modified vent stack was established at St. Ignatius for processing cashew nuts, resulting in a less hazardous working environment for processors.

Through IICA's technical assistance and management of the organic cocoa project, the MHOCGA constructed a cocoa drying facility and storage bond in compliance with organic certification requirements.

The Tapakuma Cassava Processors and the PWAPA are using solar dryers, constructed with the support of IICA and the NARI, for processing fruits and cassava.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Under the W. K. Kellogg Project, IICA promoted and saw the gradual adoption of agroforestry and intercropping techniques, and the formulation and testing of bio-pesticides in the management of Acoushi ants. The project also included community environmental awareness components.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA supported the drive by the Venezuelan Embassy to recruit students for the Simón Bolívar United World Colleges (UWC) of Agriculture in Venezuela. One female candidate was selected from Guyana for the 2005 program.

Four small grants projects funded by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI) and executed by IICA created income-generating opportunities for four rural community groups. These include a beekeeping project operated by members of the GOYA at Goed Intent, Region 3; a poultry-rearing project run by a farmers' group at Lima Sands, Region 2; a tilapia (aquaculture) project run by a women's group at Lake Mainstay, Region 2; and a duck farming project run by an Amerindian group at Santa Rosa, Region 1.



The GoG's Flood Recovery Programme was enhanced through a Flood Damage Assessment Report generated from a collaborative assessment mission by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC) and IICA after the 2005 flood.

The Institute maintains a letter of understanding with Partners of the Americas (PoA). The two organizations collaborate on a variety of initiatives, including the implementation of the Farmer-to-Farmer Programme in Guyana. The invaluable contributions of the PoA Volunteers supported several IICA activities, including agrotourism, integrated pest management, soil fertility, agribusiness management, irrigation, animal health and agro-processing.

IICA implemented the Guyana component of the OAS-funded Agro-Tourism Linkages Project with the support of the OAS Office in Guyana.

Amazon Caribbean (AMCAR) Guyana Limited has been a valuable private-sector partner, particularly during the implementation of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation Project. The organic pineapple export trade was initiated by this company. In addition to being the sole purchaser and exporter of the products of the Tri-Lakes Farmers' Association (TLFA), AMCAR supplies packaging materials and provides managerial and operational support services to the TLFA.

NARI has been a key partner in the planning and execution of many projects managed by IICA. These include the organic cocoa, Liberica coffee and peanut research projects, training in GAPs and the W. K. Kellogg Project in the Tri-Lakes Communities. IICA collaborated with the MoA, NARI, PoA and SSCF in the implementation of the Guyana Dairy Development Project (GDDP), which was funded by the USAID, between 2002 and 2006. Support was provided

in the form of participation in stakeholder consultations, review of reports and other documents, and provision of technical and logistical assistance. An important contribution by IICA to the GDDP was a survey undertaken in 2003 to generate baseline information for the improvement of dairy production in the Moblissa community in Region 10 on behalf of the Linden Economic Advancement Programme (LEAP).

The British High Commission and the DFID provided funding to IICA for the implementation of the organic cocoa and coffee projects in Region 1.

The collaborative effort among IICA, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the GoG and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) resulted in the successful hosting of a High-Level Meeting on Bio-fuels in Guyana in 2007, which will provide access to the Member States of CARICOM to funding from the IDB for bioenergy development.

The collaboration between IICA and the USDA/APHIS has helped to strengthen the technical capacity of the MoA's technicians in monitoring the country's borders for plant and animal health risks. The USDA/APHIS provides funding and materials, while IICA provides the technical support.

The country's two principal tertiary education institutions, UG and GSA, have been important partners for IICA's programs. The two institutions collaborated with IICA in launching and supporting the Secretariat of the CACHE Chapter of the Alliance in Guyana. Faculty and students of the GSA and UG received support from the Office to participate in the annual Faculty-Student Exchange Programs organized by the CACHE, as well as with the hosting of the program in Guyana in 2008. In addition, IICA hosted internship programs for



undergraduates of UG. Three UG Librarians have completed specialized training programs via the IICA/Centre for Training and Distance Education (CECADI).

IICA conducted a review of agricultural education at the secondary and post-secondary levels in the country and facilitated training in strategic planning, curriculum review and design.

5. Modernization of the Office

The continuous adjustment and implementation of the office improvement plans (OIP) have helped modernize the Office and thereby enhance the satisfaction of clients and staff.

IICA has appointed a sustainable rural development specialist, an information/documentation specialist, a field assistant and administrative personnel to provide a more efficient response to the national priorities identified in the national technical cooperation agenda.

Several items of information and communication technology equipment were procured to facilitate and enhance internal and external communication, information management and documentation, reducing costs in the process.

IICA Office in **Haiti**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Haiti

Alfredo Mena¹ and Frantz Pierre Nelson²

1. Introduction

This report highlights the main results achieved by IICA's technical cooperation in Haiti during the period 2002-2008, highlighting in particular good institutional practices and the most notable successes. The information is divided into the following four sections: i) the repositioning of agriculture and rural life in the country, ii) the results of technical cooperation linked to IICA's overarching strategic priorities, iii) the strengthening of relations with strategic partners and, iv) the modernization of the National Cooperation Program.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Haiti

The following are some of the most important results achieved in this area:

Stakeholders in the agricultural sector were kept abreast of the trends in, and outlook for, agriculture and rural life in Haiti. In keeping with institutional policy, the Office produced two biennial reports on the state of, and outlook for,

agriculture and rural areas in Haiti - one in 2004 and another in 2006. These documents presented information about recent developments in the agricultural sector, with emphasis on the main difficulties facing the country, taking into account the strategic priorities set by the Institute. They proved very useful for taking decisions with regard to the sector.

Process of preparing a state policy for agriculture and rural development. Since 2006, IICA has been a member of Working Group on Agriculture (GTA) established by the Ministry of Agriculture to provide the country with a policy document for the development of the sector and the improvement of living conditions in the rural milieu. The Institute made an important contribution to the first stage of the work, which entailed a document on the orientation of the state policy that was to be promoted. Prepared with financial assistance from the Office, the document will be used to formulate other, specific documents on the strategies to be adopted to carry out the process.

Systematization of the legal framework for the agricultural sector. IICA intends to carry out an exhaustive inventory of current legislation related to agriculture and rural areas. The results will be published in a report during 2009 and will be very useful for facilitating Haiti's integration into CARICOM. Comparing Haiti's main agricultural laws with

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those of the regional organization will highlight the changes that need to be made to the national legal framework.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The following results were achieved between 2002 and 2008 with regard to this strategic priority:

Reduction in the incidence of classical swine fever and strengthening of national quarantine structures. Under a cooperation instrument signed in 2002 with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for an initial four-year period and total funding of around US\$4.9 million, IICA made an important contribution to eradicating classical swine fever (CSF) and modernizing the country's quarantine system. Vaccination programs are carried out each year, with five new quarantine posts having been built on nearby islands. However, the most important result of the cooperation instrument was the creation of the organizational structure necessary to operate a large-scale vaccination and epidemiological surveillance network. This network, which involves many different actors in the field of production and animal health, has allowed the Ministry of Agriculture to control and monitor effectively not only CSF but also other pathogens that hinder the development of the national livestock industry. For example, vaccination campaigns were carried out against rabies, New Castle disease and anthrax using the mechanisms offered by this important network. The Institute also provides logistical assistance every year to enable a senior official of the Ministry of Agriculture

to take part in the various meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Establishment and dissemination of an integrated strategy to combat coffee berry borer. When the coffee berry borer (*Hypothenemus hampei*) appeared in Haiti, doing enormous damage to the coffee industry, producers had no idea how to combat the devastating pest. Working with the Ministry of Agriculture (MARNDR) and with technical support from the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the Dominican Coffee Council (CODOCAFE), IICA managed to establish an integrated strategy to combat coffee berry bearer. This innovative strategy, which received financial support from the European Union (EU), has been disseminated widely among numerous coffee cooperatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the sector. As a direct result of the strategy established by IICA, all investments in the coffee industry now include interventions for the integrated management of coffee berry borer, including the use of traps and the setting up of laboratories to produce parasitoides.

Contribution to the management of black sigatoka. From 2002-2006, IICA was heavily involved in the efforts to combat leaf spot disease of banana plants, a cryptogamic disease also known as black sigatoka, caused by the fungus *Mycosphaerella fijiensis*. With technical support from the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP) and financial support from the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), IICA established a program to combat black sigatoka based on two core components (the evaluation and dissemination of resistant varieties). Eighteen exotic varieties were introduced into Haiti under this program and banana producers expressed a preference for one type of plantain (FHIA-23), three dessert bananas (FHIA-17, FHIA-18



and FHIA-23) and one cooking banana (FHIA-25). The most important aspect of this program was the introduction of a system for banana seedling multiplication using a technique developed by the Centre Africain de Recherches sur Bananiers et Plantains (CARBAP). Known as PIF (“seedlings resulting from stem fragments”), the system makes it possible to produce large numbers of healthy banana plants (with no weevils or nematodes) in relatively short periods. This system was demonstrated to technical personnel from numerous NGOs who have since taken it on board. As a direct result of the Office’s action, the PIF method is now being used in numerous banana-producing areas of the country.

Support for the effort to combat the fruit fly. Thanks to a donation from USAID, in the second half of 2008 the Institute provided broad support to the Ministry of Agriculture’s National Fruit Fly Detection and Control Program (PNDCMF), contributing in particular to the production of material to sensitize people to the proper control of this pest and to the strengthening of the laboratory of the Ministry’s Directorate of Plant Protection (DPV). To strengthen the DPV laboratory, IICA facilitated the purchase of the material and equipment needed for the identification and distance diagnosing of pests and diseases that affect flora and fauna. These cutting-edge materials allow the DPV laboratory to be connected to the Caribbean Regional Diagnostic Network (CRDN), which is having a very positive impact on the process of modernizing this unit of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Promoting the sensitization of the population to the importance of avian influenza. Working with the Ministry of Agriculture and with financing from USAID, IICA successfully established an avian influenza surveillance program. In 2007, the Institute provided technical and logistical assistance to the ministry to secure from the World Bank the funds needed to improve bird flu surveillance

throughout the country. The first funds from the World Bank will be disbursed in 2009.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

With regard to this strategic priority of IICA, the most outstanding results were as follows:

Haiti participated more regularly in the international meetings held within and outside the region. The Office’s work resulted in Haiti participating more often in different international meetings. The country had not been involved in the meetings held in the Caribbean and elsewhere for a long time. Since 2003, it has attended more regularly the meetings of the Alliance, COTED and the WTO. In 2006, IICA facilitated the participation of an important Haitian delegation in the Sixth Caribbean Week of Agriculture, held in Nassau, Bahamas. Since then, Haiti has attended all the meetings held as part of the annual activity.

Promoting agrotourism as an important means of raising incomes in the agricultural sector. Special emphasis was placed on the promotion of agrotourism in the country. Thanks to the Office’s timely intervention, the Ministry of Tourism benefited from the advisory services of the head of the Caribbean Agrotourism Development Programme. Agreement was reached with the Ministry of Tourism to incorporate agrotourism formally into the plan formulated for the sector in Haiti by the Ministry.

Strengthening the export capabilities of certain companies involved in agribusiness. Since November 2007, IICA has been working with the Haitian-Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIHIC) and the Trade

Facilitation Office of Canada (TFO-Canada), under a tripartite arrangement aimed at enhancing the capabilities of 20 Haitian agricultural enterprises for exporting to North America (in particular, to the United States and Canada). After three training sessions were held in Haiti, eight of the companies received support to participate in the agrifood fair (SIAL) that took place 22-29 April 2008 in Montreal, Canada.

Approval of Haiti's application to join the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA). After participating as an observer in the meeting held in Quito, Ecuador, in 2007, Haiti was invited to the assembly of the hemispheric organization held in Panama, in 2008. At that meeting, Haiti finally became a full member of the MIOA. Haiti's new status within the MIOA entitled it to technical assistance in fields such as the best technology, methodology and procedures for gathering, processing, analyzing and disseminating information about markets of agricultural products.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The most outstanding results that IICA achieved in this area during the period under review were as follows:

Support for the small commercial enterprises of the KREDIFANM women's groups. One of the results achieved by the Office was the creation of a network of 1200 women who have access to credit thanks to an innovative methodology prepared as part of a credit project for rural women called KREDIFANM, initially financed by the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) and the Kellogg Foundation. During the period under review (2002-2008), these groups

of women benefited from a substantial increase in credit and enhanced technical and managerial capabilities following their participation in specially organized training seminars. In 2007, this methodology was systematized and published in three languages (English, French and Spanish).

Improvement in the living conditions of producers in the service areas of the PWOTOKOL project. Since 2003, thanks to continuous funding from the Kellogg Foundation, IICA has been implementing a project entitled *Pwojè Teknoloji Oganizasyon Kombit Lakay* (PWOTOKOL). It provides support to productive initiatives in rural areas that have led to numerous income-generating activities. The key priorities of the work of this local development project are animal and vegetable production, the processing and marketing of agricultural products and the organization of producers.

Increase in the income of farmers in Desbarrières (Gonaïves) and Zabriko (Ennery) through the rehabilitation and implementation of two irrigation perimeters covering a total of 550 hectares. Under a technical cooperation instrument negotiated with USAID following the passage of Tropical Storm Jeanne in 2004, IICA rehabilitated two irrigation systems located in the rural areas of Gonaïves. The two systems were returned to full operation and have since been used for high-performance crops (in particular, beans and horticultural crops). These interventions helped improve the living conditions of people working on 1071 farms, creating some 20,000 man-days in agricultural production areas at a very critical moment.

Strengthening of the self-teaching capabilities of producers' cooperatives and organizations. Thanks to financing contributed by the integrated business climate program (PRIMA) of the European Union (EU), IICA implemented a continuing education project for rural producers

in various fields, such as the pathology that affects numerous crops, the breeding of different animal species and agricultural processing. Eighteen technical guides were produced on CD and cassette, in collaboration with the CACHE local network. This important material, as well as contributing to the self-training of producers' groups, will facilitate the work of institutions and organizations involved in this aspect of the rural milieu.

Improved food security among low-income rural families. With cooperation from Argentina, since 2005 IICA has been implementing a food security program called ProHuerta, involving the promotion of small vegetable gardens to boost family consumption, with a view to improving the diet of the beneficiary families and their general health. In the beginning, this innovative program was limited to the region of Gonaïves but was soon extended to other areas of the country, thanks to the participation of new counterparts such as the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (SAIDC) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). ProHuerta is now a trilateral cooperation program (Canada-Argentina-Haiti) and will be expanding its operations to include five departments of the country over the next five years. The vegetable gardens created under the ProHuerta project have so far benefited over 4000 rural families and more than 40 rural and urban schools.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

The most outstanding results obtained under this strategic priority can be summed as follows:

Consolidation of organic agriculture as a cornerstone of the agricultural sector. Following an initiative originally

implemented in 2001 in collaboration with the Fundación Grupo 73, June 24 was declared Organic Agriculture Day in Haiti. Since 2001, numerous institutions have joined forces each year, including the Haitian Chamber of Organic Agriculture (CHAAB), to organize the day's activities. IICA makes an important contribution each year as it provides an opportunity to show the country's potential for taking advantage of the growing world market of biological products, estimated to be worth over thirty billion dollars in 2009. Since this highly remunerative market is subject to very strict regulations, IICA has provided technical assistance to establish an agency responsible for organic agriculture in Haiti. This effort is in urgent need of support from senior Ministry of Agriculture officials to bring it to fruition.

Contribution to the preparation of a large-scale program for the development of fruit growing in Haiti. In 2007, IICA took part in the implementation of a major project to promote commercial plantations of fruit trees, similar to the one executed in El Salvador. The vision for this program is shared by the Ministry of Agriculture and private sector associations, including the National Association of Mango Exporters (ANEM). The MARNDR-IICA-ANEM mission to El Salvador at the end of 2008 to learn about the Salvadorian experience was a key step in this important process, which will culminate with a large-scale program to promote fruit growing in Haiti.

Effort to afford agricultural students and professionals access to information about the sector. In 2007, IICA established a computerized agricultural documentation center for students, researchers and other professionals who seek information about agriculture and the rural milieu. Numerous training seminars were held on the management of databases, with valuable input from the pertinent Directorate at Headquarters and the Orton Commemorative Library, also

based in Costa Rica. Many institutions that carry out activities in Haiti in the field of agricultural information management participated in the initiative, such as FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture and the agronomy faculties of the universities that are members of the national CACHE network. In the field of human capital development, IICA serves as the link with agricultural education institutions like EARTH University, managing the processes used each year to select suitable candidates for the scholarships that the universities offer to young Haitians. The Office provides important support to the UWC network for the selection of students for scholarships to undertake agricultural administration studies in Venezuela.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

With regard to this IICA strategic priority, the main results achieved between 2002 and 2008 were as follows:

Institution building in the sector (creation of the National Coffee Institute of Haiti). In 2002, IICA provided major support to the design and establishment of the national institute that would be responsible for the coffee industry (similar to those that exist in other Latin American countries). Drawing on its contacts with other IICA Offices in the hemisphere, the Institute mobilized the resources of PROMECAFE to provide government agencies with valuable technical assistance that made it possible to define the structure and functions of the new institution and the core concepts of the decree-law under which the National Coffee Institute of Haiti (INCAH) was created.

Dissemination of specific concepts concerning good agricultural practices among Haitian farmers and students. In 2005, IICA facilitated the participation of a group of farmers in a training

activity in the Dominican Republic on the subject of good agricultural practices for banana growing. This intervention was carried out in collaboration with the Fundación Grupo 73. The following year a workshop was organized for students of the agronomy faculties of the CACHE network in Haiti. The training session was led by an IICA specialist from the Office in Miami. Another two training seminars took place in 2006, on the management of risk and disasters, for beneficiaries of the Project to Support the Victims of the Floods in the Rural Areas of Gonaïves, financed with a donation from USAID.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During the period under review (2002-2008), the Office made great strides in strengthening its relations with strategic counterparts (the public sector, academia, the private sector, grassroots organizations and other international technical assistance and financial agencies).

Relations with National Counterparts

The Office greatly increased its visibility during the period 2002-2008. Institutions and producers' organizations were very pleased with the results of the efforts to combat certain pests. On numerous occasions, the main government counterpart - the Ministry of Agriculture - sought technical assistance from the Office to tackle problems such as the crazy ant and the pathogen *Phytophthora colocasiae* that attacks taro plantations (known as mazonbel in Haiti). IICA also maintains excellent relations with other government counterparts, such as the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry for Women's Issues and Women's Rights and the Ministry of Planning, as well as

with decentralized state-owned enterprises like the National Food Security Office (CNSA) and INCAH.

Relations with International Organizations

The Office's international counterparts were also delighted with the results achieved. IICA played an active part in the process of planning the activities of a number of agencies, such as IFAD's Country Strategic Opportunities Paper (COSOP). The Office also signed formal cooperation agreements with other organizations. For example, IICA signed a protocol of agreement with FAO to pool efforts for the implementation of a series of joint activities on behalf of the Haitian agricultural sector. During the period, 2002-2008, numerous bilateral and multilateral funding agencies supported IICA's activities. It should also be emphasized that great emphasis was placed on horizontal cooperation, a field in which IICA positioned itself well with the work carried out with the Dominican Republic, Argentina and Brazil. The following table shows the external resources that IICA received during the period under review and the source of the funds:

Table 18: External Resources Managed by IICA Between 2002 and 2008.

Source	Legal instruments	Total amount (in US\$)
USAID		1,549,230
USDA / APHIS	1	6,915,628
European Union	3	836,397
Kellogg Foundation	-	1,594,919
CIDA / ARGENTINE COOP	1	799,264
CFC/INIBAP	1	192,625
TOTAL		11,888,063

Source: IICA Office in Haiti.

Cooperation agreements were signed with the Brazilian authorities and the World Bank involving a total of around US\$6.5 million. Disbursement of these resources will begin in 2009.

5. Modernization of the Office

Relocation of the Office and Redefinition of its Operating Structure

In 2004, the IICA Office moved to Pétiion-Ville, a residential neighborhood that is much quieter than the area where it was located for 32 years, in Port-au-Prince. The upshot was that on numerous occasions IICA was able to continue working normally when law and order broke down in the capital. The size of the new premises meant that IICA was able to house the secretariats of the Ministry of Agriculture for a year, from March 2004 to March 2005, after the ministry's offices were sacked during political disturbances. In 2003, IICA redefined its organizational structure and upgraded its logistical resources considerably (system of Internet access, IP phones and more modern computer equipment).

Improvement of the Institutional Image

In addition to the obligation to account for its actions (by means of annual reports) as part of the style of cooperation established by the current Administration, in September 2005 the Office created an e-bulletin that it distributes among its national and international counterparts. Entitled *IICA-HAITI Info*, the bulletin has always been very well received. Ten issues of *IICA-HAITI Info* have been published so far.



The Institute's premises quickly became a forum for the discussion of current agricultural problems after the Office began holding technical meetings that it dubbed "IICA Technical Fridays." Numerous issues, such as rural financing, the energy problem and the production of biofuels have been discussed during these activities.

Training for the Staff of the Office

In 2005, two members of the Office's administrative unit took part in a weeklong training course at IICA Headquarters. That same year, two members of the technical staff also participated in training sessions overseas. Since 2006, all employees have had an opportunity to take Spanish and English language courses.

IICA Office in **Jamaica**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Jamaica

Cynthia Currie¹ and Keisha Johnson²

1. Introduction

The IICA in Jamaica made a major contribution to the development of agriculture and rural life during the period 2002-2008. Especially noteworthy were the efforts to prepare the country to be an active and informed participant in the new trade regimes, advance sustainable rural development and agricultural health and food safety, and strengthen the competitiveness of local agribusiness. The development of human capital has been tremendous through the myriad training activities facilitated by IICA. It is also increasingly evident that the concept of repositioning agriculture and rural life is becoming a very important issue for the Government, as is evident in the priorities established for the reactivation of the local agriculture sector to advance the development of the country. Summarized herein are the results of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda undertaken by IICA during the period 2002-2008. The priority issues of the agenda were informed by national consultations with the members of the agriculture community.


2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Jamaica

For several years, IICA collaborated with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) in an effort to establish a Sustainable Rural Development Strategy for Jamaica. That work has contributed to the foundational elements of what now constitutes the agriculture component of Jamaica's first long-term (25-year) national development plan. The current plan, dubbed Vision 2030, is a work in progress. It incorporates the input of several agencies, including the IICA Office in Jamaica, which serves on the Agriculture Subcommittee. The overall Vision 2030 is being led by the PIOJ and the plan is intended to set the island on a path to achieving developed country status by 2030.

Hurricane relief permitted farmers to resume production activities and continue with their livelihood within a relatively short time after Hurricane Ivan, in 2004, and Hurricane Dean, in 2007, caused extensive devastation. Vegetable and freshwater fish farmers received relief assistance from the relief project funded by IICA, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2004. Greenhouse farmers, poultry farmers in St. Catherine and open field farmers in Elim, along with the Sydney Pagon Agricultural High School, were among the beneficiaries of the various inputs and facility rehabilitation provided by the relief

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project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Pan American Development Foundation (PADF)/Chevron in 2007. IICA executed both projects.

In 2005, the government was presented with a report from IICA detailing Strategies to Improve Disaster Management in the Agriculture Sector, to help it formulate a suitable policy on disaster management and recovery approaches. In 2008, the Ministry of Agriculture launched a National Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Programme.³

The Minister of Agriculture signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with IICA's Director General in 2008 in which the Institute committed to provide technical support to the government's priority areas for modernizing agriculture and increasing investment, productivity and efficiency within the sector. Several commitments of the MOU were fulfilled in 2008, such as the training of extension officers in greenhouse technology and the completion of a feasibility study on the commercial production of pineapple locally. A study to determine the true contribution of agriculture to the economy also began in 2008 as part of the MOU.

The profile of the agricultural sector received a boost in 2007 through the successful hosting of the Seventh Caribbean Week of Agriculture. Over 200 overseas guests attended the event, including ministers of agriculture from the Caribbean region. The IICA Office and Jamaica's Ministry of Agriculture organized the event together.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting of Agricultural Health and Food Safety

An evaluation was conducted of the country's Agricultural Health Programme, with the technical support of IICA, to help develop strategies and proposals towards a more coordinated approach to helping the countries in the region with their agricultural health programs.

IICA has contributed to the planning, training and technical assistance activities of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Coordinating Committee, which coordinates food safety activities.

Jamaica participated in several workshops under the Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services (SAQS) program, aimed at enhancing the technical capacities in agricultural, health and food safety systems in CARIFORUM countries. An emergency action plan for responding to exotic plant pests in Jamaica was created subsequent to the workshops.

The national capacity to respond to, and comply with, the sanitary and phytosanitary standards (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was strengthened through the participation of national officials in several of the meetings of the WTO/SPS Committee held in Geneva, Switzerland. This participation also led to the formulation of recommendations

³ Jamaica Information Service (JIS Kingston), April 21, 2008, Committee to Develop Disaster Management Plan.

for the strengthening of the country's SPS systems to ensure that the infrastructure and systems are compliant with WTO SPS standards.

The Veterinary Division of the Ministry of Agriculture was modernized to improve its human and financial resources, organizational structure and customer service division. The restructuring was informed by an assessment conducted by IICA and the World Animal Health Organization (OIE), and a subsequent implementation plan prepared by IICA. The National Quarantine Programme also got a boost with the acquisition of new risk management analysis software and a computer. These were donated by IICA.

IICA provided seed money to establish a Sweet Potato Technology Research and Development Fund to catalyze the Priority Investment Programme of the MOA development strategy in the areas of crop production. The project involved the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the Christiana Potato Growers Association (CPGA) and the MOA. The initial funds were used to determine the presence and identity of viruses that may negatively impact on sweet potato yields in Jamaica. Entitled "The Detection, Identification and Incidence of Sweet Potato Viruses in Jamaica," the report was completed in 2006 and indicated for the first time a virus complex on sweet potato germplasm in Jamaica.

The relevant stakeholders were sensitized on the prevention of the avian influenza virus. In 2008, IICA assisted the Veterinary Services Division of the MOA to host an Avian Influenza Emergency Depopulation and Disposal Seminar and simulation exercise. IICA also produced the English-language version of a radio documentary series that promoted the prevention of the disease.

IICA supported the elaboration of an index document on pests and diseases of plants in Jamaica that is now available.

b. Promoting of Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Both private and public sector interests in the agriculture sector are more informed about the various trade regimes (Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), WTO, CARICOM/Caribbean Single Market Economy (CSME) and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)), negotiating mechanisms and trade standards. They also have greater understanding of how to position themselves to access and maximize opportunities in world trade, having participated in a series of forums hosted by IICA on trade. These were referred to as The Clearing House on Trade.

An association of pig producers, the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association (JPFA), was formed in 2002 following a study by IICA assessing the pig/pork industry. That association advocated the development and implementation of several industry standards and policy frameworks that have advanced the expansion and coordinated development of the local industry to adequately meet local demand and increase competitiveness.

An association of greenhouse growers, the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association (JGGA) now exists. The JGGA was established in 2007 with assistance from IICA, to promote the use of protective agriculture and ensure the year-round availability of certain food crops that are seasonally scarce because of their vulnerability to changes in weather and certain types of pest infestation when cultivated in the open field. The growing use of this technology will also add

to increased yields and better quality for the specific crops and contribute to the nation's overall food security.

Industry officials lobbied the government for an up-to-date policy framework subsequent to reviewing details of an assessment of the dairy industry conducted by IICA in 2002. Subsequently, the government took steps to reactivate the local dairy industry, which went into decline in the wake of cheaper imports when the industry was liberalized in the 1990s. Annual production of fresh milk fell from 38.8 million liters in 1992 to 14.1 million liters in 2008. To revive the sector, in 2008 the government made funding available to expand breed stock, improve pastures and modernize farm equipment and operations to help increase production above the current 9% of local demand and make the industry competitive again.⁴ The island's 70 small dairy farmers who support the industry should see an improvement in their livelihood as the subsector is revived.

IICA organized Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) awareness for the MOA and other key local agencies that resulted in the MOA coordinating actions in this area at the national level.

Annually, IICA sponsors an Agribusiness Award to promote the importance of agribusiness in agriculture by recognizing and rewarding excellence and innovation of agribusiness entrepreneurs. There have been eight awardees since 2002.

The Improving Jamaica's Agricultural Productivity (IJAP) project got under way in 2008, in support of the proposed expansion and sustainable development of the greenhouse and marine fisheries subsectors to strengthen the nation's food security by 2011. IJAP is being facilitated with funding from

CIDA in association with the Government of Jamaica. It is intended to have a direct impact by increasing the incomes of over 2500 fishers, 530 fish vendors and the 5-7% of the local population that relies on the South Coast for its livelihood. Another 120 greenhouse farmers and their families also stand to benefit directly from the outcomes of the project. IICA Jamaica is the project's executing agency, on behalf of CIDA.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) was strengthened to make it more competitive and progressive. Since 2002, the rural women producers have benefited from ongoing skill training and capacity-building exercises. A revolving loan scheme (the Informal Credit Programme) provided funding for business expansion of several members who might not have qualified for loans from traditional lending institutions. IICA also provided institutional support in partnership with other entities, such as USAID and the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme (CPEC). The overall outcome has been the skill enhancement, increased productivity, earning capacity and competitiveness of the rural women producers. The organization's membership also grew by approximately 30% during the period under review and strengthened linkages with the sister networks in the region to facilitate information exchange and lay the foundations for engaging in regional trade.

Another initiative completed was the Jamaica Bauxite Institute (JBI), Jamaica Aluminium Company (JAMALCO)/IICA Mocho

⁴ Jamaica Information Service, (JIS Kingston) September 15, 2008, *Government Pumps Money into Dairy Sector*.

Goat Development Project (2002-2005), which initiated goat production in recovered, mined-out bauxite lands. The project provided employment opportunities and increased revenues for the participating farmers from Clarendon.

The Walkerswood Project (2003-2005) coordinated by JBI/IICA and West Indies Alumina Company (WINDALCO), which sought to utilize reclaimed bauxite lands to produce raw materials particularly for the agro-processing industry in Walkerswood, resulted in a thriving industry benefiting both the agro-processor and residents. Local tenant farmers participating in the project were organized into produce groups and benefited from a steady stream of income, having entered into a contractual agreement with Walkerswood to provide them a guaranteed market. The Walkerswood operation grew and the brand penetrated overseas markets and remains a household name today. IICA provided managerial, technical and professional services to the participants in the project.

Members of the JNRWP, JPFA and Jamaica Egg Farmers' Association benefited from training in small business management, ICT, environmental awareness and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), among others, provided by USAID and the Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CPEC) training projects.

A holistic development plan to spur economic and social empowerment in the rural communities of Charles Town and Elim has been ongoing since 2003. Because of this, residents' livelihoods have improved since the formation of the Charles Town Bee Farmers' Association, which is constantly expanding in operational size and enlisting and training new members. Research is also underway to support the commercial production of exotic herbs and medicinal plants commonly found in the area, with a view to creating an herb/medicinal

plant industry in Charles Town. Community members have also benefited from governance training and a range of skills upgrading efforts. Furthermore, the Elim Friendly Society was established with assistance from IICA. Literacy levels among residents of this rural community have increased through literacy programs coordinated by IICA and the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL). Residents have been trained in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and good governance. Farming activities within this community have improved and expanded with the implementation of a much needed irrigation system.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Representatives of nine local producers' organizations (the Jamaica Egg Farmers Association, Cotton Growers, the Jamaica Pig Farmers' Association, the Santoy Cooperative, the Ebony Park HEART Academy, the Ornamental Fish Farmers' Association, the Christiana Sweet Potato Growers Association, Organics and Jamaica Farms) reported improvements in several facets of their operations after participating in the Partners of the Americas' Farmer to Farmer Program, funded by USAID and managed by IICA. Sixty-five volunteers provided technical assistance in various types of farm management practices and farming techniques and introduced the use of various technologies to the local groups over a three-year period.

Twelve extension officers from the Ministry of Agriculture and a private horticulturalist were trained in protective agriculture and the science of greenhouse technology in Costa Rica. Their training prepared them to provide relevant technical support to the burgeoning greenhouse subsector in Jamaica.

Jamaica participated in the Western Hemisphere Conference on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety held in 2008 in San



Jose, Costa Rica. IICA coordinated efforts with the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure Jamaica was represented among the 18 participants at this very important meeting, which highlighted the importance of ratifying the biosafety protocol that regulates trade in genetically modified organisms and protects countries from associated risks.

IICA has assisted with the development of databases for the Jamaica Pig Farmers Association and the Jamaica Greenhouse Growers Association, which enables both entities to have updated data and information, making them more competitive.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

Throughout the reporting period, many of the technical cooperation activities were implemented in collaboration with a large number of strategic partners. Some of those collaborations included:

- Provision of hurricane relief, administered with funding assistance from USAID, MOA, CIDA and PADP/Chevron.
- Implementation of several community development projects in partnership with, or with the support of, USAID REACT, the Social Development Commission, JBI, WINDALCO, JAMLCO, the EU, the Partners of the Americas Farmer to Farmer and others.
- Training and Human Resource Development conducted in association with Partners of the Americas' Farmer to Farmer, the Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning, the Jamaica Agricultural Society, CPEC and others.
- Research undertaken or facilitated in collaboration with CARDI, PIOJ and intra-agency personnel.
- Policy development pursued in partnership with the Organization of American States (OAS), MOA, PIOJ and WTO.
- As a result of the OAS/IICA Agro-tourism Linkages Project (2005-2008), stakeholders in the tourism and agriculture sectors collaborated to identify the hindrances to strengthening the linkages between the two sectors. The stakeholders also recognized the need to develop an agrotourism framework for Jamaica and to strengthen the marketing relationship between rural small farmers and farming communities with the hotels, tour operators and other service providers in the tourism industry.
- In 2008, the European Union, through its Rural Diversification Programme (EURDP), approved funding for IICA to undertake the development of an agrotourism program in the Buff Bay Valley. The project is the first of its kind and aims to create a holistic tourism experience incorporating farm tours, farmers markets, heritage sites and eco tours, all operated by the community residents.

5. Modernization of the Office

The range of technical expertise within the Office has widened with the appointment of permanent technical staff to lead and support activities that form part of the technical cooperation agenda.



Upgrading the Office's technological platform has increased the efficiency of the work processes and facilitated the expansion of the range of some administrative services that the Office performs, thus minimizing the need for, and costs of, outsourcing. The upgraded communication technologies have facilitated ease and speed of access to other offices as well as contained the associated utility costs.

The Spanish language competency of staff is improving and an increasing number of team members are developing fluency in the language to be able to communicate with Headquarters and other IICA offices in Latin America.

The Documentation Centre was modernized to serve the public more efficiently. Library resources are catalogued and a dedicated library technician is now in place to serve the Institute's growing clientele.

The vulnerability to power surges was minimized with the acquisition of a generator. The Office can continue to operate and serve its clientele in the event of service disruption from

the national grid. The generator also ensures a quick return to functionality if power is lost during a hurricane.

The Office's online presence through the IICA/Jamaica website facilitates 24-hour access by our clientele, who can view or download a fair range of information at their convenience. Extensive upgrading work was also completed on the website to make it more user-friendly and informative.

The Office also launched a quarterly newsletter to improve communication of its activities with the agriculture community and general public.

IICA is an annual exhibitor at the Caribbean's largest agriculture show, the Denbigh Agricultural and Industrial Show, held over a three-day period each year in Jamaica. IICA also sits on the Denbigh Planning Committee and integrates the presentation of its annual Youth in Agriculture Award into this event. The Denbigh platform has helped tremendously in publicizing the IICA name and service to new entrants to the agriculture sector as well as to the general public.

IICA Office in **Saint Lucia**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Saint Lucia

Una May Gordon¹

1. Introduction

For the past seven years, the IICA Office in Saint Lucia has sought to respond continually to the challenges posed by today's rapidly changing world. In particular, the Office carried out strategic interventions designed to respond to the impact of globalization on agriculture development and contributed to the country's overall development agenda.

This report presents a summary of the results of the actions taken to support agriculture and rural development in Saint Lucia during the period 2002-2008. IICA's achievements during the period were based on the framework of the priorities established in the 2002-2006 and 2006-2010 Medium Term Plans, the Caribbean Regional Agendas and IICA's National Technical Cooperation Agenda for the Eastern Caribbean States (ECS).

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Saint Lucia

During the period under review, IICA's cooperation activities led to adjustments in the policy framework for agricultural

development in the ECS subregion and, more specifically, for Saint Lucia in developing the national agendas for technical cooperation 2002-2006 and 2006-2010. Those four-year agendas, prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries (MALFF), reflected the strategic focus and priorities for agriculture of the Government of Saint Lucia (GOSL), academia and private sector partners.

Technical support was provided to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat for the development of the OECS Policy Framework and Strategic Plan for Agriculture. Guided by this plan and coupled with the provisions of the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements, the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and its AGRO-Matrix (an operational tool) and the Jagdeo Initiative, the Office assisted the MALFF in developing its strategic framework for repositioning agriculture and rural life and formulating its policy for agricultural development for 2002-2015. IICA also facilitated a substantial revision of this framework in 2008, resulting in a new agriculture policy for 2009-2015.

The Office continued to support the development of knowledge capabilities and advance the ministerial agenda within the MALFF and the Secretariat of the OECS based in Saint Lucia by facilitating their continued participation in national, regional and hemispheric dialogue. Saint Lucia has participated in every hemispheric meeting and every meeting

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of the Caribbean Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu since 2002. IICA facilitated the OECS Secretariat's participation in the Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Summit Process (GRICA), in 2006, and in the Ecuador Ministerial.

IICA contributed to the building of human and institutional capabilities by training personnel in the public and private sectors. Key areas targeted for capacity building throughout the period were: (i) appreciation and application of the theory of the "New Agriculture" for development; (ii) project identification, formulation and implementation; (iii) use of information and educational material and tools for transformation; (iv) agricultural extension and communication methodologies; and, (v) new trends in agricultural health and food safety.

The vulnerability of the economy to natural disaster was brought to the fore once again when in 2007 Saint Lucia was hit by Hurricane Dean, which inflicted significant damage on the economy as a whole and on the agricultural sector in particular. The Cabinet of Ministers charged IICA with directing and leading the effort to provide the GOSL with assessments of the damage caused by the hurricane. The expertise of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) was mobilized and an assessment of damage to all economic sectors was conducted. IICA led the team assessment of the agricultural sector and, within two weeks of the hurricane, a comprehensive report on the direct and indirect damage to the sector was presented to the Government.

IICA also concentrated efforts on strengthening the Alliance framework and its constituent members, which is an effective mechanism through which IICA continues to execute its work in the communities. These efforts, executed with support

from the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Ministry of Agriculture, also served the purpose of increasing the participation of women and youth in the development process. National chapters of both the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (CANROP) and the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) were launched in Saint Lucia.

In 2007/2008, IICA was asked to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the MALFF, the results of which will be used to realign the ministry to better understand its role and readiness to meet current demands from the agriculture and related sectors that it serves.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA's Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Program continued to support the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System (NAHFSS), to satisfy trade requirements and increase production. The country realizes that it needs to implement plant and animal health and food safety standards in order to access international food markets, and that the private sector has a critical role to play in this regard. A Technical Committee composed of public and private sector personnel was set up to develop and monitor AHFS activities. Terms of reference were prepared and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers, which formally recognized the committee as the body responsible for overseeing sanitary and phytosanitary activities and leading the discussions on participation in the proposed Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA).



The importance of this committee was further shown when the Ministry of Agriculture mandated a study for a more formal mechanism to oversee the NAHFS System. IICA undertook the study and recommended that a committee with a secretariat be established immediately, with plant health, animal health and food safety sections continuing to operate. The Ministry of Agriculture accepted the recommendations and is now considering how to implement them.

Through the Initiative for the Americas, IICA facilitated the participation of country representatives at the meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), held in Geneva. IICA participates in the National Codex Committee, a subcommittee of the NAHFS Committee, which is chaired by the St Lucia Bureau of Standards.

IICA implemented a project to determine the effects of the country's participation in SPS committee meetings, particularly on efforts to strengthen institutional capabilities to improve the elements and resources available for more active and efficient participation. The project was entitled "Development of Sustainable Institutional Capabilities in the Countries of the Americas to Consolidate their Active Participation in the SPS Committee and Promote Implementation of the WTO Agreement on the Application of SPS." Discussions and workshops were held to determine a shared level of development and identify the weaknesses and strengths of the SPS service. The results were submitted to the ministry and the NAHFS Committee.

An Agricultural Health Emergency Action Plan for Exotic Pests and Diseases, incorporating considerations for both animals and plants, was developed through a special project entitled "Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services"

implemented by IICA with European Union funding. The project also prepared a cost recovery mechanism for AHFS and the country benefited from the training activities implemented by the project.

IICA continues to support the monitoring of exotic diseases in animals through a special Veterinary Epidemiology Project, which is being implemented in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD).

Throughout the period, IICA supported capacity building among farmers and technicians in order to institutionalize Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for increased competitiveness. Activities were undertaken in collaboration with the St. Lucia Bureau of Standards and implemented with funds provided through a Canadian International Development Agency/Caribbean Regional Human Resource Development Programme for Economic Competitiveness (CIDA/CPEC) Project. Training sessions were undertaken and manuals distributed on GAPs for commodities. Information is available about critical measures for consistent training for the production of safe and wholesome food by farmers. IICA received support from agencies such as the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI). As a result of the collaboration, technicians, producers, input suppliers, pack house workers, truck drivers and exporters received training in, and or/have access to, documented procedures for GAPs, the farm codes of practice for packing and transportation. IICA provided technical support for a GAPs Farmer Certification Scheme. A generic document was subsequently produced entitled Operational Procedures of a Certification Scheme for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables in Trade.



IICA helped significantly improve the capacity of pig farmers to adhere to food safety practices during production and slaughter through a workshop on pig production implemented with assistance from the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA). The volunteer also visited pig farmers and held discussions with farmers in all the agricultural regions.

In the area of pest management, initiatives were undertaken to mitigate the threat of the giant African snail. Through the IICA Emergency Fund, technicians were trained and public awareness materials prepared. An action plan for dealing with the pest was prepared and is available. Technicians were trained to identify witches' broom of cocoa. Following the training, an island-wide survey to detect the presence of the disease revealed that it was present in cocoa in all the agricultural regions. IICA provided advisory support to the Banana Pests and Diseases Committee set up to advise the banana industry on appropriate approaches for the management of pests and diseases on bananas.

IICA led a country team that carried out a review and made recommendations for sigatoka leaf spot monitoring. The capacity to identify and respond to emergencies and emerging issues was improved through participation of technicians in regional and national workshops on two banana diseases (black sigatoka and moko diseases). These two diseases have been found in the neighboring countries and are considered a threat to the industry in Saint Lucia. Detection surveys conducted over the years have been negative. In addition, technical support was provided for banana leaf spot (sigatoka) disease control applicators. The Institute also provided technical support for the development of awareness material (video) for moko disease of banana.

IICA provided technical support for the management of pesticides and toxic chemicals through membership of the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board and active participation in the board's activities.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

During the period under review, the Office remained acutely aware that the development of competitive agribusinesses and agroindustries was crucial for creating employment and income opportunities. Therefore, IICA's actions were intended to support an enabling environment involving public/private partnerships, the building of sectoral linkages, industries and institutions, and support for improved knowledge and management skills for market-oriented agriculture. To achieve these and other goals, the following actions were undertaken:

- The enabling environment for private sector participation was strengthened with the launch of the Saint Lucia Chapter of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA) in 2002. IICA conducted a study to review the current system of financing for agriculture, which resulted in the development of an Agribusiness Risk Management Analysis Instrument.
- With CABA and the various government ministries, IICA facilitated capacity building, training and education for increased technical capabilities to participate in the discussions on the multilateral trading system and to encourage positive change in resource use and in the attitudes of producers and processors.



- Through cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Ministry of Commerce, the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) and the Economic Unit of the OECS, the MALFF received continuous support in guiding stakeholders through a process of education on the status of the different international, hemispheric and regional trading systems. These include the reform program on agriculture, the negotiations of the European Union - African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (EU-ACP), the imperatives for change as a result of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) process and the creation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).
- IICA helped stakeholders in various agroindustries identify and plan for the challenges and capitalize on opportunities within their industries by conducting a number of studies and development plans. These included:
 - i. Passion Fruit Industry: IICA supported a study entitled “The Status of the Passion Fruit Industry in Saint Lucia.” This study provided the basis for business discussions and served to stimulate wider discussions about the larger possibilities for the juice industry and for tree crop development. A small industry group for passion fruit was established as a result of these actions;
 - ii. Herbal Industry: The herbal industry, which agriculture stakeholders identified as one that offered possibilities for increased opportunities for the sector. IICA helped convene the international conference organized by the Caribbean Herbal Business Association and the Caribbean Association of Researchers and Herbal Practitioners entitled “Advancing Caribbean Herbs in the 21st Century”;
 - iii. Livestock/Pig/Pork Industry: to aid development in the livestock subsector, IICA presented a proposal to the GOSL for the establishment of an institutional framework for the development of the livestock subsector, focusing on a Livestock Development Committee and a private sector umbrella organization. The Institute also conducted a comprehensive assessment of the pig/pork industry and supported a workshop held to present the report and promote dialogue among stakeholders. The dialogue allowed actors in the industry to highlight areas of concern, discuss the assessment and reach agreement on the elements of a business plan for the development of the industry. IICA continues to support the efforts of the Pig Farmers Cooperative to strengthen its governance structure and management and supply capabilities;
 - iv. Beekeeping Industry: the Institute conducted a comprehensive assessment of the beekeeping industry with a view to providing actors with information that would assist them in identifying areas with development and business potential; and,
 - v. Banana Industry: the banana industry remains the single most important agricultural activity in Saint Lucia. IICA has continued to lend support throughout the development and transformation taking place in light of the loss of preferential treatment for bananas. A “Position Paper on a Marketing Infrastructure for Non-Banana Agriculture in Saint Lucia” was developed and presented to a select group of interested private and public sector entities.
- In 2002, IICA provided technical support to the restructuring of the farmer-owned Agriculturist Association and assisted



with the drafting of a five-year business plan for its development. IICA also provided assistance to the Black Bay Farmers Association to develop a five-year strategic business plan for its effective and efficient management and operation and the related agricultural enterprise. The association continues to receive technical and development assistance from IICA.

- Actions carried out throughout the period focused on the strengthening of the inter-institutional framework to foster stronger linkages between the agriculture and tourism sectors. A document presenting the elements of a subregional agro-ecotourism project to be located in the six IICA member countries of the Eastern Caribbean States (ECS) was presented to the OECS Secretariat for consideration. The OECS Authority accepted the project and endorsed its implementation. IICA is actively assisting the secretariat in seeking funding for the implementation of the project.
- IICA facilitated a number of consultations among the various stakeholders in both sectors and proposed a national multi-stakeholder committee. The Institute then developed terms of reference for the committee.
- At the level of implementation, IICA collaborated with the Marketing Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture to promote fresh fruits as an integral part of the annual Saint Lucia Jazz Festival and other international sporting events. The Office also continued to work with the various stakeholders to identify and address the constraints to reliable supplies of local fresh foods to the hospitality sector.
- The Institute supported the MALFF's extensive consultations with leaders of the agriculture and related sectors with a view to reaching agreement on a new

marketing infrastructure targeting non-banana farmers; and at the same time articulated a framework for the development of agribusiness, access to credit and the amalgamation of farmer's organizations.

- IICA continues to be an important source of information for all stakeholders in the agriculture sector, including farmers, technicians and students. In 2008, it succeeded in facilitating Saint Lucia's participation in, and membership of, the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA).

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Efforts concentrated on the provision of assistance to develop and implement sustainable community projects, to strengthen capacities for decision making, accessing financing, product development and the development of standards for fresh and processed agrifood products from the communities.

Throughout the period, IICA provided technical support to a wide range of community groups to increase their organizational and management capabilities. Training was also provided in areas such as project development, entrepreneurship, agro-processing and preservation, packaging and labeling, marketing, business management, trade and the environment.

IICA assisted the efforts of the St. Lucia Network of Rural Women Producers (SLNRWP) targeted at women's groups and individuals and supported by the Ministry of Social Transformation and the Ministry of Agriculture. The aim was to contribute to the promotion of women's role in

development, increase exposure and income-earning potential and the development of new marketable products through value addition.

The Secretariat of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (CAFY) and the local chapter, the St. Lucia Agricultural Forum for Youth (SLAFY), continue to receive support from IICA. Support was given to strengthen their governance and operational structures and for the hosting of four executive meetings of CAFY and four regional development workshops.

IICA supported the formulation of a regional strategy for youth engagement in agriculture and facilitated the hosting of the first Alliance/CAFY regional essay competition on "A New Agriculture."

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA's work in this area focused on the transfer and modernization of production technologies for sustainable agriculture and included collaboration with CARDI, CIDA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other institutions whose work has an impact on agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia:

- In collaboration with CIDA, an irrigation pump was purchased and installed to service members of the Black Bay Farmers Association.
- The UNDP and the Bank of Saint Lucia assisted IICA in facilitating the transfer of technology from Costa Rican

entrepreneurs to Saint Lucian farmers and technicians (the building and installing of low-cost biogas units on farmers' holdings).

- CARDI and IICA, through the IICA/CARDI collaboration agreement, supported various programs aimed at development in the agriculture sector. During the period under review, IICA and CARDI implemented five programs together. These included intervention targeting protected agriculture and organic farming.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Throughout the period, IICA continued to lend support to the work of the national biodiversity committee and to the development of the national biosafety framework. The Institute also provided support to the hosting of a national seminar on climate change and food production and an international seminar on biofuels.

To evaluate and determine IICA's action for an Environment and Natural Resource Management Strategy in the Caribbean Region, the Office commissioned a study, the result of which should be used to guide the Institute's decision making.

In collaboration with the FAO, a report based on IICA's field experiences in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was presented to an international workshop containing five case studies on good practices for risk reduction in agriculture and agroforestry against hydro-meteorological hazards.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

The establishment of long-term partnerships continues to be the cornerstone of IICA's work. Throughout the period, the Office sought to strengthen cooperation with a number of national and subregional institutions whose work has an impact on agriculture and rural life in Saint Lucia and the ECS. In 2007, the efforts culminated with the systematic identification and engagement of all the relevant agencies to form a consortium for cooperation. In 2008, IICA and all the other agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to undertake specific programs for development in the agriculture and related sectors.

To date, eleven agencies have signed the Consortium Agreement. The agencies currently involved are:

- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI)
- French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
- *Centre National du Machinisme Agricole, du Génie Rural, des Eaux et de la Forêt* (CEMAGREF)
- French Embassy to the OECS Member States
- *Institut de Recherche pour Le Développement* (IRD)
- French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA)

- *Université des Antilles et de la Guyane* (UAG)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- University of the West Indies, St Augustine (UWI).

In addition, programs were implemented with some embassies of IICA member countries accredited to Saint Lucia, including the embassies of Mexico and Venezuela.

5. Modernization of the Office

Changes in technology and information systems posed new challenges for IICA as it delivered services to its clients during the first years of the period under review. However, after careful assessment, significant upgrades of the Office's infrastructure and technological platform allowed for greater efficiency and improved delivery of products and services to internal and external clients. These upgrades also permitted the staff to play an active part in the Institute's affairs throughout the hemisphere.

The upgraded computer infrastructure and network enabled the Office to advance its efforts to serve as a window of global information on agriculture for all its clients. The modernization of the Office also meant that the staff had to upgrade its competencies. Opportunities were created for staff to strengthen their technological capabilities and to develop positive attitudes towards change, at all levels.

IICA Office in St. Kitts and Nevis



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in St. Kitts and Nevis

Augustine Merchant¹

1. Introduction

In St. Kitts and Nevis, IICA started a consultative process with a wide cross-section of stakeholders. The aim of the process was to encourage dialogue and consensus building with an eye to providing medium and long-term strategies. These strategies formed the basis for the National Agenda for the Development of Agriculture.

The implementation of the national agenda over the period 2002-2008 therefore contributed significantly to the repositioning of agriculture and rural life in the country.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in St. Kitts and Nevis

The annual Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA) was organized with technical support from IICA. This event provided an opportunity for senior Ministry of Agriculture staff and other stakeholders to meet, dialogue and reach a consensus with their regional counterparts on issues that

assisted in advancing the sector. The 2005 CWA was held in St. Kitts and Nevis and was of particular significance, given that the sugar industry had closed down shortly before and there was a need for a smooth transition to other agriculture-related enterprises. Sugarcane dominated the landscape for over 300 years and the closure provided a fertile environment for discussions about a 'new' agriculture. Some of the topics introduced as potential development options included agroenergy, agrobiotechnology, agrobiodiversity and agrotourism. In addition, local participants became more informed about the various dimensions of food security and the Jagdeo Initiative. The CWA not only raised the profile of the agricultural sector but also provided an opportunity for producers to showcase their produce and products to a regional audience at the Trade Show and Exhibition.

In 2006, with technical support from IICA, the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis approved a Sugar Adaptation Strategy (SAS) for the period 2006-2013. The aim of this strategy is to transform the economy as it adjusts to the new economic and social challenges brought about by the closure of the sugar industry. The SAS includes a comprehensive agricultural development strategy and work plan designed by the Institute at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture. This program is being implemented and has contributed to the efforts to modernize, diversify and reposition the agricultural and rural milieu.

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With technical support from IICA, St. Kitts and Nevis participated in several regional agricultural policy deliberations as well as the ministerial meetings held within the context of the Summit of the Americas process. Consequently, it contributed to the development of a shared vision of agriculture and rural life with other countries in the hemisphere. In this regard, the country adopted and, is implementing, the strategic actions needed to fulfill the mandates of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the Jagdeo Initiative. The AGRO-Matrix, which forms the base for an information system, was actively promoted and became more widely understood. In addition, there is now growing acceptance of it as an appropriate instrument to: (i) conceptualize a holistic approach to agricultural and rural development policies and strategies; (ii) develop interventions aimed at addressing specific issues such as diversification, competitiveness and rural prosperity; and, (iii) promote linkages among the various elements of the system, such as agrotourism, agriculture and health. The AGRO-Matrix was used as a frame of reference in conducting the 2007 National Consultation with Leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life in St. Kitts and Nevis. The study highlighted the following three areas: (i) national experience with regard to strategic issues; (ii) the impact of those efforts on the improvement of agriculture and rural life; and (iii) leaders' expectations with respect to the future of agriculture and rural life.

The Institute also sought to broaden the horizon and network of young people in the hemisphere. Two young professionals from the Ministry of Agriculture participated in the Forum for Young Leaders, held at the Institute's Center for Leadership in Agriculture in Costa Rica. As a result, they were able to enhance their leadership skills and expand their understanding of current issues that affect agricultural development.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Two of the critical issues facing the agrifood sector of St. Kitts and Nevis are its ability to protect domestic plants, animal and human health and, simultaneously, to comply with international world trade regulations. In an effort to address these concerns, the Institute helped establish an Agricultural Health and Food Safety Committee. Through this committee, the Institute was able to engage in capacity-building activities and to:

- With assistance from the Pan American Health Organization, review archaic food safety laws and develop more modern legislation consistent with World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations;
- Collaborate with other agencies in conducting regional training courses for technicians from the Federation. These courses included best practices for the prevention and control of avian influenza, giant African snail, papaya mealy bug and hibiscus mealy bug;
- Develop and distribute facts sheets on important agricultural health and food safety issues;
- Collaborate with the Caribbean Development Bank in co-hosting a regional training of trainers' workshop and symposium on food hygiene and sanitation practice. This workshop was held for participants from the nine countries that hosted the Cricket World Cup. The St. Kitts and Nevis Office, with support from the Regional Agricultural Health



and Food Safety Specialist, was subsequently engaged in an educational and awareness food safety program; and,

- Assist the Ministry of Agriculture in conducting a two-day intensive certification course for 37 pesticide operators. The individuals who participated enhanced their competency in the judicious use of pesticide.

The West Indian fruit fly, *Anastrepha Obliqua*, had become a significant pest in St. Kitts and Nevis. Its destruction of a wide range of fruits was particularly significant as the country sought to diversify its agricultural base. In 2002, the Institute initiated a control program with the assistance of the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA), IICA/Mexico, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the University of Gainesville and the United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS). The following actions were pursued and incidence of pest infestation was significantly reduced.

- Training of technicians in procedures for handling and releasing parasitoids
- Survey protocols for determining the presence and level of indigenous natural enemies and monitoring parasitoids levels
- Preparation, introduction and release of parasitoids
- The use of a low-risk, insecticide-treated sphere that provided a safer way to control the fruit flies without using the conventional broad spectrum of toxic insecticides.

The coconut palm forms an important part of the landscape of St. Kitts and Nevis. In recent years, the tropical aesthetic that

they created has been adversely affected by the high incidence of lethal yellow disease. Consequently, IICA contributed to the Ministry of Agriculture Coconut Rehabilitation Programme, providing technical input and planting materials valued at EC\$5000.

During the reporting period, agricultural health and food safety personnel participated in sanitary and phytosanitary meetings held in Geneva, Switzerland. Attendance at these meetings was made possible by IICA's Initiative in SPS for the countries of the Americas. The initiative had a positive impact and contributed to development in the area of SPS. Some of the positive impacts included: (i) the Federation had an opportunity to provide input for the decision-making process as a result of participating; (ii) understanding of SPS issues and obligations under the WTO/SPS agreement improved; (iii) an enquiry point/notification authority was established; and, (iv) both public and private sector stakeholders were involved in the SPS committee.

The introduction to the Federation of a number of exotic plant and animal diseases demonstrated the devastating consequences of inadequate quarantine protection. Consequently, IICA conducted a number of training programs that improved the quarantine service. One of the major, concentrated efforts was the implementation of a European Union-funded project entitled "Strengthening Agri-Quarantine Services." Some of the outputs of this project were:

- The development of plant and animal preparedness plans for St. Kitts and Nevis;
- The development of accreditation programs for private plant and animal health professionals to perform regulatory functions under government supervision;

- The training of four nationals in the use of software for import risk analysis for both plants and animals;
- The development of a harmonized registration procedure for agricultural pesticides; and,
- Training for enquiry point and notification authority officials.

Several training workshops in good agricultural practices were conducted with IICA's support. However, "Institutionalising Good Agricultural Practices in selected commodities in the OECS," the project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, was the most comprehensive program instituted. Some of the outputs of this project were:

- Training in due diligence/traceback, inspection and certification procedures;
- Improvement in the Multi-purpose Laboratory's diagnostic services;
- Public awareness initiative; and,
- Development of quality control systems.

Consequently, many of the participants are aware of the food safety principles and practices required along the agrifood chain and are applying them to their farming enterprises.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA continued to support national efforts aimed at raising awareness of policy and trade issues that are critical to

sustainable agricultural and rural development. In this regard, the Office collaborated with various local, regional and international agencies in hosting a number of trade symposiums.

With the Institute's support, over 300 people, including crop and livestock farmers, importers/exporters, agro-processors, beekeepers and students, took part in the highly interactive meetings and are more cognizant of the requirements that are essential to enhance competitiveness in local and international markets.

IICA also was instrumental in the formation of an Inter-Agency Forum on Trade. This forum, made up of senior public sector officials and representatives from the private sector, provided updates of current trade issues. Ministry of Trade officials used these meetings to inform members about the status of the negotiation process. In addition, personnel who attended the SPS agreement meeting in Geneva were able to provide reports on those meetings.

The Institute designed and implemented a Gap survey regarding the approval, implementation and enforceability status of draft harmonized policies, legislation, regulations and protocols. As a result, a list of fiscal incentives for agro-enterprises was also drafted and presented to the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis. Public and private sector officials were sensitized to the importance of a strengthened policy, legislative and regulatory framework for national competitiveness.

Through the support provided by IICA, the members from various associations on both islands benefited from training in strategic planning that enhanced their agribusinesses. Over 85 entrepreneurs benefited from these training sessions, which were conducted locally. One of the initiatives pursued, and which contributed to the competitiveness of agribusinesses,



was the Caribbean Regional Intern/Scholarship Program (CRISP). Funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the overall objective of this project was to equip farmers and other stakeholders involved in agricultural enterprises with the necessary information, skills and tools to develop and manage their businesses more profitably. Participants focused on a series of training courses in order to complete the program and are now better able to manage their enterprises.

IICA provided guidance to financial institutions in the Federation and encouraged them to increase their annual loan contributions to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In addition, the Institute developed a credit risk analysis instrument and presented it to the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Banking for its perusal and comments. The rationale for applying this type of analysis is that enterprises are inherently risky and, therefore, require enhanced planning, analysis and management in order to be successful. IICA collaborated with the Eastern Caribbean Institute of Banking and held a consultation with stakeholders from the subregion. This instrument would have contributed towards improving the environment for lending in the agricultural sector.

The closure of the Sugar Industry in 2005 highlighted the urgent need to strengthen the linkages between tourism and agriculture. IICA responded expeditiously and intensified efforts to achieve those objectives. One of the activities undertaken was the hosting of a national agrotourism symposium. This symposium explored opportunities for forging stronger and more effective links and laid the groundwork for the elaboration of a strategy to link with both sectors. These outputs were further enhanced by an agrotourism workshop, which took place during the Fifth Caribbean Week of Agriculture. The workshop brought together regional partners from the agriculture and tourism sectors to share and exchange successes,

experiences and lessons learnt in the creation of agrotourism products and services. One of the outstanding achievements of the conference was the memorandum of understanding signed between the Caribbean Hotel Association and IICA to promote agrotourism linkages in the Caribbean.

The three-year OAS/IICA project, “Strengthening of the Tourism Sector through the Development of Linkages with the Agricultural Sector in the Caribbean,” consolidated and further enhanced previous efforts. This project provided an inventory and market studies on agrotourism enterprises, a DVD that documented various best practices in agrotourism, an agrotourism strategy document for St. Kitts and Nevis, and a community tourism development strategy.

IICA provided technical and financial support to enable the St. Kitts Farmers’ Cooperative to take part in the agricultural exposition held annually in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands. As a result, the farmers were able to advertise their products and develop new markets. In addition, the Office collaborated with other agencies in organizing special events that served as platforms for the promotion and sale of agricultural products.

The Institute supported and facilitated improved dialogue between producers and the hospitality industry in St. Kitts. Success was achieved in 2007 when the St. Kitts Farmers’ Cooperative signed a contract to provide the Marriott Hotel with fresh fruits and vegetables. In Nevis, a similar arrangement was already in existence. This was consolidated and strengthened and, as a result, the farmers increased their sales to the Four Seasons Hotel.

IICA collaborated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in sponsoring a project entitled, “Enhancing the participation of marginalized

youth in the development process of the Eastern Caribbean States.” This project was able to identify and train 20 individuals in selected skills, while at the same time empowering and partnering them through the development of enterprises. Five people were able to establish economic enterprises and improve their livelihood.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA supported and strengthened a number of youth groups, agribusiness organizations, cooperatives and associations so they could participate more fully in the socioeconomic development of the Federation.

The St. Kitts and Nevis National Agricultural Youth Forum was established as a vehicle to assist in the development of a viable agricultural sector. One of its outstanding achievements was the hosting of a week of activities to celebrate its second anniversary. Over 30 youths from the Caribbean participated in the event and were able to exchange views on possible solutions to common problems, develop a network for further interaction and enhance the process of Caribbean integration.

The leadership and organizational skills of the young people were also enhanced thanks to their participation in workshops such as “Priority Setting, Organizational Development and Management” and “Leadership Development and Policy Integration for Youths in Agriculture.” IICA is cognizant of the need to develop skills and love for agriculture at a young age. Consequently, for a three-year period it facilitated practical agricultural training for high-school students. This training contributed significantly to the students’ School Based

Assessment Programme. In addition, it opened up avenues for some participants to pursue careers in agriculture.

Project Strong is a non-formal institution that promotes basic education among socially marginalized and economically disadvantaged youths. During the reporting period, IICA assisted the institution in developing a project entitled, “Preparing Disadvantaged Teenagers for Self-employment.” A grant of CDN\$10,846 was received from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives to purchase equipment, furnishings and materials for the program. As a result, skills training in areas such as beekeeping, needlework, basketry and agro-processing were introduced and remain ongoing.

IICA was also instrumental in introducing beekeeping as a viable source of income. Subsequently, a project proposal was developed for the establishment of a Beekeepers Cooperative and CDN\$12,404 in grant funds were received to undertake development activities. In an effort to add value and utilize the wax, the Institute was able to obtain technical assistance from the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA) to conduct training in the manufacturing of candles, soap and polish from beeswax. As a result, members were able to generate additional income by utilizing their skills.

Through IICA’s support, the productive capacity of the Nevis Growers’ Cooperative Society was greatly enhanced thanks to two grant fund allocations. The organization initially received a grant of US\$5000 to purchase drip irrigation equipment for the members and then, more recently, received the sum of US\$19,550 to purchase fencing material and small farm equipment.

Three rural women’s groups met regularly and were very active during the reporting period. Eighty-five of these women

benefited from training in agro-processing, information technology, project writing and entrepreneurship. In addition, IICA assisted the Fahie's Women Producers' Association and the Nevis Agro-Processors Cooperative in obtaining grand funds of US\$11,500 and US\$19,500, respectively, for their continued development.

The capability of the St. Kitts Farmers' Cooperative to meet its contractual obligation to the Marriott Hotel was greatly enhanced as result of a proposal that IICA developed on behalf of the cooperative. A US\$20,000 grant was provided to assist in capacity building and infrastructure development.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

During the period under review, IICA continued its efforts to modernize agriculture and rural life through the introduction of new and improved technology and innovation. IICA, the Department of Agriculture and Euro-Drip Inc. of the United States co-sponsored an irrigation workshop for 35 people. The participants were trained to design and install irrigation systems for different types of crops and land with varying topography.

Technical assistance was secured from FAVACA, in collaboration with IICA, to conduct a one-week study of peanut production in St. Kitts and Nevis. Special emphasis was centered on the improvement of harvesting and post-harvesting technology. Consequently, peanut farmers were able to reduce their post harvest losses and increase the amount of peanuts sold on the market.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Lack of water for irrigation has been cited as one of the limiting factors that militate against the development of agriculture. It is also one of the ten key binding constraints to agricultural development identified under the Jagdeo Initiative. IICA provided the Ministry of Agriculture with technical information regarding the construction of an artificially lined dam for water harvesting and a source from which most of the materials could be procured.

IICA supported the promotion of beekeeping as a viable enterprise during the reporting period. As a result, the Beekeepers Cooperative was initiated and consolidated. In addition, the youths at Project Strong were also introduced to beekeeping.

With IICA's collaboration, one member of the Fahie's Women Producers' Association participated in a workshop entitled, "Knowing and growing: ICT tools and services in support of organic agriculture." In addition, an extension officer was able to enhance his knowledge of organic farming by participating in a workshop in the Dominican Republic. Consequently, local knowledge and competency in organic farming have been improved.

IICA also funded a pre-feasibility study on the potential of developing agroenergy as an option for renewable energy. The results of the study informed the policy and decision making regarding rational choices pertaining to the sugar industry.



4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

Cooperation with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO): IICA collaborated with FAO in a project entitled, “Assistance to reduce vulnerability to food security and livelihood security in rural and farming communities through strengthening and expansion of rural income streams.”

Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI): Two projects were submitted to the CFNI for funding and each received US\$5000 in grant funds. IICA collaborated with CFNI in executing the project.

Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA): FAVACA provided technical assistance in evaluating the pest/disease status of beekeeping; evaluating the status of agro-processing in St. Kitts and Nevis; and controlling the fruit fly and fire ants.

Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI): The CFLI provided approximately US\$85,000 in grant funds to strengthen programs that IICA has been undertaking with youths, agro-processors, women and farmers.

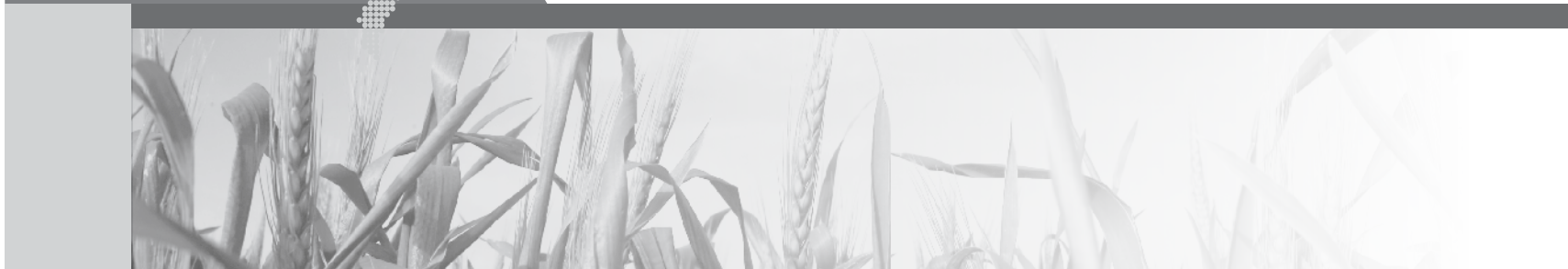
Organization of American States (OAS): The OAS provided funding for a project entitled, “Strengthening of the tourism sector through the development of linkages with the agricultural sector in the Caribbean.”

Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI): Joint activities were undertaken, mainly in the management of the red fire ants and the West Indian fruit fly projects.

5. Modernization of the Office

In the face of new challenges and mandates, IICA engaged in a process of institutional modernization. This was wide ranging and included efforts to better equip the Office to implement its national strategies for the sustainable development of agriculture and rural life. In addition, the Institute acquired equipment that improved its technical cooperation in aid of the national leaders of Agriculture and Rural Life.

IICA Office in **St. Vincent and the Grenadines**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Philmore A. Isaacs¹

1. Introduction

Agriculture and rural life have undergone a number of fundamental changes over the past decade. The IICA Office in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, as part of the ECS team, has contributed significantly to some of these changes through the implementation of the national technical cooperation agenda. The annual reports for 2002-2008 detailed IICA's contribution in support of the country's initiatives. The following presentation, therefore, is designed to give the reader an overview of the Institute's work in St. Vincent and the Grenadines throughout that period.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The Institute's call for the modernization of agriculture at the hemispheric, regional and national levels must be placed in the context of IICA's own initiative to renew itself. This began with the Director General's document "Repositioning IICA to meet the challenges of the 21st Century." With a new vision, mission, objectives and guiding principles, IICA was ready to engage in dialogue for corresponding changes in its Member

States. This was accomplished through the Summit of the Americas Process, which resulted in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, IICA's Medium Term Plan and annual action plans based on priority actions.

IICA has now institutionalized the process by which consensus is achieved on its National Technical Cooperation Agenda (NTCA). Stakeholders are now better informed about what IICA can do to foster agriculture and rural development and, more importantly, can hold the Institute accountable for its performance. As a result, the Institute's image has been greatly enhanced as it presents its report annually at an accountability seminar.

At the regional level, IICA facilitated the participation of the Deputy Chief Agricultural Officer and personnel from the Windward Islands Farmers Association (WINFA) in an activity held in Trinidad in 2004 to assist in the formulation of a Regional Strategic Plan to Reposition Caribbean Agriculture.

IICA's most significant contribution to this renewed interest and focus on agriculture is the Caribbean Week of Agriculture (CWA), which is implemented by members of the Alliance: Caribbean ministers of agriculture, IICA, the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the CARICOM Secretariat and the Caribbean Agri-Business Association (CABA). Having abolished the Standing Committee

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of Ministers of Agriculture, there was no regional ministerial forum for dialogue, consensus building and articulation of policies relative to agriculture and rural life. Through the CWA initiative, with support from IICA, all this is possible. The most recent CWA took place in 2008 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, with 200 overseas participants in attendance. The theme of the event was “Innovative Agriculture and Agro-Industries - Fueling Sustainable Development” and the slogan was “Twas always Agriculture,” summing up the thinking and achievements of the sector over the past eight years.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Through IICA’s various interventions over the last eight years, national capacities have been enhanced at the personal and institutional levels.

Outstanding among these achievements is the fact that St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in compliance with the World Trade Organization’s sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement, now has a National Notification Authority at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Trade (MFACT), an Enquiry Point for SPS at the Ministry of Agriculture and an Enquiry Point for Codex Alimentarius at the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Bureau of Standards. All this was made possible through the IICA-sponsored Initiative of the Americas for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. Between 2002 and 2008, nationals of St. Vincent and the Grenadines participated in the WTO/SPS Committee Meetings in Geneva,

Switzerland. Funds and technical assistance for this were provided through IICA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Using the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool developed by IICA, in 2008 the Institute was able to provide this country with a document to guide the way forward with a Common Vision for Agricultural Health and Food Safety, in alliance with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). There is now an active National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Committee.

Many Vincentian nationals, both in the public and private sectors, are better able to deal with agricultural health and food safety issues as a result of training facilitated by IICA and other partners, in disciplines such as:

- Pest Risk Analysis (2002, in Trinidad)
- Good Agricultural Practices (2002, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Strengthening Agriculture and Quarantine Services (SAQS) (2002, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Inspection and certification procedures (2003, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Pest control operators certification (2005, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Standard setting processes for Codex and World Organization of Animal Health (2008, in St. Vincent and the Grenadines).

The Ministry of Agriculture now has a National Emergency Preparedness Action Plan for Plant and Animal Diseases as a

result of IICA's contribution. These became useful when fruit fly and moko disease invaded the country.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA supported the facilitation of training and the encouragement of the formation of groups, designed to promote trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness.

National chapters were launched of: i) the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (2002); ii) the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers (2004); and, iii) the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth (2003).

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA's work in St. Vincent and the Grenadines is national in scope and therefore affects all the rural communities. Nevertheless, there are some special communities that benefited directly from the Institute's action.

In 2002, with IICA's support, two agro-processors in the Lauders area received a donation of scales, stoves, bottles, seals and refractometers to enhance their capacity to produce good quality jams, jellies and seasonings.

Having ascertained that many rural groups were unable to access funding because they lacked the capacity to prepare projects, IICA conducted a workshop on project identification, formulation and implementation in 2003. Seventeen people took part.

To augment its recognition of rural communities, in 2004 IICA revamped the Inter-American Awards in the Rural Sector. In 2005, the Coordinator of the Caribbean Association of Feminist Research Action (CAFRA) was the recipient of an award presented in St. Kitts.

Table 19 shows the number of individuals whose capacities were enhanced as a result of training workshops/seminars conducted by IICA/St. Vincent and the Grenadines over the years in various disciplines.

Table 19: Participants in Training Events Organized by IICA.

Year	Number of Participants
2002	200
2003	114
2004	123
2005	100
2006	100
2007	78
2008	297
TOTAL	1012

Source: IICA

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

As traditional agriculture came under pressure, other niche markets for specialty products began to emerge. In 2006, IICA facilitated the process of sensitizing 25 frontline extension

officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and the St. Vincent Banana Growers Association to the principles of organic farming. As a result, two individuals from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries were selected for further capacity building in Guyana, where there is an organic farmers' organization.

Under the IICA/CARDI Agreement, the Institute provided the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) with a shredder/chipper, a soil sterilizer and two totally enclosed greenhouses to enhance its research and development capacity in vegetable production. Vegetable producers can now obtain from CARDI a medium in which to generate seeds.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The bee population of St. Vincent and the Grenadines declined suddenly and drastically around 2004. IICA was approached for technical assistance and, through its contacts with the Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA), experts visited St. Vincent and the Grenadines (2005 and 2006, respectively) and advised on methods for restoration. From near extinction, today there is national honey on the market and a national Honey Beekeepers Association is in the making.

With IICA's technical cooperation, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Agricultural Forum for Youth (SVGAFY) was reactivated under a new executive and with the active participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the agricultural students of the St. Vincent and

the Grenadines Technical College. An environmental area was under serious degradation and threatening a part of the Windward Highway with fallen debris, so the SVGAFY responded to the challenge of soil conservation and contributed to the stability of the location (2008).

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA collaborated with many organizations in the execution of its program and the delivery of technical assistance.

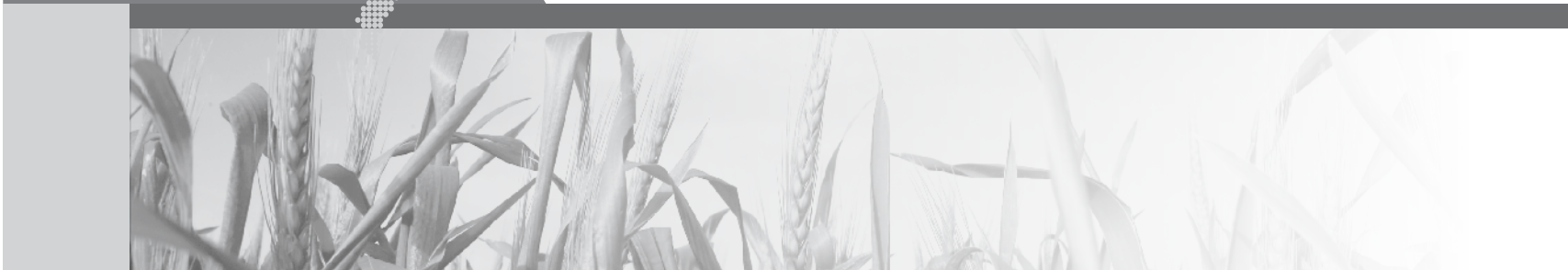
- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/IICA Youth Development Project, entitled "Enhancing the participation of marginalized youth in the development process of the Eastern Caribbean States," benefited youth groups of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Agricultural Forum for Youth (SVGAFY) in 2003 and 2004. The Mt. Pleasant Educational Sports and Cultural Organization (M-PESCO) and the Lauders Youth in Action Movement (LYAM) successfully implemented broiler production and marketing projects. Twenty youths benefited from this activity.
- IICA/FAO. In 2008, under the project "Strengthening and expanding rural income streams," UD's Plantain Chips, a small local business, received assistance in the form of modern processing equipment and labels, and training in business management. The intervention by the two organizations resulted in an expansion of the enterprise.



5. Modernization of the Office

The environment in which people work has a big impact on their state of mind and, consequently, their output. Therefore, IICA Headquarters initiated the program to raise the standard of the IICA Office. Emphasis was placed on the acquisition of equipment and tools, which are so vital for providing services to our clients.

IICA Office in **Suriname**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Suriname

Cromwell C. Crawford¹

1. Introduction

The IICA Office in Suriname has been providing technical cooperation to the country for 27 years. This support intensified over the past eight years, however. During the eight-year period under review, the development and implementation of the national agenda led to the Office's program taking on greater relevance, since it reflected more accurately the priorities of the national milieu. The annual accountability seminar also provided opportunities to keep stakeholders abreast of the Institute's actions and for them to provide feedback on IICA's activities in the country. The Institute's technical cooperation actions were delivered in the six strategic areas, with major actions in the areas of agricultural health and food safety, the strengthening of rural communities and support for the country's efforts to reposition agriculture. This report presents a summary of the Office's main achievements during the period 2002-2008.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Suriname


During the period under review, IICA supported and facilitated the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) and ministerial delegates in important ministerial and other hemispheric meetings. This participation enhanced the local participants' knowledge of the agriculture and rural development scenario in the hemisphere and provided them with opportunities to play an active part in shaping the hemispheric agenda.

IICA established, equipped and managed the Suriname local network of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas (SIDALC), which was used for training in information management and providing virtual library services for the agricultural milieu in the country.

Agreements were entered into with several education and other institutions, including the Foundation for Education and Communication in Suriname (EDUCONS), Peace Corps Suriname (PCS), the Suriname Red Cross (SRC), to enhance the development of the country's agriculture and rural areas.

Two major painting contests were sponsored for youth in Suriname to help strengthen IICA's image in the country and

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build awareness among young people of the importance of sustainable agricultural and rural life, and an understanding of the factors that affect development in these areas.

In an effort to continue to enhance its visibility, the Institute regularly published issues of the information bulletin "Partnership." The bulletin highlighted IICA's activities and brought into focus current relevant discussion topics, including organic agriculture, climate change and its effects on agriculture and food security.

In support of the country's efforts aimed at diversification of the agricultural sector, the Institute prepared proposals and supported major diversification initiatives in Nickerie and Coronie, two districts in Western Suriname. The Nickerie project included diversifying from smallholder rice cultivation to other activities such as aquaculture and cash crop vegetable production, including hot peppers and tomatoes. The Coronie project includes the production of pork and dairy products, apiculture and coconut and other fruits, including citrus, West Indian cherry and soursop.

Support was provided to the Ministry of Regional Development for the formulation of a framework for the establishment of the newly instituted department for agriculture development in the interior.

The Institute participated in several exhibitions and fairs in the country to highlight its interventions and achievements and to draw attention to topical issues in agriculture and rural development. The Institute participated in annual agricultural fairs sponsored by the Suriname Chamber of Commerce (KKF). Displays included poster presentations of various IICA's projects, including the Upper Suriname River IRD Project, the Kayapaati Chicken Coop Project and food security projects in Sipaliwini and Kwamalasemutu. Other exhibitions in which

IICA participated included tourism fairs, where the Institute's achievements in agrotourism were highlighted.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

During the period under review, agricultural health and food safety was one of the principal areas in which Suriname received technical cooperation. IICA implemented the Suriname component of the Program for the Eradication of the Carambola Fruit Fly (*Bactrocera Carambolae*) in South America. Activities carried out included monitoring, trapping, control activities, public awareness, training and ongoing surveillance. During the period of implementation, the population of the Carambola Fruit Fly declined significantly.

Another major IICA activity was the support provided to the public and private sectors in the preparation of a national plan for avian influenza prevention. The result was an awareness and prevention program, and the formulation and execution of a detailed implementation plan that included awareness campaigns, simulation exercises, the distribution of pamphlets, brochures and other printed materials, and the organization of monitoring and surveillance exercises and training of technicians and farmers.

Suriname hosted the launch of the Strengthening Agricultural Quarantine Services (SAQS) project for the Caribbean region. The scope of the project was to promote the creation of one regional mechanism to articulate and promote actions among Caribbean countries in the areas of agricultural quarantine



services. This resulted in a greater awareness among the public and private sectors of the importance of quarantine services and an upgrade of local services.

In addition, online training organized by the Directorate of Agricultural Health and Food Safety in the areas of animal health and Codex Alimentarius was organized for local stakeholders, allowing Surinamese technicians to be better informed about current animal health and food codes.

IICA supported and facilitated the participation of Suriname nationals in regional and international conferences, training programs, workshops and seminars, including participation in WTO/SPS meetings in Geneva. The Office also supported activities to facilitate compliance with WTO/SPS standards by livestock farmers and the establishment and operation of the Agricultural Health and Food Safety Unit.

Other training activities hosted included in-service nematology and bacteriology and weed and mite identification that equipped relevant staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries to identify and characterize these pests and to be able to provide more effective pest management support to farmers.

The Office facilitated World Animal Health Information Database (WAHID) and World Animal Health Information Systems (WAHIS) training activities for veterinary officers from Guyana and Suriname.

The Institute provided face-to-face training, training of technicians and farmers in several areas including pest and disease identification management and control, safe use of pesticides, pesticide residue management, good agricultural

practices and the management of geographic information systems (GIS) and global positioning systems (GPS).

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA successfully implemented the Suriname component of the regional fruit project. Fruit committees were established, feasibility studies were conducted for a variety of fruits and relevant technology was transferred to producers and technicians.

Horizontal technical cooperation was enhanced with the visit of a team of technicians from IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture to Brazil under the aegis of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) to study technologies used in the production, marketing and processing of cashew. This allowed the Institute to transfer appropriate technology to farmers to facilitate the upgrading of their cashew production.

The Institute supported and facilitated negotiations with Barbados to afford Suriname's farmers and exporters opportunities to market fruits and vegetables to that island. A trial shipment of vegetables received favorable reviews and, as a result, small quantities of Suriname's vegetables are reaching the Barbadian market.

IICA promoted organic farming among relevant stakeholders and supported the country's diversification drive. An agreement was signed with Ecosystem 2000 to promote organic farming in the country. Over 50 farmers and technicians were trained and a national organic platform was established.

The Office collaborated with the public and private sectors in the establishment of an integrated export packinghouse at the Johan Adolf Pengel Airport.

The Institute conducted for the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) and the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism (TCT), prefeasibility studies for agricultural standards for export of vegetables, including African eggplant, string beans, bitter melon and okra.

IICA developed a profile for the preparation of a handbook entitled "From Farm to Table." This handbook will highlight the steps to be taken to prepare fruit and vegetables for export. Tenders are currently out for consultants to prepare the handbook, which is expected to be completed in 2009.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

A major initiative of the Institute in this strategic area was the implementation of an integrated rural development (IRD) project in the Upper Suriname River Basin, which the national authorities selected as a reference territory to apply the territorial approach. Significant achievements of the IRD project included improved farming systems through the adoption of agroforestry techniques and use of compost. At least two community centers were established and agro-processing systems were strengthened to produce cassava-based products such as cassava cookies and farine. Experiences generated in the Upper Suriname River basin are being transferred to the Sipaliwini District, eastern Suriname and to Kwamalasemutu in the Deep South.

The Institute spearheaded several studies in selected parts of the interior during the period under review. These included a participatory rural appraisal of the food security, family nutrition and income generation situation of the Cotica Region in Eastern Suriname. Information gathered in these studies was used to plan intervention strategies in several communities in the interior of Suriname.

At the request of the Suriname Aluminum Company (Suralco), IICA developed a plan for alternative income generation for communities in the mined-out bauxite areas in Moengo community. Alternative production systems proposed included small ruminants, aquaculture and cassava production and processing.

This period saw the formation and strengthening of the Suriname Network of Rural Women Producers (SUNROP). With IICA's support, women producers entered into agreements with hotels and are marketing products, strengthened networking with other women's groups in the Caribbean and provided training to members in production and business principles.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA designed and conducted training courses in several rural communities related to the production of crops such as peanuts, pineapple and West-Indian cherries. As a result, farmers improved their production and marketing systems.

Horizontal technical cooperation was carried out in Brazil, including a study visit of the Cashew Development Foundation (STIMOPRO) and the Brazilian Agricultural Research



Corporation (EMBRAPA) to observe production techniques and secure planting material and information for selected crops such as West-Indian Cherries (Acerola), upland rice, podosiri and cassava.

Manuals were published on important local crops, including passion fruit, papaya and pineapple. Training activities were conducted on the production and management of fruit and vegetable crops.

Following requests from the private sector, the Office organized seminars in pasture establishment and management, and provided technical assistance to public and private sector operations. Dairy operators improved the management of their pasture and feeding regimes.

The Office facilitated and supported the process of securing small ruminant breeding stock to assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) to upgrade local genetic stock. The Representative visited the Dominican Republic and collected information on small ruminants. IICA also coordinated the visits of Ministry of LVV technicians to the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Barbados to secure stock. The Ministry of LVV is in the process of acquiring stock.

The Institute supported national efforts to organize a round table and other discussions on agroenergy and biofuels that led to the planning of a major seminar on the subject to be held in the first half of 2009.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

In Collaboration with the Centre of Agricultural Research in Suriname (CELOS), the Institute organized workshops on

sustainable land use in the Amazon Region and the Amazon Initiative, and on Tropigen and plant genetic resources in the South American Tropics. This resulted in the development of land use plans.

The Office supported the participation of Suriname in meetings of the Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS), allowing Suriname's research sector to benefit from technologies generated in the hemisphere.

With support from the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) and in collaboration with Suriname's public and private sectors, IICA introduced the concept and methodology of agro-ecological zoning to the country. A proposal was prepared and presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV). The Ministry of LVV implemented elements of the proposal.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

Since 1982, when IICA began providing technical cooperation to Suriname, significant efforts have been made to maintain and strengthen relations with strategic partners. This became more marked during the last eight years. The publication of the in-office bulletins "*Partnership*" and "*Koboogo*" demonstrates the Institute's willingness to collaborate with and keep partners informed of its actions.

Under the long-term partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV), the collaboration and support included the areas of fruit and vegetable production, agricultural health and food safety,



information and distance education, agricultural diversification, dairy production and agriculture in Suriname's interior.

In collaboration with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Suriname Red Cross (SRC), IICA conducted flood relief, rehabilitation and food security activities in communities in the Upper Suriname River Basin, the Marowijne River Area in the Kwamalasemutu area of the interior.

In collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), IICA implemented a one-year project entitled "Alternative income generation activities for small-scale gold miners to reduce the negative impact in the Brownsberg Nature Park." The major objective was to substitute ongoing unsustainable economic activities in the Brownsberg area by developing attractive, sustainable small-scale enterprises. Farmers in the area improved their production practices.

The Institute implemented the Suriname component of the OAS funded agrotourism project, which included an inventory of agrotourism linkages in the country, preparation of a video documenting success stories, development of a national agrotourism action plan and community engagement strategy, and seminars and training workshops for farmers, hoteliers and tour operators. Farmers increased their marketing of produce to hotels and restaurants and tour operators are upgrading their services.

The Institute maintained close working relationships with other members of the Inter-American System - the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Joint activities were conducted, including the establishment of recreational facilities for young people. The OAS funded and supported the agrotourism project.

The U.S. Embassy collaborated with IICA in the organization of training activities funded by the USDA, including online courses sponsored by the Directorate of Agricultural Health and Food Safety. The Brazilian Embassy facilitated the visits of technical teams to Brazil and the Guyana Embassy provided logistical support to cross-border activities between Guyana and Suriname.

Agreements were signed with the Peace Corps Suriname (PCS) for the provision of volunteers to support IICA's technical cooperation actions in the country, and with the Suriname Red Cross (SRC) for the implementation of flood relief and food security projects.

With the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Office implemented the project "Alternative income generation opportunities for small-scale gold miners to reduce the negative impact in the Brownsberg Nature Park." The Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF) funded a flood relief project implemented by the Institute in the Duwatra community in the Upper Suriname River Basin. With Conservation International (CI), IICA co-sponsored stakeholder discussion on agroenergy and biofuels.

Good working relationships were maintained and strengthened with other government ministries, including:

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which collaborated with the Office in protocol and other matters, including Suriname's participation in summit meetings;
- The Ministry of Regional Development, which collaborated in the integrated rural development project in the Upper Suriname River Basin and which IICA supported in the development of a framework for the Department of Agriculture in the interior;

- The Ministry of Education collaborated with IICA and the Education and Communications Network Suriname (EDUCONS) in the production of an interactive CD ROM on the growing of selected vegetables;
- The Ministry of Health collaborated with IICA and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (LVV) in the revision of agricultural health and food safety legislation;
- The Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism (TCT) collaborated in the agrotourism project;
- Other public sector entities with which partnerships were formed and strengthened included educational and research institutions such as the Anton de Kom University of Suriname, the Centre of Agricultural Research in Suriname (CELOS), de Anne van Dijk Rice Research Institution (ADRON) and Airport Facility; and,
- Private-sector institutions and organizations with which the Office maintained partnerships included the Suriname Aluminum Company (SURALCO), producers' organizations such as Dairy Unions and women's groups.

5. Modernization of the Office

The physical environment of the Office was upgraded constantly with necessary repairs and refurbishment, resulting in a more pleasant and welcoming atmosphere for both staff and visitors to the Office.

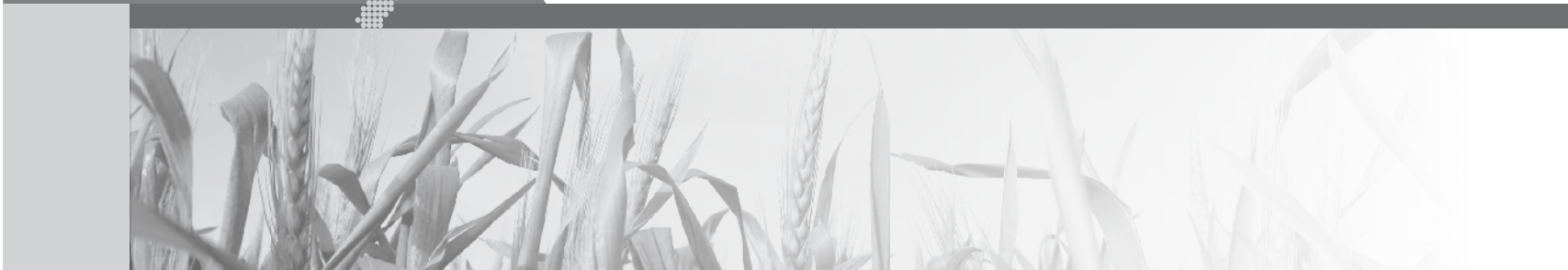
The Office constructed and equipped the Center for Distance Education, Information and Documentation in Agribusiness. This center was used for training in information management and other disciplines. Stakeholders and collaborators from the Ministry of LVV, education institutions and the private sector regularly utilize these facilities.

The Office's computer hardware and software are upgraded continually and ongoing training is provided for staff to ensure facility in the use of the technology. This has increased the efficiency of operators and the production of documented PowerPoint presentations and other materials.

Administrative staff received training in the management of IICA's computerized accounting system, resulting in greater accuracy and efficiency in generating accounting information.

The Office hosted a number of workshops to the satisfaction of organizers and participants, including one entitled "The Establishment and Development of a Regional Agricultural Policy Network in the Caribbean," and World Animal Health Information Database (WAHID) and World Animal Health Information Systems (WAHIS) training for veterinarians from Suriname and Guyana.

IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago

Gregg C. E. Rawlins¹

1. Introduction

IICA in Trinidad and Tobago maximized its relations with strategic partners within the agriculture sector, both nationally and regionally, in implementing its technical cooperation program in Trinidad and Tobago during the period under review. The Institute pursued activities that fall under its relevant strategic priority areas in the Caribbean Region but concentrated its efforts in the areas of trade and competitiveness, agricultural health and food safety and strengthening rural communities. This management report provides results of the Institute's contributions to the development of the agriculture and rural sectors in Trinidad and Tobago over the period 2002-2008, through the implementation of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Trinidad and Tobago

The issue of repositioning the agricultural sector in Trinidad and Tobago during the period 2002-2008 largely hinged on programs embarked on by IICA to provide policy makers and

the public with strategic information about the importance of agriculture to the economy. This information now sets the stage for the agricultural sector to be placed higher on the national agenda in terms of resource allocation and priority.

A major thrust in this direction was the completion of a report on the true contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy. Among other things, this report quantified the sector's backward and forward linkages to the general economy and captured its aggregate GDP contribution to the economy. Other important sources of information were three reports on the status of, and outlook for, agriculture and rural life in Trinidad and Tobago. These reports provided comprehensive analyses of the sector and insights into critical areas to be addressed in order to move the sector forward. The reports were used extensively by officers from the Planning Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR) and contributed to monitoring and planning at the macro and sectoral levels.

During the period under review, IICA continued to provide support to ministerial delegates in preparation for various hemispheric and regional meetings of ministers of agriculture. The meetings were critical in charting the way forward for agriculture in the hemisphere and the region. Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources of Trinidad and Tobago benefited from them and drew on them

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in preparing major policy documents such as the Vision 2020 and the Transformation Plan for the Agricultural Sector.

IICA was also able to influence and support new policy directions and outcomes for the sector through information contained in two publications: *Agriview* and *In a Nutshell*. These publications analyze pertinent agrifood sector issues as they relate to trade, agribusiness and rural development.

IICA established and continues to maintain the Caribbean Regional Agriculture Policy Network (CaRAPN) website, which also played a critical role in shaping and informing policy decisions nationally and regionally. Equally important was the establishment of an agricultural information system to monitor and evaluate progress with the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action and the Jagdeo Initiative.

IICA also collaborated with one of its partners in implementing a project entitled *Enhancing Information and Communication for Food Security in Trinidad and Tobago*. This project generated brochures and information bulletins for the public that have contributed to a better understanding and appreciation of food security and the key dimensions of food security and the role of agriculture in achieving food security.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA played a critical role in supporting the integrity of the country's agricultural health and food safety system, largely

by employing its human and capital resources to improve the capabilities and efficiencies of personnel responsible for the safety and wholesomeness of food. This group of personnel includes everyone involved in the agrifood chain - farmers, agricultural and extension officers, food importers and exporters, food distributors and others.

The involvement of IICA in the food safety area also extended the use of its resources for ensuring that physical facilities and equipment, procedures and regulations pertaining to food safety conform to acceptable regional and international standards. The provision of information on food safety was also a major strategy employed by the Institute in its contribution to the national agricultural health and food safety effort.

In 2002, IICA facilitated an EU/CARIFORUM-funded project implementation unit that was established to strengthen and modernize the region's agricultural quarantine services, including the Dominican Republic. The project implementation team, which was based at IICA, was largely responsible for organizing training workshops and seminars with quarantine officers employed with ministries of agriculture throughout the region.

Over the last seven years, IICA also made significant contributions by hosting, either on its own or in conjunction with other agencies, a series of training workshops and seminars for all persons involved in food safety. Training opportunities facilitated by the Institute were wide ranging and included:

- Pest risk analysis: the identification of exotic pests and diseases in citrus
- Pests and diseases of economic importance of the honey bee
- Codex Alimentarius and You

- The OIE Normative Process and You: for both officers of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health
- Mites of economic importance in the Caribbean, which was held jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR), CARDI (Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute) and the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture)
- Animal disease surveillance and preparedness: focus on avian influenza. This workshop, hosted jointly with many organizations and institutions, resulted in the development of a regional strategy for dealing with avian influenza
- Identification of thrips of economic importance
- WTO notification dissemination/enquiry point software
- Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), to improve surveillance and detection of pests and disease
- Improving the quality and safety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Traceability systems for fresh produce
- Identification of fruit flies of economic importance
- John's disease in livestock
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

It was also customary for IICA to facilitate the participation of agricultural health and food safety officials of the MALMR in meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, as part of its contribution to building capacity in that area.

IICA made important contributions to the formation of the proposed National Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Agency (NAHFSA), through its representation on the NAHFSA committee, and conducted assessments of the food safety and SPS systems in Trinidad and Tobago, using the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) methodology.

Apart from the training and capacity building elements of the national agricultural health and food safety program, critical support was provided to the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources (MALMR) in strengthening the regulatory framework for proper management of the agricultural health and food safety system. IICA played a major role in supporting the preparation of a manual for emergency responses for the introduction of exotic plant diseases.

IICA provided technical assistance in the preparation of manuals on Good Agricultural Practices for a range of export crops, and for a desktop simulation exercise for plant health emergency. Other interventions made to strengthen the regulatory framework for agricultural health and food safety included development of CODEX Alimentarius standards for specific agricultural crops and preparation of a draft biosafety framework.

Over the past seven years, information on agricultural health and food safety proved to be valuable to stakeholders in the industry. Most of this information was made available to the public through IICA in two publications: the Caraphin News, on plant health and food, and a Dairy Herd Health Manual (also available as a CD ROM).

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

During the period under review, the Office employed a wide range of approaches in its contribution to promoting trade and

competitiveness in the agrifood sector. These approaches can be grouped together under the following headings:

■ **Creation of Business and Investment Opportunities:**

A major slice of IICA's resources was directed at supporting business opportunities for entrepreneurs with an interest in investing in the agrifood sector, including the new growth area of agrotourism. These opportunities were provided largely by the preparation of business plans; conduct of feasibility studies; conduct of surveys and investment profiles on specific areas of the agrifood sector. The major initiatives taken within the period under review to facilitate business and investment opportunities included:

- Preparation of a business plan and provision of technical assistance for a community group (the South West Development Agency) in support of their application for 300 acres of state lands for agriculture. The business plan was a key component of their bid for the lease for the land from the State;
- Completion of a food trade study aimed at identifying specific agricultural commodities in Tobago that could be marketed successfully in Trinidad;
- A study of food use in the hotel sector, with an eye to expanding food production opportunities among small and medium-sized entrepreneurs in the domestic market;
- Development of protocols for crops most frequently traded with regional partners;
- Establishment of a collaborative framework with the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) for promotion of agricultural exports and fish products to the United States and European Union;
- A feasibility study for establishment of breeding and slaughtering facilities for the rabbit industry;
- Feasibility studies for establishment of a dehydrated fruit and vegetable facility;
- Implementation of a project to identify market opportunities and technologies for development of a range of herbal products;
- Identification of investment opportunities for dried herbs and spices; essential oils; herbal beverages and cosmeceutical products;
- Publication of a Caribbean Herbal Business Magazine to attract investments for the sector;
- Preparation of project proposals for several rural community groups to obtain funding, including grants, for primary agriculture and small-scale agro-processing projects;
- Conduct of a study to determine the demand by supermarkets for fruits and vegetables for the benefit of farmers;
- Conduct of an OAS-sponsored project entitled "Strengthening the Tourism Sector through the Development of the Agricultural Sector";
- Development of cost of production models for crop and livestock production. Many Institutions and farmers' groups have expressed great interest in using the model;
- Hosting of a workshop entitled "Quality control, science validation and business prospects of medicinal and aromatic plants, and opportunities in agrotourism";
- Preparation of a manual for the production of sapodilla (*Manilkara achras* (Mill.) Fosberg); soursop (*Annona muricata* L.) and sugar apple (*Annona squamosa* L.)



in order to stimulate production and consumption of those once popular fruits;

- Development of a national technical cooperation program with the National Agricultural Marketing Corporation aimed, among other things, at strengthening the agribusiness sector and developing an export promotion platform;
- Conduct of workshops entitled “From Farm to Table,” in order to build partnerships among farmers, purchasing managers and chefs together;
- Implementation of program to assist a rural community to develop a local agrotourism project;
- Conduct of a study to determine the demand for agricultural products by hotels, in order to create business opportunities for farmers;
- Facilitation of farmers’ groups and networking organizations to participate in trade shows and exhibitions;
- Conduct of a study on the local pork industry. This study was important in the formation of the local pork industry, which was subsequently supported by IICA; and,
- Conduct of a study on the dairy industry with recommendations for improving its competitiveness.

- **Establishment of the Regulatory and Policy Environment:** over the seven-year period, IICA played a major role in working with other agencies and stakeholders to develop appropriate strategies and a policy framework for the orderly and progressive development of many farmers’ and rural community groups.

The major initiatives made by IICA in shaping the policy and regulatory environment included its input for the review of the agricultural incentive policy; preparation of a study on the impact of agricultural and macroeconomic policy on the agricultural sector over a 25-year period and completed recommendations for the development of the citrus and rice industries. Inputs were also provided for the preparation of strategies for development of the agrotourism industry and for agrobiotechnology.

- **Establishment of Mechanisms for Dialogue and Networking of Stakeholder Groups:** IICA made major contributions to the establishment and operations of many commodity organizations and network associations and facilitated and encouraged networking and dialogue among stakeholders in the agrifood chain. These accomplishments were largely achieved through its participation in, or facilitation of, various consultations or meetings with stakeholders and its role in providing key secretariat and technical support for many producer/commodity associations and networking groups.

IICA also made major contributions to the formation and operation of the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association (CABA), the Caribbean Herbal Business Association (CHBA) and the Pork Producer’s Association. It also facilitated a national consultation on the beekeeping industry and established a national task force on the agrotourism industry. Continued secretariat support was provided to the Network of Rural Women Producers (NRWP). The Institute also contributed to the Vision 2020 report for the agriculture sector as a member of the Technical Committee, and participated in the national consultation on rising food prices and the food crisis.



The Institute created an avenue for the expression of youth in agriculture by facilitating meetings and other activities of the national chapter of the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth. It also continued to accept two final-year students in agribusiness from the University of the West Indies under its internship program, and facilitated the participation of two young adults in the Forum for Young Leaders at IICA Headquarters in Costa Rica.

- **Building capacity within Stakeholder Groups in the Public and Private Sector:** Training and building capacity in the agrifood sector has been one of the major pillars of support provided by IICA. This strategy is deemed important for improving the competencies and efficiencies of participants in the agrifood sector. Workshops, meetings and field visits were the chief methods used to impart knowledge and skills and thereby build capacity.

IICA hosted several workshops for the benefit of stakeholders on the progress and likely outcomes of the negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) on the agricultural sector, as well as on sanitary and phytosanitary regulations. The Institute also completed training courses in project management for agricultural and extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources.

c. **Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach**

IICA largely focused its support for strengthening and improving the lives of rural dwellers on the provision of resources to ensure they are empowered and facilitated to develop successful business enterprises. Empowerment of

communities entailed providing relevant training to various rural community groups to fill some identified need in their community. Facilitation of the community groups meant providing the group with the required services and resources for implementing their programs. Several community groups and farmers' associations benefited from those interventions.

With the technical collaboration of IICA, farmers groups' and rural communities and associations were exposed to a range of courses, including training courses and workshops on primary agricultural production, handicraft making, food processing, agribusiness management and group dynamics. Principal recipients of this training were the Network of Rural Women Producers, the Cattle Farmer's Association, 4-H Club members and the Trinidad and Tobago Forum for Youth in Agriculture.

IICA'S contribution to the development of rural communities was facilitated primarily by the provision of secretariat support for the functioning of the community groups and network associations; and preparation of project proposals and business plans to access grants and other types of funding. Revolving loan funds were also established for two community groups (the NRWP and the Dairy Cattle Farmers' Association). Another important aspect of the facilitation process involved making the necessary arrangements for the groups to participate in international conventions, national and regional trade shows and exhibitions. The Institute also facilitated exchange visits for these groups.

d. **Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture**

During the period under review, the Institute's contributions in this strategic area focused on two major topics: herbals and biotechnology.

In 2002, IICA promoted technologies for enhancing local production and competitiveness in the area of herbs. In collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Centre for Development of Enterprise (CDE), IICA hosted the Caribbean Herbal Business Forum, in Montego Bay, Jamaica. At that forum, the seed was planted for the Caribbean Herbal Business Association (CHBA), whose mandate it was to promote regional cooperation in the research, development and marketing of herbals and herbal products from the Caribbean. IICA has managed the Secretariat of the CHBA since 2003. The work associated with the CHBA has strengthened the capacity of small and medium-sized herbal and related businesses in the region in research, marketing and business development, making a significant impact on the promotion and development of work in this area in the Caribbean region.

IICA also played a significant role in the area of agrobiotechnology, as it coordinated the establishment and development of the Caribbean Programme on Biotechnology and Biosafety (CPBB) during the 2005-2006 period. The Office coordinated several regional workshops on behalf of the Caribbean Consultative Group for Agro-biotechnology (CGABC) and the Institute spearheaded the organization of a biotechnology workshop for the Sixth Caribbean Week of Agriculture in Nassau, The Bahamas, in 2006. The document "Strategy for a Caribbean Programme on Biotechnology and Biosafety" was completed in 2006 and serves as a sound, broad-based Caribbean strategy for consideration in this area of work, which is poised to provide new "prospects for increased agricultural production and the development of a new wave of agribusinesses for the future."²

² IICA. Strategy for a Caribbean Programme on Biotechnology and Biosafety. 2006

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

In support of the cultivation of safe foods under environmentally acceptable conditions, IICA provided support to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in the development of initiatives in organic agriculture. IICA assisted the MALMR and other stakeholders in embracing new technologies to access market opportunities in organic agriculture through the hosting of workshops. The Institute also supported the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in drafting its National Organic Policy Guidelines.

IICA provided support to a regional IICA/PROINVEST/ASTT/DFL project, which conducted market surveys that identified commercial opportunities in organics. The project produced a package of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to be aired on radio, a video documentary on organic agriculture and a handbook on organic practices. Additionally, the Institute played a key role in the development of capacities of technicians from Dominica, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago in best practices on organic production, under a CPEC/CIDA-funded project.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During the period under review, IICA undertook an in-depth and broad-based process of consultation in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders in the agrifood sector in Trinidad and Tobago. This continuous process of consultation was an



important element of the Institute's work, in order to ascertain the specific needs of its clientele and ensure that its technical support became more relevant, meaningful and responsive to needs within the sector. The process resulted in the preparation of IICA's National Technical Cooperation Agenda, which has proven fruitful in responding to institutional mandates as well as needs at the country level.

Significantly, IICA further strengthened its already close ties with a number of national and regional agencies in the sector:

CARDI: IICA and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute developed a synergistic relationship of technical collaboration that was strengthened still further during the period under review. The IICA/CARDI Technical Agreement proved to be a program of binding significance, resulting in the implementation of a number of projects. Additionally, IICA and CARDI collaborated in several workshops on information and the media.

FAO: As international agencies with similar visions and strategic focus, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and IICA were able to work closely together in a consultative manner in the areas of food security, agricultural health and food safety.

NAMDEVCO: IICA's strategic partnership with the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation (NAMDEVCO) spans a variety of areas of work under the headings of agribusiness and agricultural health and food safety. IICA worked with NAMDEVCO on a number of initiatives to strengthen the capacities of farmers and other agribusiness entrepreneurs, as well as in developing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for a number of crops.

UWI: The close working relationship with the Faculty of Science and Agriculture of the University of the West Indies (UWI), in the areas of agribusiness development, biotechnology and agrotourism, was mutually rewarding. IICA became an annual choice for placement of two final-year students of the Agribusiness Programme, for an eight-week agribusiness internship each summer. In 2004, the Institute hired one of the agribusiness interns as a consultant to the Caribbean Regional Agriculture Policy Network (CaRAPN). Each year, the Institute provided a tangible incentive to encourage students in the field of project management in agriculture by granting a cash award to the top final-year student.


5. Modernization of the Office

Information and Communications: With guidance from IICA Headquarters, the Office kept pace with the advances in ICT platforms and applications to perform its work in a more efficient manner. Additionally, the Office is in a position to offer webcast services to groups of participants and freely offers the use of its computer facilities to clients and beneficiaries such as the rural women and youth in agriculture groups, when the need arises.

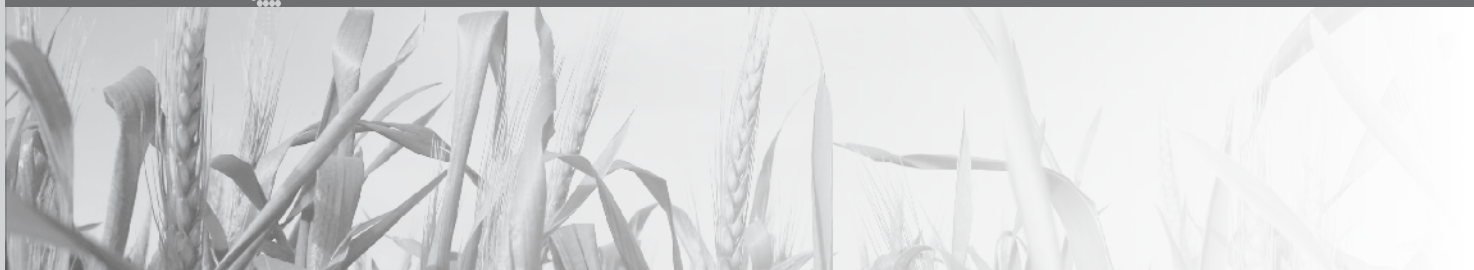
Communication via email has progressed to a very high level that allows for swifter and more effective intra- and inter-office communication. The use of email has had a major impact on the Office's work with stakeholders. Additionally, the Office manages websites for IICA/Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Regional Agriculture Policy Network (CaRAPN) that provide a wealth of information to the national, regional and international agricultural communities.



Developing Human Capacities: Over the years, the Office has strengthened the capacities of its staff in the areas of project management, accounting procedures, Spanish and various other subject areas of relevance to the Institute's work. Staff members continuously organized, coordinated and participated in workshops and other technical forums nationally, regionally and internationally, through which they have acquired much different knowledge and a range of skills to be able to improve their performance and respond more efficiently to the leaders of agriculture and rural life in the country.



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the **Central Region**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Central Region

Róger Guillén Bustos¹ and Juana Galván²

1. Introduction

IICA's support for the development of agriculture and rural life in the Central Region (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama) was particularly important in 2002-2008. During this period circumstances were particularly propitious for the technical cooperation provided by the Institute at both the national and regional levels.

Between 2002 and 2008 many free trade agreements were being negotiated in the region and, as a result, institutional capacity-building was needed in the public and private sectors alike to implement and take advantage of those agreements. Work was carried out to enhance the sector's competitiveness, especially in key areas such as agricultural health, technology and agribusiness capabilities. The regional integration processes was strengthened and regional policies and strategies on agriculture and rural development were defined

and implemented with a view to reducing food insecurity and rural poverty. The agricultural sector was badly affected by weather phenomena.

The Institute conducted its technical cooperation activities through a network of country offices, a team of regional and national specialists in the areas prioritized in the Medium Term Plan (MTP), as well as specialists on hemispheric matters and on externally-financed regional projects. This group of specialists worked collaboratively and largely inter-thematically to assist the countries of the Central Region to take action that was relevant to and consistent with their needs.

The achievements made were possible thanks to the support IICA received from the agricultural public sector, academic sector and private and civil society organizations and to the partnerships and agreements on joint operations efforts with other regional and international organizations and institutions.

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2. Repositioning Agriculture and Rural Life in the Central Region

The Central Region's acknowledgement of the valuable contribution agriculture makes to development, not only of the rural milieu but of the wider economy, helped to ensure a substantial flow of cooperation resources for the sector. In addition, in 2007 the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) approved the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA) for the period 2008-2017 which, was welcomed by the presidents of the Central American Integration System (SICA). This policy is helping to foster the development of the region's agrifood and rural sector.

Two spheres provided the Institute with special opportunities to encourage governments and private stakeholders in Central America to attribute due importance to the agricultural sector and rural life: the negotiation and entry into force of the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA) and the Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting, "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas", held in Guatemala in 2007.

In the DR-CAFTA process, for the first time agriculture-sector institutions and producers' associations participated actively in the negotiation of a trade agreement with the United States, their greatest trading partner and one of the world's largest markets.

Almost all the countries involved in negotiating DR-CAFTA asked IICA to provide support for the policymakers representing their trade stances at the negotiations to help them develop proposals based on the reality in the region's agriculture sector

and the particular situation in the respective countries. DR-CAFTA also represented an opportunity to deliver support for making agricultural sectors more competitive, since the countries treated agriculture upgrading as a national priority in order to benefit from the agreement.

Many of the countries developed complementary agendas to address structural lacks in infrastructure, research investment, technology and technical assistance, which created an opportunity for the region to raise funds from external sources. In partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), IICA had the opportunity to support the governments on different projects in their countries.

The second sphere of opportunity mentioned above, the Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas", held in Guatemala in 2007 and organized by IICA and the Government of Guatemala, generated a number of agreements that recognized the importance of agriculture and other rural activities. The Ministerial Declaration made at the meeting gave the Institute a mandate to support the countries, through the Ministerial Delegates, with the dissemination of the agreements of the ministerial meetings held in the Dominican Republic (2001), Panama (2003), Ecuador (2005) and Guatemala (2007), as well as the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan.

Further to that mandate, a hemispheric team was set up to prepare the IICA offices to provide the requested support and to help them to develop skills in using the AGRO-Matrix planning and follow-up tool. National workshops held in the framework of these activities helped to form follow-up and support linkages for Ministerial Delegates for the distribution of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, the ministerial agreements and the AGRO-Matrix.

The AGRO 2003-2015 Plan and the mandates conferred at the Guatemala 2007 Hemispheric Ministerial Meeting served as a frame of reference for the formulation, approval and implementation of a regional policy on agriculture (2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy). IICA participated in this process by supporting the Central American Agricultural Council in the formulation and ongoing implementation of the policy.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

With the support of IICA, the countries built consensus for addressing the issue of traceability in the region and improved their capabilities in this area. This paved the way for increasing capacity to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary requirements, thereby affording Central American producers access to the international market. Through regional and national events, information-sharing was promoted and the foundations were laid for a regional vision on traceability. Support was also provided to the Sub-Group on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the Central American Customs Union for preparing the regional traceability project, as a basis for making decisions on resource allotment and the prioritization of traceability actions in the region.

With the help of the Institute, the countries upgraded their institutional capabilities for implementing the SPS Agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and for taking an

active role in the SPS Committee of WTO. This was achieved through the participation of the Central Region countries, from 2002 onwards, in the “Initiative for the Americas on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures”, a hemispheric IICA project through which the countries attend and take their proposals to WTO SPS Committee meetings. Six years into the project, the Central Region has raised its participation from 0% to over 90%, with representatives from the ministries of trade and agriculture delegated to carry forward negotiations within WTO. IICA also contributed to the formation of institutional coordination mechanisms on SPS issues in many of the Central Region countries.

In 2008, IICA set up a training program in partnership with other international organizations, to promote the countries’ participation by videoconference in processes involving standards of the Codex Alimentarius, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Two hundred and eighty public and private sector representatives from the countries of the Central Region participated in the harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary rules. These actions improved the countries’ capabilities for engaging with processes related to health and safety standards.

General guidelines on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) were made available to agricultural small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the countries in order to facilitate proper implementation and ensure food safety, with a view to the competitive development of agribusinesses.

The Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool was applied to veterinary services in the countries, with an emphasis on the beef chain, in the framework of a project conducted jointly by IICA and the International Livestock Research Institute

(ILRI) aimed at improving the productivity, quality and safety of beef and the beef trade in Central America. The activity served to identify the strengths and weaknesses of veterinary services and to adopt agendas for improving them, with the support of the private sector.

National capabilities for managing sanitary issues were also bolstered, based on the needs identified through application of the PVS instrument. Ten workshops were held, with 476 technical personnel from the public and private sectors. The issues addressed were: hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP), GMPs, traceability, epidemiology and OIE information systems. These workshops were run with the support of the Regional International Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health (RIOPPAH), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Costa Rican Livestock Development Corporation (CORFOGA) and the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) of Costa Rica.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

The Institute provided technical cooperation to the countries to facilitate trade and help them lock into the advantages arising from free trade agreements, through competitiveness and opportunity-seeking activities.

IICA lent technical cooperation to the Central American countries to enable them to take on the challenge of making their agrifood chains more competitive and taking better advantage of opportunities in international markets, principally in the framework of DR-CAFTA, thus helping them to increase agrifood trade with the United States.

Activities were conducted to support ministries of agriculture and other agriculture sector public institutions in free trade negotiations, which served to demonstrate their importance in promoting merchandise trade and to engage them actively in putting forward proposals to strengthen information systems.

Leaders of producers' associations, agro-exporters and professionals working in agriculture now participate proactively in the free trade process in order to protect their interests and propose solutions, aiming to ensure that the agreements negotiated work in their favour and increase their income by expanding trade and creating more rural jobs. This level of participation was achieved through intensive efforts to strengthen human resource capacities and through institution-building activities that catered to over 500 technical personnel in the region's public and private sectors.

IICA conducted an "Export Platforms Program", which was coordinated and implemented in the framework of the "Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety". The export platforms helped to develop business capacities, disseminate information about the quality requirements of international markets and set up trade contacts. This program gave 175 Central American agribusinesses the opportunity to enhance their export capabilities and skills for designing export business plans. Enterprises from agrifood chains in fruit, staple grains and toasted coffee, among others, participated in the program.

The Institute currently offers a methodology for strengthening the agribusiness capabilities of small-scale producers' organizations in Central America, starting with a series of training courses on agribusiness development for technical

and production leaders, whose ideas are developed into action plans and business schemes that help them to build on their performance and position themselves in local, regional and international markets.

IICA has also actively supported fruit growing in the Central American region with the creation of the International Forum on Tropical Fruit Agribusiness. The Forum was instituted by IICA with the support of strategic partners, including ministries of agriculture, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), the Regional Technical Assistance Unit (RUTA), the Department of Agriculture of the United States (USDA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

In the last few years support has also been provided for the formulation of a regional cooperation framework project for improving the competitiveness of fruit growing in Central America, which was approved by IDB in 2008 as “Central America Competitiveness Program for Fruits” and will be executed by the Executive Directorate of the Puebla Panama Plan with technical collaboration from IICA.

With a view to promoting products and identifying trade opportunities, support was provided for Central American agro-exporters to participate in the BioFach fair in Germany, in partnership with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), AGRONATURA, the Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (HIVOS) and the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO). This partnership was maintained for three consecutive years: 2004, 2005 and 2006.

During this period, the Institute supported the countries of the Central Region with regard to the organization and operation

of agrifood chains. Work was undertaken at the national level on action plans for increasing the competitiveness of chains in the beef, milk, staple grains and poultry sectors. The poultry sector appears set to become the first sector able to be organized at a regional level, i.e., such that the countries can work together to enhance their competitiveness. In partnership with IDB, IICA implemented the project “Strengthening the technical capacities of policy units of ministries of agriculture in Central America”, of which agrifood chains was one of the most important components.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

In the area of rural development, IICA promoted capacity-building in public institutions by facilitating the exchange of experiences among directors and managers of rural development programs and institutes in the region.

During 2002-2008, IICA provided methodologies for sustainable rural development with a territorial approach. By applying these methodologies, Local Action Groups in several Central American countries improved their capabilities for territorial management. As a result, a broad group of people are now well informed about the territorial approach to rural development and conversant with its implications. The methodologies were disseminated through training events, some short (national level talks and workshops) and some longer (international courses on territorial development in Spain or on agro-ecology, eco-agriculture and leadership in Central America).

One of the Institute’s major contributions to the region was the systematization of experiences of territorial rural



development, which served to improve the capabilities of managers, technical personnel and leaders of rural public and private entities involved in programs and projects on sustainable rural development to conduct analyses of their experiences. This exercise highlighted the factors common to successful experiences and encouraged information sharing. The resulting conclusions and recommendations on rural development policies were then presented to the corresponding authorities. The systematization encompassed experiences of rural agro-industry and rural tourism in several Central American countries.

With a view to upgrading the region's rural development capacities, almost 300 people, including managers, technical staff and rural leaders of public and private institutions in Central America, took part in congresses, seminars and workshops in which the territorial approach to sustainable rural development was discussed, together with its implications for strategies, policies and methodologies of intervention.

Over 60 extension workers, officials from the agricultural public sector and members of civil society entities received training on leadership and eco-agriculture issues, the territorial approach and participatory territorial prospective studies.

Starting in 2008, rural development programs and institutes and related public entities were actively engaged in the formulation of a "Central American strategy for sustainable territorial development in rural areas". IICA and other international and regional cooperation agencies provided technical support for the process.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

During 2002-2008 the Institute supported the Central Region countries in technology and innovation and strengthened the region's institutional fabric through technical and financial cooperation with various agencies and governments.

In fulfilment of the respective mandate from the Central American Agricultural Council, a proposal was formulated on technology and agricultural diversification with the support of IICA and the participation of national agricultural research institutes from the Central Region. A number of lines of work were recommended, including the introduction of an innovation-based approach and the development of a diversification strategy. The document was analyzed, approved and implemented by the steering committee of the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System (SICTA).

The Institute facilitated the reactivation of SICTA, which was achieved partly through the System's participation in different regional processes, such as the formulation of the Central American Agricultural Policy and the development of a Regional Agro-environmental and Health Strategy. Twelve knowledge networks were set up with the main researchers from the national agricultural research institutes and resources were raised to implement regional projects. A network of experts was formed to manage a portfolio of regional agricultural technology projects. Starting in 2006, IICA served as SICTA Executive Secretariat, which was valuable for supporting monitoring and implementation of the agreements adopted by the body's steering committee.



With a view to supporting regional agro-biodiversity conservation, IICA developed and implemented a strategy for promoting coordination among professionals working in that area, with national commissions operating at the country level and the Mesoamerican Network of Plant Genetic Resources (REMERFI) at the level of the region. This strengthened the regional strategy for management of plant genetic resources, as a means to safeguard the genetic base for upgrading species in Central America. REMERFI was also incorporated into the networks that the Institute has supported at the hemispheric level.

A grant was negotiated with the World Bank for the formulation of a regional project, and another was secured from the Global Crop Diversity Trust of FAO for the regeneration of maize and bean materials in germplasm banks. This grant was extended to support the implementation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.


With the support of SICTA, which contributed pre-investment resources, and the technical support of IICA, three regional projects were identified and formulated in response to the 2007 call for proposals made by the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO). A total of US\$1 million was raised to select potato seed material and study the complex of tomato viruses in the region.

In coordination with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (COSUDE), the Institute also participated in the formulation and implementation of the Agricultural Innovation Network project, known as the SICTA Network Project or SICTA Network. During the first phase of a competitive fund, this project financed 12 projects, with a total investment of US\$697,559. In phase 2, 15 projects were formulated, with a budget allocation of US\$1,688,490. The SICTA Network's

investment in projects mobilized almost six times as much in counterpart funding for the beneficiaries.

A total of 27 innovation projects had been implemented in Central America, 75% of which directly benefited over 6,000 families of small-scale producers of beans and maize and, potentially, all the staple grains producers in the region. The SICTA Network helps small producers to become more competitive and improve their income. The project's intervention strategy combines production and post-harvest innovations and promotes collective market access. The entire strategy rests upon capacity-building in beneficiary producers' organizations, by making them the main drivers of the processes and guarantors of its continuity. The projects have generated an average yield gain of 30% in beans and 45% in maize, compared to the respective national averages. As well as improving yields, collective downstream management and product quality gains raised sale prices by between 20% and 30% over the price offered by traditional intermediaries. IICA participated in the Steering Committee of the SICTA Network Project. In addition, the Institute is responsible for the implementation of this COSUDE-financed project, through an Executive Coordinator.

In the area of agricultural technology, cooperative work was carried out in the framework of the Regional Cooperative Program for Technology Development and the Modernization of Coffee Growing in Central America, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica (PROMECAFE). The Institute supported coffee institutes and other authorities in the coffee sector directly in the program's member countries. For example, greater efficiency was achieved in production technologies, training and transfer, dissemination of information, agribusiness development, valuation of specialty coffees, genetic upgrading, development of new F1 hybrid genetic materials, integrated



pest management, agro-forestry systems, clean processing and use of by-products, safety, environmentally-friendly productivity with social fairness, and broader diversification of income for producers.

The Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) selected PROMECAFE as its regional counterpart in work to support coffee producers in Central America and the Dominican Republic. PROMECAFE is the executor of the projects “Protection of coffee quality, linked to its origin” (AECID) and “Geographical indications for agrifood exports” (IDB/Multilateral Investment Fund, MIF). In this process, IICA contributed to institutional capacity-building by helping to develop methodologies and increase integration among the public institutions involved in the legal registration of protected geographical indications (PGI) and protected denominations of origin (PDO). Support was also provided in work relating to the upgrading of coffee quality, safety and traceability with a view to international marketing.

During this period PROMECAFE received valuable cooperation from the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France, FONTAGRO, the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), the International Coffee Organization (ICO), AECID and IDB/MIF. Their technological and financial contributions helped not only to achieve worthwhile results, but also to form a technology charter that contributed solutions not only regionally, but also further afield.

The activities of PROMECAFE were coordinated from within IICA by the Executive Secretary of the Program with the support of other professionals at the Institute.

e. Promoting Regional Integration

During 2002-2008 the Institute supported the countries in their efforts to carry forward and strengthen the participation of regional councils of agriculture ministers in the regional integration processes. In the Central Region, this consisted of supplying a permanent Technical Secretariat for the ministerial council. With the cooperation of IICA, this Secretariat helped to formulate and execute regional policies, strategies, programs and projects.

The Executive Secretariat of the Central American Agricultural Council (SCAC) supported the Council of Ministers and the Regional Technical Committee of CAC with the development and implementation of medium term frameworks for action. SCAC facilitated the preparation and implementation of the Plan of Action for Agricultural and Rural Development of the Puebla Panama Plan, the 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy, the Agro-Environmental and Health Regional Strategy for 2009-2024, and the Regional Strategy for Staple Grains, and is in the process of formulating the Central American Strategy for Sustainable Territorial Development in Rural Areas.

In the preparation of the 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy, the Institute participated as a member of the Inter-Agency Group set up to support the ministries of agriculture and provided a team of specialists for the formulation of proposals in different priority areas. IICA also supported the organization of national-level consultations with the agricultural public sector, producers’ organizations and civil society.



For the implementation of the 2008-2017 Central American Agricultural Policy, IICA set forth a series of regional actions that included: support for the formulation of regional programs in agro-tourism and agro-industry; linking of small farmers with markets and competitiveness in priority agro-chains; the organization of the first Central American Forum on Agro-Energy; the creation of the Network of Competent Authorities for Organic Agriculture and subsequent support for it; support for the operation of the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System; and participation in the integrated work program on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and food safety.

IICA, SCAC and the Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA) joined forces to support the implementation of the program of work on sanitary and phytosanitary issues in the framework of the 2008-

2017 Central American Agricultural Policy and as part of the process of establishing the Central American Customs Union (CACU).

IICA's contribution to that program of work facilitated progress towards the regional harmonization of sanitary and phytosanitary rules. The Institute prepared and reviewed proposals for Central American technical regulations, formulated a regional traceability project, prepared harmonized quarantine procedures manuals, developed a regional project for modernizing peripheral quarantine posts of the Central American Customs Union, participated in the conceptualization and preparation of a training program to support the modernization of quarantine posts, and supported the countries' participation in Codex Alimentarius, while monitoring issues of common interest and helping to articulate national positions.

IICA Office in **Belize**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Belize

Salvador Monge¹

1. Introduction

This report presents the contributions that the IICA Office in Belize made towards the development of agriculture and rural life in Belize between 2002 and 2008. The results reported in this document reflect reforms outlined in the Institute's Medium Term Plan to transform IICA into a modern development Institution. Those reforms included the adoption of a new style of cooperation that emphasizes operational efficiency, prudent financial management, improved use of human resources, closer relations with international strategic partners and a new relationship with Member States based on participation, transparency and accountability.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Belize

A significant undertaking by the Office in Belize was the preparation of a medium-term strategy for the development of Belize's agriculture sector. This exercise was conducted with technical support from Headquarters and regional specialists from the Central and Andean regions. The final document was to serve as a strategic guide for the Ministry of Agriculture

and Fisheries (MAF) and other institutions that support the development of Belize's agriculture sector.

IICA/Belize supported the Information and Documentation Center with equipment and technical assistance and purchased equipment for it. Resource material was collected and cataloged and the document center is now fully operational for use by students, farmers and technicians.

In 2003, holding the pro-tempore presidency of the Central American Integration System (SICA) was a significant and historic step towards the integration of Belize into the Central American group of countries. In support of this process, technical support was provided to the MAF before the minister took over as the Pro-tempore President of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC). As a direct result of this integration, Belize received technical support from the IICA Office in El Salvador for the procurement and construction of a small-scale cashew processing plant. This cashew plant supported the MAF priority of agro-processing and rural prosperity.

A national workshop on strategic planning and curriculum development was coordinated and facilitated for staff from the Department of Agriculture of the Faculty of Science and Engineering of the University of Belize and secondary schools whose curricula include strong agriculture components. The workshops applied the methodology for strategic planning

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to be used as a participatory tool for curriculum review and upgrading, thus making a direct contribution towards improving the quality and relevance of agricultural education in Belize.

Under the leadership of IICA, the National Bio-safety Committee completed a national policy and draft legislation for biosafety and biosecurity. Nationwide, broad-based consultations to encourage dialogue and input from stakeholders and the public also served as an excellent source of public education and sensitization on biosafety issues. This input served as the basis for preparing and implementing the national strategy for biosafety in Belize.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Support was provided to the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA), to provide training in the area of beekeeping and pest risk analysis as part of their staff development program. Additional staff training was also provided for BAHA staff for development of quarantine procedures and protocols. Furthermore, support was provided for Belize participation at the WTO/SPS meetings held in Geneva.

A consultation for the establishment of a regional body to coordinate agricultural health activities, a workshop on animal pest risk analysis and disease surveillance and a workshop for development of legislation for an animal emergency response system. Technical support was provided

to the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Services (SPS) focal point for the development of a national action plan for compliance with the World Trade Organization sanitary and phytosanitary (WTO/SPS) agreements.

A national SPS committee was set up to support efforts to strengthen national agricultural health services. This committee includes members from the public and private sectors. Noteworthy was the presentation of a special award to the Belizean delegate by the committee in recognition of her outstanding participation and contributions made at the meetings. This experience has strengthened the local knowledge base on international sanitary and phytosanitary issues, which could impact the ability of Belize to participate in international trade and to safeguard its borders from the entry of exotic pests and diseases.

The Performance Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool was successfully applied to the veterinary/livestock sector through a series of consultations with user groups from the different sectors of the livestock industry, including veterinarians, and in 2008 the IICA Office applied the PVS tool to BAHA's food safety, SPS and plant health services. The tool was presented to stakeholders and comments, recommendations and concerns were discussed and documented. The results of the application of the PVS tool were used to develop a national SPS strategy for strengthening BAHA capacity as the competent authority in Belize for food safety, plant health, quarantine, animal health and SPS.

The monilia (frosty pod) disease of cacao was positively identified in Belize in 2004 through technical collaboration between IICA and CATIE. A national survey was conducted to determine the distribution of the infestation and a strategic plan of action was prepared for its eradication.

A functional national sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) committee, working with IICA and OIRSA, organized and executed the first in a series of national seminar/training activities involving the private and public sectors, entitled “Trade Agreements: Opportunities for Belize.”

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA provided technical advice to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries prior to his taking over as Pro-tempore President of CAC as part of Belize’s pro-tempore presidency of SICA. Logistical support was provided for the participation of two Belizean technicians in the meeting of the WTO/SPS Committee held in Geneva and for the participation of two Belizean technicians in the regional agribusiness forum on tropical fruits held in El Salvador. To date, the National Focal Point for the SPS/WTO continues to actively participate in meetings in Geneva. The SPS focal point operates a fully functional SPS committee with representation from all relevant stakeholders. The MAF maintains a National Fruit Tree Programme and participates in the regional Mesoamerican fruit program.

IICA hosted a national seminar entitled “Opportunities and Challenges for the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Rural Eco-enterprises in a Global World” that was facilitated by a technician from CATIE. This seminar, which was attended by representatives of the public and private sectors, highlighted the importance of eco-enterprises to the rural economy and the contribution they make to the preservation of natural resources and overall sustainable development. The report was made available and serves as baseline data for use in the MAF policy and strategic plan.

Technical staff from the Office participated in numerous committees and working groups for commodities/topics such as citrus crops, sugar, tropical fruits, biosafety, organic agriculture, agricultural research and ecological agriculture, making a valuable contribution to the overall improvement of agriculture in Belize. On the committee of the Citrus Research and Education Institute (CREI), IICA’s role is to provide technical support on institutional strengthening and citrus production along the chain. IICA assists the Sugar Industry Research and Development Institute (SERDI) by providing technical support in the areas of sugarcane research, field productivity and diversification strategy. As part of the National Fruit Tree Programme, IICA facilitated horizontal cooperation for site visits by producers from Central America through the SICTA Network. Through IICA leadership, the national biosafety policy was approved by Cabinet and the implementation phase is ongoing. IICA also chairs the Belize Organic Producers Association (BOPA), which is mandated to develop the organic sector in Belize through policy and legislation, certification and inspection, and improved agronomic practices.

Technical support was also provided to Belize Trade and Investment Development Services (BELTRAIDE) to support institutional strengthening to facilitate and foster a climate of credibility in the provision of services to investors, producers and exporters. Furthermore, a SWOT analysis, which is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats involved in a project or business venture, was conducted by IICA and the recommendations made were implemented to reorganize BELTRAIDE’s internal structure and thereby improve efficiency and productivity. BELTRAIDE’s capacity for implementation of its strategic plan and service to the private sector was strengthened through this



intervention with the provision of specific training activities. This is a semi-autonomous institution that implements government policy for the promotion of investment for entrepreneurial development for local products and facilitates exports of those products to overseas markets. IICA also facilitated a visit to the IICA Office in Miami for the General Manager of BELTRAIDE who received valuable insights from the trade facilitation team on the avenues and networks required to import and distribute goods from the Caribbean and Central America in the United States.

The Institute provided technical support for the execution of a value chain analysis of the sugar industry in Belize, to identify bottlenecks and recommend strategic interventions to make the industry more competitive. Outputs from this analysis were integrated into the preparation of a national adaptation strategy and accompanying financial proposals for solicitation of funds for implementation of the strategy for improving the overall competitiveness of the sugar industry as it adjusts to reforms being implemented under the EU-ACP sugar protocol. This work was executed by a team of national staff with support from IICA technicians from Headquarters and the Caribbean and Andean regions. The completed document was submitted to, and approved by, the Sugar Industry Control Board (SICB). This is an important input that will address the long-term adjustments that the sugar industry will undertake to remain competitive after preferential EU prices are reduced by 36% over the next four years. This strategy will significantly impact the livelihood of the northern districts of Corozal and Orange Walk and the economy in that area.

The SICB has commenced the process of implementing the "National Sugar Adaptation Strategy for Belize." This strategy was prepared by IICA and is being funded by the EU with an allocation of 3.084 million Euros in grant funds for 2006.

The implementation of this strategy is an important activity for the sugar-producing districts and the country, since it will address the long-term adjustments and reforms that the industry will undertake to remain competitive. The strategy will be focusing on five components to achieve that objective: improvement of the efficiency of sugarcane production, processing and transportation; diversification within the sugar industry to expand revenues earned from the production and processing of sugarcane; diversification for vulnerable groups that may need to seek alternative agricultural activities; and, socioeconomic interventions to assist farmers who are unable to pursue alternative livelihood opportunities in agriculture.

The Belize Office organized a visit to Miami, USA, by private sector exporters from Belize. The mission enabled them to understand the services provided by the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety; familiarize themselves with the export promotion activities conducted by Costa Rica's Trade Development Office (PROCOMER) and agribusiness office in Miami; and learn about produce market trends in Florida through visits to supermarkets and wholesale produce markets and identify potential market opportunities for products from Belize in the Florida market. This action started the Belize Export Platform Program.

An export platform strategy was developed to identify, train and equip potential small and medium-sized businesses with the skills required to export new products to the US market. This export platform is a direct result of the export strategy developed by BELTRAIDE using the 2006 strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis conducted by this Office with technical support from the IICA Office in Miami.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Technical support was provided for the design and construction of a cashew processing plant, sourcing of cashew processing equipment from El Salvador, installation of the equipment in Belize and training for members of the cashew producers cooperative in operation and maintenance of the equipment. The cooperative markets roasted cashew nuts on the local market and plans to expand production to supply export markets.

Technical training was provided to farmers and extension agents on seed multiplication and agronomic practices for cashew, plantain, apple banana, coco yam, cassava and pineapple in support of the MAF's agricultural diversification program. Procedures for selecting and introducing improved germplasm for cassava and managing and controlling black sigatoka were highlighted. The producers of the above crops are organized in groups to better utilize technical and financial support.

Technical support was provided to the Cashew Producers' Cooperative on processing of cashew nuts and management of their processing facilities. This included the sourcing of the equipment and technical support for its installation from El Salvador. Funding for this initiative was provided by the Government of Belize and the Belize Audubon Society, as a grant to stimulate economic growth in rural Belize.

The Mesoamerican regional fruit program, supported by IICA, was launched in Belize in 2005. The actions included the presentation of a status report on the fruits sector in Belize and a consultation workshop with stakeholders where pineapple,

pitahaya, coconuts and cashew were selected as priority crops with potential for development as commercial products. The program plans to prepare a regional project and identify funds for the development of a regional strategy for expanding production and exporting fruits in the region.

IICA supported the design of a poverty alleviation project in the village of Dolores, Toledo District (The Dolores Integrated Pilot Project). IICA will support this effort, working with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, to promote technology transfer and adoption to improve agronomic practices. This project is holistic in its objectives and the integrated approach is been used to prioritize, identify roles and responsibilities, and ensure sustainability to maximize limited human and financial resources.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

As a member of the ministerial task force for institutional development, IICA provided technical cooperation for the conversion of Central Farm (the Research Department of the Ministry of Agriculture) into an autonomous institution - the Belize Institute for Agricultural Research and Development (BIARD). Draft legislation was produced for the institutional transformation. Technical assistance was provided to the biosafety committee for preparation of draft legislation on biosafety and GMO use, and legislation for organic agricultural practices was completed and submitted to the relevant authorities for enactment.

Technical support through participation on the National Committee for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development (NCCARD). The remit of this newly established committee is to set up subcommittees for specific commodities

that will define priorities for agricultural research and development at the national level.

Belize's sugar industry benefited from horizontal technical cooperation sourced through IICA from Costa Rica's Chamber of Sugar Producers (LAICA). Under an IICA/LAICA agreement, an industrial engineer from LAICA made two trips to Belize in 2006 and facilitated seminar-workshops at different sugarcane producing communities to educate cane farmers in the concepts, methodology and implications for implementation of the core sampling system in Belize. Core sampling allows for payment for sugarcane delivered to the factory based on quality. This system rewards farmers for quality and is designed to motivate farmers to improve the overall quality of sugarcane delivered to the factory. This intervention is expected to make a general contribution towards the improvement of efficiency of sugar production in Belize.

The citrus industry in Belize benefited from horizontal technical cooperation sourced through IICA from the visit of representatives of El Salvador's fruit industry. A delegation of fifteen industry officials specializing in citrus nursery and certification, orchard management, pest control and agribusiness, and coordinators of the FRUTALES Program from the IICA Office in El Salvador visited key citrus industry sites, shared experiences and exchanged recommendations.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Direct technical cooperation was provided to the Toledo Cacao Growers Association (TCGA) in the form of training seminars and field days on improved farming techniques for nursery and field management in organic cacao production. These activities were conducted to support a program for the

expansion of organic cacao (from 200 to 1500 acres) over the next three years. These small-scale organic cacao growers have a guaranteed market for their dried and fermented cacao beans (UK-Green and Blacks) and receive a fair-trade price. TCGA is the sole internationally certified exporter of organic cacao in Belize and leads the organic export industry at the national level.

Support was also provided to the Belize Organic Producers Association (BOPA) towards the advancement of the national organic agriculture legislation through the process of revision prior to enactment. Through its involvement in BOPA the Institute is coordinating the establishment of a local system for certification of organic fruits and vegetables to be sold to facilities that cater to the tourism sector.

Through the Belize Organic Producers Association (BOPA), technical support was provided for revision of the national organic agriculture legislation as it goes through the final stages of revision by the Office of the Solicitor General prior to enactment. Through BOPA, an initial feasibility study was also conducted to determine the viability of establishing a local market for organic products within the tourism sector. Consultations were carried out with local institutions such as the Belize Tourism Board, the Belize Marketing and Development Cooperation (BMDC), the Belize Citrus Growers Association, the Toledo Cacao Growers Association (TCGA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, all of which responded positively to the implementation of this program in 2005. Some 1.5 million cacao seedlings were produced and planted by 700 farmers in Toledo, Stann Creek and Cayo Districts.

Thanks to the efforts of CATIE and the local IICA Office, Belize is now a member of the Mesoamerican Network on Plant Genetic Resources (REMRFI). The focus of this organization

is to coordinate information and expertise from inside and outside the region, linking the plant genetic resource sector with other biodiversity conservation agencies.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partnerships

Training activities in composting and pruning of cacao for organic production were facilitated, in collaboration with CATIE, for farmers, agriculture students in secondary schools and MAF extension officers. The training is part of a series of capacity-building activities aimed at improving oversight and management of small projects in rural communities.

An avian influenza (AI) simulation exercise conducted with the collaboration of IICA, OIRSA, BAHA and the MAF, helped identify areas that need to be addressed for development of a national AI response mechanism. This exercise is a significant component of a series of activities being implemented by the government to minimize the potential impact and risk associated with the entry of AI into Belize. IICA is a member of a national committee that is responsible for developing and coordinating all AI response mechanisms.

Working with OIRSA, BAHA, MAF and the Ministry of Health, IICA sponsored a series of public awareness campaigns to promote good agricultural practices for backyard poultry in Belize. The objective was to educate the public on the importance of keeping healthy poultry and thereby reduce the introduction and possible spread of avian influenza in Belize.

The IICA Office in Belize was instrumental in establishing a partnership between IICA, CATIE and the University of Belize for the establishment of a document center for public use at the University of Belize Central Farm Campus. This, along with the execution of a training workshop in information technology management for the university librarians, was a significant contribution to the upgrading of the library services offered by the university.

The IICA Office in Belize participated in a poverty alleviation and community reconstruction project with the SIF, through a partnership approach that included PAHO, OIRSA, the IDB and other government ministries and NGOs. This new approach will maximize the use of resources and strengthened relations with the institutions mentioned for future collaboration.

5. Modernization of the Office

Since 2002, the Office has had the technical and administrative staff it needs to implement the national technical cooperation agenda.

IICA has the equipment required to provide its clients with more efficient services. The Office made the necessary adjustments to focus on, and harmonize with, government policy, and generate the economic and financial resources needed to make its services more efficient.

IICA uploaded information to the Web page about IICA in Belize, its programs and projects, and incorporated links to other useful websites.

IICA Office in **Costa Rica**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Costa Rica

Byron Miranda¹

1. Introduction

The report presented herein outlines the main results of IICA action in Costa Rica from 2002 to 2008 based on the National Technical Cooperation Agenda. These results were made possible by the concerted, dedicated efforts of our partners and associates. Nevertheless, the major achievements can be attributed to the determination and tireless efforts of countless idealistic Costa Ricans who injected vigor into cooperation activities to create a new perception of the strategic importance of agriculture and rural life. In the final analysis, these are the ones who dream of transforming rural life into an attractive, profitable, prosperous, equitable option for local populations and for overall society.

During 2002-2008, thousands of people considered new concepts, took part in a variety of experiments and eventually consolidated projects and techniques to bring sustainable, equitable development throughout the country. These men and women gave life to their projects with support from IICA. Farmers, indigenous groups, peasants, artisans, university students, researchers, local governments, the central government and many other Costa Rican entrepreneurs brought their ideas to fruition with support from IICA.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Costa Rica

Producing and disseminating the information needed for decision-making by public and private stakeholders in agriculture and rural life. During the 2002-2008 period, IICA prepared, published and disseminated studies with quantitative and qualitative information on agriculture and trade that triggered analysis and dialogue among key representatives of the public and private sectors. The following publications and events are emblematic of this process:

- “*Matriz de contabilidad social para Costa Rica*” (2004).
- “*Más que alimentos en la mesa: la real contribución de la agricultura a la economía de Costa Rica*” (2004 y 2007).
- “The State of and Outlook for Agriculture and Rural Life in Costa Rica,” a report published annually since 2006 to examine the performance of agriculture and rural life and encourage information, thought and analysis.
- Proceedings of international seminars: Agricultural Insurance and Risk Management–Trends and International Experiences; and the International Agribusiness Forum on

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Tropical Fruits. Both events took place in 2006, and the two volumes of proceedings were distributed in both print and digital format.

Promoting the development of a new institutional framework. IICA supported and backed up Costa Rica's participation in regional integration processes, especially in the framework of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), an entity made up of the region's ministers of agriculture. Some of these efforts took place in partnership with other cooperation agencies. Results included: a) approval and implementation of the Central American Agricultural Policy, b) approval and implementation of the Regional Environmental and Health Strategy and c) progress in developing the Central American Strategy for Territorial Rural Development.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

During the years from 2000-2008, IICA completed 280 technical cooperation activities using its own resources and 56 externally funded projects, both regional and national, for a total investment in excess of US\$8.9 million (47% with its own resources and 53% with external resources). On average, 40 technical cooperation actions and eight national and regional projects took place every year, for an annual average budget outlay of US\$1.3 million. These funds, classified as non-reimbursable technical cooperation, were invested in the public, private and academic sectors and in nongovernmental organizations. (See table 20).

Table 20: Technical Cooperation Projects and Actions 2002-2008.

Year	Technical cooperation actions ⁱ		Technical cooperation projects ⁱⁱ	
	Number	US\$ Value	Number	US\$ Value
2002	18	402,481	7	777,782
2003	30	769,426	6	501,487
2004	31	495,468	5	624,484
2005	34	434,538	9	523,911
2006	44	443,827	9	623,791
2007	45	819,551	13	957,137
2008	55	867,225	12	703,508
Total		4,232,515		4,712,101

Source: IICA Costa Rica.

- i. Total technical cooperation activities conducted with regular IICA budget funds
- ii. Technical cooperation projects conducted with external resources (partners, counterparts)

The main results of our Technical Cooperation are:

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Modernization of the National Animal Health Service (SENASA) clearly improved public/private coordination. Representatives of various production sectors (beef and dairy cattle, bees, aquaculture and swine) completed a "common vision" exercise (2004-2005) and developed joint working plans to strengthen the Service.

In 2007, IICA worked with SENASA to prepare for and follow up on an evaluation by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). Using earlier inputs as a basis, it helped develop an investment project to strengthen SENASA. The Director General of this Service publicly recognized IICA for its support in a special event for accountability held in 2009.

In 2008, IICA supported a process for institution building by the State Plant Protection Service (SFE), completing the “public/private common vision” exercise. Later, while the SFE was under intervention, IICA sat on the Interagency Advisory Commission, together with the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and in this setting, provided assistance for conceptualizing, analyzing and reviewing the process.

Improvements were made in institutional capacities for negotiating and applying sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures. With support from the “Initiative of the Americas” project, Costa Rican representatives participated on the World Trade Organization (WTO) SPS Committee in the 2002-2008 term.

IICA also lent critical support for the installation and successful operation of the National SPS Committee. This work included promoting opportunities for national dialogue, publicizing successful experiences in other countries and promoting and negotiating with national agricultural and health authorities to have the Committee set up in compliance with the 1997 Executive Order 26226-S-MAG.

Various technical cooperation activities also proved useful for building up institutional capacities on the Intersectoral Food Safety Commission (CIIA). For example, IICA supported development of a Medium Term Plan (2002), preparation

of a cooperation proposal to build momentum for creating a National Food Safety System (2003), working out a strategic plan and designing the CIIA website (2005).

In 2005-2007 IICA combined forces with the International Livestock Research Institute/Common Fund for Commodities in a project to improve the quality, safety and marketing of beef in Central America; as a result, public and private stakeholders learned more about health and safety in the production chain. National animal health services also developed new skills in the areas of safety and risk assessment.

Finally, IICA provided key stakeholders in food safety and health issues with opportunities for information and dialogue, especially the International Workshop on Traceability (2007), attended by 170 people from the public sector, academia and private sector in the Central Region, Mexico and the Dominican Republic. The proceedings from this event were distributed widely and made available in both print and digital formats.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Broad-based activities were undertaken to promote opportunities for Costa Rican products to penetrate international markets: a) IICA assisted the *Corporación Hortícola* in examining alternatives for boosting horticultural exports to the countries of the Caribbean (2004); b) It supported the Chamber of Exporters of Costa Rica (CADEXCO) with forward-looking studies on access to the European market for agri-food products (2005), culminating in the release and dissemination of a study on market access conditions for Costa Rican products in the European Union (2007). It also performed a technical review of a study on the market in

the European Union, in preparation for the trade agreement between Europe and Central America (2008) and a basic study of 15 food subsectors in support of the negotiating team for the Free Trade Agreement with the United States (2003); c) It conducted a study on the Costa Rican rice sector and market access commitments under CAFTA (2004); and d) It developed indices for use in studying the world rice market, which facilitated development of the “Agreement on the Rice Chain” (2005).

IICA helped Costa Rica improve its trade negotiating skills and its capacity for administering trade agreements through a number of different activities: a) It held workshops for information and analysis of the implications of bioterrorism laws in the United States (2003); b) It conducted a study on the Costa Rican international trade management system (SACI); c) In partnership with FAO, it helped the MAG Secretariat of Agricultural Sector Planning (SEPSA) hold a workshop on administering the international trade system; and d) In partnership with INCAE, IICA contributed to strengthening the SEPSA Agricultural Trade and Competitiveness Unit in the areas of international trade and agri-food systems (2006).

IICA worked to strengthen the public and private institutional framework for developing and promoting agribusiness: a) It developed a proposed national plan for development of national agribusiness for the MAG National Production Council (CNP) (2002); b) It designed and validated tools for incorporating the gender approach into micro-enterprise support programs (2003); c) It supported SEPSA in developing and disseminating Agro 21, a strategy for competitiveness, sustainability and equality in agricultural production chains (2004); d) It facilitated preparation of a strategic plan for the bean chain, in support of MAG (2005); e) It drafted proposed regulations for geographical indications and appellations of origin (2006); f) It supported the MAG Tomato Program

Management and Comprehensive Marketing Program (PIMA) in designing, setting up and operating a tomato auction system (2006-2007), culminating in a published report on lessons learned: *“Lecciones aprendidas de una experiencia de comercialización innovadora: la Subasta del Tomate”* (2008); and g) Finally, it helped the PIMA organize and develop the first two annual International EXPOPIMA Fairs (2007 and 2008) and organize the regional workshop “Status and Outlook for Wholesale Markets in Central America” (2007).

Moreover, the program “Creating exporters to Canada” was held for the third time and led to the participation of Costa Rican business owners and products in the Canadian trade fair Grocery Innovations (2002). In 2003, the program was redirected toward the United States market, and upon conclusion, the experience was documented as “Creating exporters: export platforms,” serving as a model for other countries of the region.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA offered technical cooperation services to the MAG Rural Development Program (PDR-MAG) in 2004-2008, leading to the adoption and incorporation of a territorial approach to rural development in the National Development Plan 2006-2010. This approach was also reflected in public policies, proposals for institutional transformation, investment program design and promotion of social management for high-priority territories (regions with low social development ratings).

Under the terms of a technical and administrative cooperation agreement between PDR-MAG and IICA, efforts and resources focused on conceptualizing and applying pilot experiences with

the territorial development approach (2004-2008) in regions identified as having low levels of human development: a) on the northern border (Upala, Guatuso, La Cruz and Los Chiles); b) in the Central Pacific (watersheds of the Aranjuez and Sardinal Rivers), and c) in the southern region (Corredores, Osa, Golfito, Buenos Aires and Coto Brus).

Cooperation focused on promoting the territorial approach to rural development among national authorities and contributing to professional development for the PDR-MAG technical and management team, as well as representatives of other entities from the public sector and from academia. Activities included the design of technical cooperation projects and the production of methodologies and tools for use in exercises to describe and map social stakeholders and investments in selected territories, and for cartographic analysis of territorial dynamics.

The experience acquired in this process served as a basis for reorienting both public policy and the institutional framework for rural development (2007-2009) contained in the draft framework law for territorial rural development. As part of this reorientation, the Agrarian Development Institute (IDA) was transformed into the Rural Development Institute (INDER).

In partnership with Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP), in 2002-2003 IICA supported implementation of the model for "Food and nutritional security at the local level" (SAN/Local) in the canton of Talamanca. This experience strengthened self-management capabilities among local residents and improved institutional coordination for fighting malnutrition and poverty in areas posting low human development scores.

In support of the municipal government of Vázquez de Coronado, in 2002-2003 IICA conducted an assessment of

agro-tourism potential in the canton, along with a plan to promote this type of activity.

It also supported the Inter-institutional Commission for Entrepreneurship among Rural Women, made up of the National Women's Bureau (INAMU) and 15 other public sector entities, by holding technical cooperation activities to create opportunities for rural women and youth. Examples include a study on 400 groups of income-generating women, and design of a methodology for evaluating the business development of rural women's groups (2003-2004). IICA supported the MAG National Rural Youth Program in designing and operating the Institutional Service Network for Rural Youth (2007-2008).

It aided the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) by developing a proposal to improve the quality of agricultural education in rural technical secondary schools of the Pacific Region and the Northern Region (2003-2004), and the experience was documented for consideration at the national level.

IICA technical cooperation actions provided opportunities for reflection, analysis and dialogue on national rural life through workshops held to consider and discuss agricultural policies, rural development strategies, food security, rural poverty and agricultural extension service (2005). The Rural Studies Group promoted analytical workshops, and more recently, the Network for Rural Studies and Alternatives was created. All this was enriched by the participation of academic institutions, the public sector and international cooperation agencies.

IICA helped build capacity among national rural development institutions, both public and private, through a broad array of actions: a) it designed and implemented a teaching-action program for facilitators and rural leaders, entitled "*Desatando energías locales*," attended by 25 specialists and 100 rural leaders from three high-priority territories (2008);

b) It sponsored three courses taught in Spain on specialized studies in rural development, in partnership with the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Food (MAPA), attended by 60 people from Central America (2004-2006); and, c) It offered two courses on agro-environmental policies supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, attended by 70 Costa Rican rural leaders (2007-2008).

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA's most significant work in this area was its help in implementing the model for qualitative improvement of higher education in agriculture at the school of Agronomy of the University of Costa Rica (2004).

Also during the 2002-2008 period, the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO), the IDB and IICA joined forces to support and finance the management and implementation of several research projects: a) competitive areas for corn production in Central America; b) development of black Sigatoka-resistant plantain and banana cultivars for local consumption in Latin America; c) development of myco-insecticides for integrated whitefly management in fruit and vegetable crops of neotropical regions; and, d) food safety in Central America–Lettuce.

IICA provided funding with resources from the Red-SICTA Project to support the University of Costa Rica Research Foundation (FUNDEVI) in its study on a post-harvest management strategy for organic cassava (2006-2008).

The Institute was interested in supporting institutional modernization and technology policies geared toward the

development and incorporation of technological innovations. With this goal in mind, it helped design and implement the project “Innovation of the bean value chain in the northern region of Costa Rica,” oriented toward improving the technological, organizational and business skills of six organizations of small-scale bean producers. This work was done in partnership with the Technology Research and Transfer Program, (PITTA-Frijol), Worldvision and PDR-MAG, with financing from the Regional Red SICTA-IICA Project and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

IICA helped build up the National Agricultural Research and Technology Bureau (INTA) in a number of ways: a) It supported development of the strategic plan (2002); b) It backed the formulation of a proposal for institutional transformation (2003); c) It put together an advanced investment project profile for INTA called “Technology innovation for attaining food security and competitiveness in agriculture” (2005); d) It contributed to the development of the strategic plan for 2008-2012; and, e) It supported Costa Rica's participation in the process of reactivating the SICTA.

In 2006, IICA strengthened the National Commission on Plant Genetic Resources of Costa Rica (CONAREFI) by helping to coordinate the various institutions and researchers involved in this field. A technical forum took place as part of this process, “The importance of plant genetic resources for fighting poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean.” Several Costa Rican entities acquired greater technical capacities for managing and assessing the risk of modified living organisms through a 2007 course that IICA conducted in partnership with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), OIRSA, the National Finance and Technology Council of Costa Rica and the program Biotechnology for Latin America and the Caribbean (BIOLAC).

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA worked with public and private entities devoted to sustainable development, helping to improve the skills of management and technical teams through a number of technical cooperation activities: a) In partnership with the University of California at Santa Cruz, it held an international course on agro-ecology and territorial development, attended by more than 50 people (2006); and, b) Two sessions were held of the International Course on Leadership for the Development of Eco-agriculture: Integrated Management of Rural Territories in Central America, organized in conjunction with the University of California at Berkeley, Ecoagriculture Partners, CATIE, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the PDR-MAG and Costa Rica's Universidad Nacional (UNA). These courses were attended by over 60 rural leaders from around Central America (2007-2008).

The Institute was active in supporting and carrying out significant multinational projects. One was the Project for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Native and Wild Crops, a joint project by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the World Bank, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and IICA, which concluded in 2008 with the preparation of basic studies and a regional strategy for conservation and use of agro-biodiversity in Central America. Another was the Project for Reducing Agricultural Sector Vulnerability to Climate Change (VULSAC), with an eye toward reducing the fragility of the agricultural sector in Central America in the face of recurring natural disasters in this region (2000-2003).

Technical cooperation actions from 2002 to 2003 were oriented toward strengthening Costa Rican trade union organizations involved in organic production. One of the most significant

actions was IICA cooperation in developing a national strategy and conducting studies on the situation of these organizations, both in Costa Rica and in the region as a whole.

With IICA technical cooperation, support was stepped up in 2003 for the National Irrigation and Drainage Service (SENARA), particularly in drafting and negotiating the Program for Integrated Management of Water Resources (PROGIRH). A variety of actions took place to assist SENARA in building up its institutional and technical capacity and modernizing and expanding irrigation infrastructure in Costa Rica: a) A technical identification mission drafted the orienting framework and terms of reference for formulating the PROGIRH (2003); b) The PROGIRH was developed in 2004 with resources from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), for a total of US\$51 million; and, c) SENARA also received support to review its guidelines and operating capacities for implementing the PROGIRH and furthering the process of institutional modernization; along these same lines, a report completed in 2008 described the current status of SENARA, future prospects and recommendations for improved performance.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

From 2002 through 2008, IICA built a solid foundation of partnerships, which produced excellent outcomes for the country and for IICA counterparts. Below are descriptions of some of the most significant results.

Several international courses were held for specialization and training, in partnership with the University of California at Berkeley and at Santa Cruz, Ecoagriculture Partners, CATIE,

the IUCN and Spain's MAPA. These partnerships added considerable value to the quality of the events as participants benefited from the professional skills of entities claiming different strengths and complementary financial resources.

The main joint actions were: a) promoting the application of the food and nutritional security model at the local level (SAN/Local) in Talamanca (IICA-PAHO); b) project on innovation of the bean value chain (Red-SICTA-IICA, PITTA Frijol, Worldvision and PDR-MAG); and, c) IICA-IUCN cooperation to carry out a partnership program in border zone ecosystems and territories. These examples illustrate the value of working together.

The partnership of SENARA, CABEI and IICA facilitated allocation of a non-reimbursable fund totaling US\$120,000 to formulate a feasibility study for the PROGIRH, which yielded strategic benefits for the country. The CABEI loan for the PROGIRH was approved by the Legislative Assembly (2008).

Another important achievement was the creation and implementation of the Interagency Commission for International Cooperation (2006), made up of IICA, FAO, RUTA, the Taiwan Technical Mission and subsequently, OIRSA. The purpose of this commission is to fit international cooperation to national needs. The Secretariat is provided by SEPSA-MAG. The fruitful endeavors of this commission became evident when agricultural sector authorities asked three of its members (OIRSA, IICA and FAO) to sit on the Interagency Advisory Commission for the process of modernizing the State Phytosanitary Service (2008). This process was completed successfully thanks to the work of all participating agencies, whose timely, valuable recommendations were used as input by national authorities.

Because IICA has become a partner to national entities and a trusted ally to major counterparts, it enjoyed ready access to external resources and joint participation in the following cases: a) a system to monitor the movement of cattle (SENASA-WTO-IICA); b) leadership training (IICA-Project for Municipal Strengthening and Decentralization (FOMUDE)-EU); c) strengthening groups for local action (Development Board of the South (JUDESUR)-IICA); d) study on competitiveness of the bean chain (IDB-IICA), and e) leadership training (IDA-IICA).

5. Modernization of the Office

During the 2002-2008 period, the technical and administrative platforms underwent significant improvement, which in turn led to better, more relevant and more effective technical cooperation services.

Greater integration and teamwork. The working environment was improved by the introduction of regular opportunities for interaction, dialogue and teamwork. The office also undertook a program for ongoing improvement of staff capabilities, fostering greater professional development opportunities in particular areas of competence and introducing the possibility of acquiring new skills (courses for professional growth, English language acquisition, photography, leadership, computer skills, management).

Survey of client satisfaction with cooperation services (2008). An independent company specialized in communication



and image conducted a study based on a random sampling (120 people) to evaluate the perception of cooperation services among counterparts and partners. The company presented its findings in March 2009 in an accountability meeting. Overall, it revealed a high regard for IICA's contribution and recognition of the quality and professional standing of its staff. The study also identified certain limitations and areas needing improvement, from the user's perspective.

System for managing audiences (2008). An audience management system was designed and implemented. It is based on a computerized tool and a common platform operated by all members of the team in order to maintain a fully up-to-date database on users of cooperation services. This information is critical for discovering who the users are, identifying their needs and designing tailor-made support services. Application of the system significantly improved communication with partners and counterparts and provided

a means to keep information up to date and to target services more effectively.

Integrated management system. In 2007, the Office was designated for a pilot study of the new IICA accounting information system, known by the acronym SAP. Application of the SAP improved the system of controls and the management processes for national and regional technical cooperation activities. Significantly, the office scored more than 97% for on-time delivery of reports and satisfaction by users both in the Institute itself and among national and international counterparts and partners.

Balanced Scorecard (2006). As part of the integrated management system, the office adapted concepts and tools from the Balanced Scorecard Performance System or BSC; the results included substantial improvements in managing technical cooperation, especially in the areas of priority setting, targeting and monitoring of actions.

IICA Office in El Salvador



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in El Salvador

Keith Andrews¹

1. Introduction

There follows a summary of IICA's achievements in El Salvador during 2002-2008, in the framework of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda prepared jointly with the main partners from the country's public and private sectors. During that period, IICA's technical cooperation efforts focused on responding to the priorities established in the Salvadoran agrifood and rural sector.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in El Salvador

IICA contributed to promoting the use of data systems throughout the period, but in the last five years efforts centered on knowledge management and between 2002 and 2003 the El Salvador chapter of the Inter-American Association of Agricultural Librarians, Documentalists and Information Specialists (AIBDA) was reactivated.

The Institute also helped to broker changes in university and school curricula and to improve relations among academic institutions. A diagnosis of the national situation was performed

and measures were taken to help resolve the problems that were identified in that exercise.

In partnership with private enterprise, government departments and national cultural agencies, IICA conducted two major activities that employed a novel methodology to reposition agriculture in the awareness of the wider public. One of these was an exhibition entitled "Rural life in El Salvador through art", which was shown in the National Anthropology Museum and received over 12,000 visitors in 2006. This activity gave rise to a "Travelling Exhibition", which toured over 60 cultural centers and other locations throughout the country, especially towns and cities in the interior. This modality gave over 10,000 visitors the opportunity to appreciate not only the Salvadoran art, but also the messages it conveyed about the past, present and future importance of the rural sector and agriculture to life in El Salvador. Colloquia and debates were held, in which hundreds of participants learned about the multiple functions of agriculture. A second exhibition drew attention to migration, both internal and international, as a force that has helped to make the country what it is today.

IICA provided support for the formulation of the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA) and for other initiatives, especially within the new Mesoamerican fruit agribusiness project of the Mesoamerican Program on Innovation for the Development of Fruit Agribusinesses. Within the framework of the formulation of PACA, the Institute supported the Ministry

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of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) and other stakeholders on matters of technology, with an emphasis of biosafety and biotechnology.

One of IICA's most valuable contributions to repositioning agriculture and rural life, and one that serves as an example of transparency, was the accountability seminar, which examined the fulfilment of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda. This achievement sets IICA apart from many other cooperation agencies.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Between 2002 and 2005, IICA provided technical assistance for achieving the recognition of areas free of the fruit fly *Ceratitidis capitata* and for the modernization of national agricultural health systems. Technical assistance was also delivered to enhance international trade and upgrade procedures for the movement of agricultural products. In 2003, IICA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) worked successfully to add the Maradol papaya variety to the list of products admissible for export to that country. Workshops were organized and delivered and technical training visits were carried out on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs).

Starting in 2004, steps were taken to engage public and private stakeholders in the Comprehensive Agricultural and

Environmental Protection Program (PIPAA) model applied in Guatemala. Particularly in the private sector, a number of firms that sell fruit and fresh vegetables have shown great interest in this initiative. IICA presented different models of safety assurance, organizing missions to Guatemala to learn about the country's experiences with exporting certified vegetables to the United States and promoting experience-sharing among specialists. Representatives of the public and private sectors were coached in agricultural health and food safety issues, with a view to implementing a safety assurance program for fresh fruits and vegetables. Through the National Fruit Program of El Salvador (MAG-FRUTALES), technical assistance and training on these issues was also given to fruit producers, processors and microenterprises. IICA has four GAP auditors certified by *LatuSistemas* in El Salvador.

The Institute worked actively on the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Project, which was implemented at the hemispheric level, and applied the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool to national food safety services. A public consultation was carried out and a national commission was set up to enable the country to gain greater benefit from its participation in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Committee of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The agribusiness private sector expressed an interest in becoming actively involved in decision-making through this commission.

In 2004-2005, thanks to an agreement with the Center for Phytosanitary Excellence of Colombia, the Institute carried out the project "Technical assistance for the preparation of four pest risk analyses for chipilín leaves and edible izote, pacaya and chufle flowers", in order to pave the way for exporting these products to the United States as "nostalgia goods". Coaching was also provided for many members of the staff of the Directorate-General of Plant and Animal Health of

MAG. In 2005 the first technical guide to the main arthropod pests and diseases of fruit trees was published, which helped to build knowledge about many fruit pests.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

The MAG-FRUTALES programme is one of the largest in El Salvador. This year the value of primary production resulting from sowings directly promoted by the program is expected to exceed US\$50 million. The Government of El Salvador, with the support of private investment, has invested funds amounting to some US\$6 million in this program.

An avocado subsector was created and the Persian lime sector was greatly consolidated. Native fruit production increased, especially of red mombin, nance and sapote. The coconut, cashew and orange subsectors were strengthened.

Other achievements delivered:

- Technical assistance was provided for sowing fruit species over approximately 7,877 ha. 41% of the area sown (3,226 ha) is under citrus, 14% (1,102 ha) is under avocado and the remaining 45% is sown with other crops, such as mango, cashew, sapotaceous trees, coconut, red mombin and custard apple.
- Some 3,751 farmers are growing fruit to make use of degraded soils in many hillside areas that were previously devoted to staple grains.
- Technical assistance was provided to transfer state-of-the-art technology for use in annual maintenance of 3,500 ha which were beginning to yield produce.
- 1,050 people strengthened their technical, administrative and financial capabilities for post-harvest and marketing management.
- Assistance was provided to facilitate the participation of 15 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and microenterprises from the fruit sector in trade missions.
- A specialized fruit market intelligence system was implemented to monitor the domestic and international markets. The web portal www.frutal-es.com recorded over 250,000 visits per year.
- Twenty-seven firms, nine producers' associations and 17 institutions and organizations upgraded their technical, administrative and financial capabilities in different aspects of processing.
- Over 40 SMEs were advised on agroindustrial fruit processing.
- Fruit processing manuals were developed, along with directories of suppliers of fruit and agribusiness equipment and services.
- IICA cooperation helped to set up citrus and red mombin growers' associations, an avocado growers' and sellers' corporation and a nursery growers' association. An association of coconut growers and sellers was also created.
- Five international fora were held on tropical fruit agribusiness. Four of these took place in El Salvador and the fifth was held in Costa Rica with organizational input from El Salvador. These events catered to between 200 and 400 participants per year.



- Four platforms were created with a view to assisting fruit growers to export to such markets as Europe, Canada, the United States and Central America. Sponsorship was provided to enable growers and sellers to attend a number of trade fairs, including the BioFach. This gave 15 fruit companies and dyers (with indigo) access to new business opportunities.
- Ten tasting rounds of fruit-based products were organized, at both the national and international levels, which generated new markets for agribusinesses. The fruit sector reduced imports of citrus by one million kg, and of avocado, mango and other fruit by seven million kg. In addition, in 2008, exports of fresh and frozen fruit were increased by some 2,397,322 kg.
- In 2008, IICA supported the implementation of two new programs to promote the fruit business: the FRUNORTE pilot scheme and the Production Development Program for Fruit-Growing (PDP) both financed by the Millennium Fund (FOMILENIO). These programs span some 50 municipalities in the northern part of El Salvador and have benefited 500 farmers growing fruit over an area of 70 ha.
- The MAG-FRUTALES program, together with programs to develop fruit growing in the north of the country, is working directly with supermarkets, regional supply chains and other national distributors and exporters to secure profitable and reliable markets for growers.
- IICA provided support for the promotion of fresh fruit consumption in El Salvador, along the lines of programs such as “Five a day”.
- The Institute collaborated with the Association of Agricultural Engineers (SIADES) and the Chamber of Agriculture and Agribusiness of El Salvador (CAMAGRO) on capacity-building for agribusiness management, managerial and commercial processes and value added. Twenty-five agriculture professionals were trained on development project formulation and agribusiness management.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

From 2002 to 2006, IICA worked in a consortium together with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and Universidad “José Simeón Cañas” (UCA) on the Environmental Program for El Salvador (PAES), which operates with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to promote the development of small farms with an environmental and production focus.

From 2002 to 2007, in partnership with the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (GS-OAS), the Institute provided technical and administrative support for the Program for Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Areas of the Trifinio Region (PRODERT). One of the achievements of this effort was the establishment of a PRODERT Directors’ Forum (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador).

Since 2005, work has concentrated on the Ilopango Lake basin and especially on the Chalatenango Highlands (ZACHA), applying the territorial approach to rural development. This

has helped to generate better link-ups between social and cultural aspects and in production and trading methods. These linking achievements also owe much to the efforts of institutions which support the territorial development processes and local organizations. There is now a more integrated vision of the opportunities, agents, markets and public policies that stand to benefit from greater linking among rural territories, and between those territories and others in the rest of the domestic economy and the broader Central American region. The project's work emphasizes the development of local talent, local institution-building and the non-dependent interaction of people and institutions with the broader environment. ZACHA has been recognized as one of the most successful examples of intervention based on the territorial approach and, as such, it has been a topic of discussion at meetings in Brazil, Ecuador, Costa Rica and, on countless occasions, El Salvador and Honduras.

This initiative generated participatory processes within rural communities, involving women, children, young people and the elderly, which has undoubtedly helped to ensure generational pass-down and leadership for visioning development over the long term. Cross-border and horizontal cooperation activities were also organized in Belén Gualcho, Honduras, with the support of the IICA Office in Honduras.

In 2004 IICA, jointly with the Association for the Integrated Development of the Chalatenango Highlands (ADIZAL), approached the Austrian Organization for Development Cooperation (HORIZONT3000) with a view to carrying out an agro-tourism project in ZACHA. The project was approved in late 2006 and implemented in 2007 and 2008. The area's agro-ecotourism capacity was significantly expanded by developing tourist spots, tourist routes and rural family-run microenterprises. An agro-market for tourists was built and the organic fertilizer plant and the production of certified seed

potatoes, which both come under this project, show promise of considerable economic success. All this has been possible thanks to partnerships forged with agencies that have collaborated in the ZACHA development processes, including Caritas Chalatenango, the National School of Agriculture (ENA), UCA and the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA). ADIZAL and the Territorial Action Group (GAT) formed at least four separate agreements with stakeholders financed by FOMILENIO to coordinate development activities in the area.

IICA has supported the Friends of Lake Ilopango Association since 2005. The Institute trained directors and technical personnel on the territorial approach to basin areas and rural development and related matters. The MAG-FRUTALES program was the cornerstone on which the Association built its basin reforestation programme. IICA sits on the Board of the Association, where it contributes to strategic planning. The Institute coordinated the basin's diagnostic process with UCA and has helped with the conceptual planning of a "basin authority", which is now being formed.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA has striven to integrate this area into the effort to make agribusinesses competitive, strengthen rural communities and manage natural resources and the environment in a sustainable manner. In fruit growing, the projects managed by IICA, especially MAG-FRUTALES, have introduced germplasm and crop management practices from leading fruit-growing countries. This technological capture benefited the Nursery Growers' Association and many producers in El Salvador. Growing know-how, practices and technology on avocados were acquired from Michoacán (Mexico), Israel

and Chile; on Persian limes from Veracruz (Mexico); on coconut from Brazil and the Central American countries; on cocoa from Costa Rica, Honduras and other countries; and on cashew nut from Brazil, India and other countries. As well as acquiring technologies, Salvadoran growers made new business contacts and are now keen to continue learning from the world leaders in order to continue innovating. In all technology work, emphasis is afforded to the application of GAPs and GMPs.

For a decade now, IICA has been working with a number of partners on technology recovery and upgrading for the production and processing of indigo. A physical and chemical profile of the indigo plant was developed and methodologies were designed for measuring indigotine concentration. With the establishment of a trial plant, many indigo producers were trained, new techniques were tried out and dye production was maximized. The technologies developed included oxygenation in the workshop, water heating and process optimization. Innovation in design and dyeing techniques was promoted at the workshop located in the Office.

Throughout the period, under an agreement with the Regional Cooperative Program for Technology Development and the Modernization of Coffee Growing in Central America, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica (PROMECAFE), IICA supported the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) by disseminating information about the integrated management of coffee berry borers, particularly trapping methods for controlling this pest.

National innovation capacity was boosted by means of four training workshops held on techniques for preparing convincing proposals. This activity benefited over 120 public- and private-sector professionals responsible for the management of funds and donor relations.

Three projects were implemented under the Agricultural Innovation Network (SICTA Network): “Production diversification and optimal rainwater and soil use for agriculture in three drought-prone communities in eastern El Salvador”, “Technological innovation in agro-production systems for staple grains growers”, and “Technological innovation in the white maize agrifood chain in El Salvador”. Thanks to these projects, producers from 14 organizations from all over the country gained skills for diversifying production and for introducing technological innovations, such as rainwater management, introduction of new varieties, harvest management and marketing techniques.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

With the support of IICA programs, over 10,500 ha were sown with permanent crops, mainly on hillsides. The MAG-FRUTALES, MAG-PRODERT and MAG-PAES programs have sown fruit varieties and, on a smaller scale, timber-yielding species. The work performed by the producers involved in these projects and the technical staff of IICA convinced many farmers of the financial viability of sowing permanent—rather than annual—crops. It also became clear that this approach offers major environmental benefits, such as soil conservation, enhancement of water table recovery capacities and restoration of biodiversity.

The MAG-PAES and MAG-PRODERT programs encouraged the adoption of soil conservation practices, especially the use of hedging and fencing, and the construction of terraces to protect soils in the River Lempa basin and the Trifinio Region.

In its many talks, presentations and articles, IICA emphasized the importance of agriculture as the foremost tool for

conserving soils, agro-biodiversity and plant genetic resources and, as far as possible, for protecting rural biodiversity in El Salvador, whose high population density precludes the significant expansion of natural areas.

The Chalatenango Highlands, where IICA facilitates a territorial management process, have become a benchmark for a variety of practices, especially the production of organic fertilizer, the recycling of poultry litter, the sowing of hillsides with permanent fruit species, conservation methods and the integration of agriculture with tourist activities.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During the period covered by this report, IICA maintained relations with key partners, including:

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), especially in the area of food and nutritional security and in support of national strategy formulation.
- The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), through volunteers working on the international marketing of native products and natural colorants.
- The Special Multilateral Fund of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (FEMCIDI) of the Organization of American States (OAS), which financed the execution of the project "Development of competitive advantages of micro and small fruit enterprises in El Salvador". This project helped 10 micro and small enterprises to improve their production and processing technology, implement GAPs, develop new products, register plants, brands and products, and receive training in business management and marketing. This project benefited 120 fruit processing microenterprises.
- The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which, with the support of IICA, collaborated with fruit processing firms.
- IICA worked with the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), JICA and the National Council for Culture and Art (CONCULTURA) on the revitalization of the indigo sector and on enhancing the competitiveness of indigo producers and dyers who work with natural colorants. In coordination with JICA, IICA contributed to the adoption of new technologies and dyeing designs. The Institute also supported the organization and establishment of the Association of Indigo Producers of El Salvador (AZULES), as well as capacity-building in dyeing firms that employ hundreds of part- and full-time dyers. This industry is run mainly by women.
- CATIE, with which IICA worked on basin management, reforestation and the promotion of fruit growing, especially cacao.
- OAS, with which the Institute worked on the development of agro-industry.
- GTZ, with which the Institute worked on natural colorants and agrifood chains.
- The Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECID), with which IICA worked on local development and the strengthening of agri-chains.
- HORIZONT3000, with which work was carried out on the agro-tourism project in the Chalatenango Highlands.



- Caritas Chalatenango, with which work was conducted on rural development with a territorial approach in the Chalatenango Highlands.
- CLUSA, with which the Institute worked on organic agriculture in the Chalatenango Highlands.
- The World Food Programme (WFP), which IICA partnered on food security and the production of staple grains.
- The embassies of Brazil and Mexico and institutions in both countries, which provided support for fruit growing development programs.
- Israel, Chile, Colombia, Peru and the United States, with which work was carried out to support fruit growing.
- Academic institutions, such as ENA and the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences of the University of El Salvador (UES), and professional organizations, principally SIADES.
- Private enterprise, CONCULTURA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, museums and academies were actively involved in exhibitions on agriculture and rural life and migration. Such events also engaged trade unions, firms and local organizations, which constitute the backbone of agriculture and view IICA as a strong partner.

5. Modernization of the Office

The process of developing a National Technical Cooperation Agenda and the holding of an annual accountability seminar

gave the Office's operations transparency and built up an environment of trust among partners, which made it possible to channel more human and financial resources into efforts to meet the needs of the country.

IICA set up a Documentation Center, which retrieved and organized bibliographical resources and made them available to the public. In 2008 the Center began to shift towards information and knowledge management with a view to benefiting partners in the sector in the future.

Since 2005, the Office has coached over 400 professionals and other agricultural stakeholders in basic and intermediate-level use of global data systems. This activity was organized in collaboration with the Orton Memorial Library and generated new capabilities and broadened the supply of up-to-date agricultural, technical and scientific information, thus benefiting teachers, students, librarians, researchers and civil servants.

In the period covered by this report, the Office worked at projecting the institutional image more strongly, published dozens of editorials and articles, generated news and participated in fora, talks, congresses, dialogues and other events in which it consistently emphasized the multiple functions of agriculture, the need to modernize the sector, the links between the city and the countryside and the role of agriculture in a modern urban society.

The Office published informative and technical documents and other specialized publications that served to record, systematize and spread the institution's knowledge and experience.

IICA Office in Guatemala



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Guatemala

Jaime Muñoz-Reyes¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the main results achieved by the IICA Office in Guatemala during the period 2002-2008, based on the implementation of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda, as the central element of the Institute's new cooperation model. These efforts have not only repositioned Guatemala's rural and agrifood sector, but have also enabled it to improve its competitiveness by promoting joint efforts between the public and the private sectors, in response to the commitments set forth in the Medium Term Plan 2006-2010.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Guatemala

The Institute redoubled its efforts to reposition agriculture and expand the traditional concept of agriculture "as the primary sector of the national economy". With this goal in mind, IICA worked closely with public and private-sector stakeholders associated with agriculture and rural life, achieving the following results:

- Increased awareness in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) and among private-sector and civil society organizations linked to agriculture, of the need to adopt a systemic concept of the sustainable development of agriculture and the rural milieu, in line with the vision contained in the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan adopted by the Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas in 2003;
- Provided training to the personnel of the Policy and Strategic Information Unit (UPIE) of MAGA, which adopted the AgroMatrix of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan as a valuable tool for the formulation and analysis of strategies and public policies for agriculture and the rural milieu;
- Implemented and disseminated two studies among decision-makers: one on the economic performance of various sub-sectors of agriculture and another on the comparative advantages of different agricultural and agroindustrial products, with the aim of promoting a better understanding of the dynamic interaction between territories, agricultural production-trade chains and the international context, which conditions their performance; and,
- Organized a Forum in 2007 and worked with the leading actors of agriculture and rural life in the design of strategies

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to complement public and private efforts to promote the sustainable development of the country's agriculture and rural milieu.

IICA also contributed to efforts to disseminate a global vision of agriculture and to strengthen the leadership skills of a group of teachers and officials linked to national agricultural development, during the First Forum of Agricultural Leaders of Guatemala, held in 2008. This event was attended by 40 professionals, and was organized by IICA in coordination with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Zoology of the University of San Carlos in Guatemala.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

With the Institute's support, representatives of the national agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) services actively participated in international forums. This process enabled them to share their ideas and effectively implement the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (WTO/ASPS), which in turn led to a more competitive insertion of the country's agrifood production in international trade, benefiting national producers and exporters.

Representatives of the public and private agricultural sectors also received training on the international standards established by the AMSE, the Codex Alimentarius, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). The training helped them to interpret

and apply these standards and regulations in international trade processes.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

With IICA's technical guidance, the MAGA selected strategic commodities with competitive potential and, based on these products, organized private-sector stakeholders in committees for the management of agricultural production and trade chains. These committees were subsequently incorporated into the Council for Agricultural Production (CONPRODA) and the Council for Livestock Production (CONPRODAN), both of which are forums for dialogue and consensus-building on strategies and policies to improve the competitiveness and sustainable development of the agriculture, forestry and fisheries subsectors. This process served to improve the public-private institutional framework of the agrifood sector and the rural milieu.

The Institute provided ongoing technical support to agricultural production and trade chains, and contributed to the design of studies and action plans to improve the country's competitiveness in national and international markets. More than 20 Agrifood Chain Committees were established, the most important being those of the dairy, beef, honey, fruit and vegetable sectors.

In partnership with the Faculty of Agronomy of the University of San Carlos, in Guatemala (FAUSAC), IICA contributed to the formation of human capital for the international commodities trade. Twenty-five specialists in this area who work in various public and private organizations of Guatemala's agricultural sector completed a diploma program. The Institute cooperated in the design of the technical content of this program.

IICA also provided technical support to MAGA in the design and implementation of a program to link small-scale dairy farmers to dynamic markets. The idea is to facilitate farmers' access to support services and infrastructure to enable them to be more competitive and comply with the quality and safety standards demanded by the dairy industry.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The Institute provided technical and administrative support to the Project for Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Areas of the Trifinio Region (PRODERT), through efforts to improve the productive, organizational, administrative and marketing activities of six associations based in the project area and by applying a "learning by doing" approach with 18 cooperative marketing groups operating in that territory.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

In 2006, IICA supported MAGA by preparing a proposal for the restructuring and modernization of the Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (ICTA), which resulted in an improved institutional image and closer relations with regional and international organizations. ICTA also served as Chair of the Central American Integrated Agricultural Technology System (SICTA) for three years and contributed to the strengthening and improved integration of Central America's national agricultural research institutes (INIA).

IICA also contributed to the design and technical execution of four projects co-financed by the Central American Agricultural Technology Integration System Network (Red SICTA), which

promoted the adoption of technological solutions to improve the bean, maize and papaya production chains.

IICA's efforts to foster dialogue among stakeholders involved in technological innovation in the agricultural sector, resulted in a national proposal for the establishment and consolidation of the National System of Agricultural Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer (SNITTA).

As result of IICA's support to the Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation (PROMECAFE), the personnel of Guatemala's National Coffee Association (ANACAFE) continued to benefit from training courses and from the generation, validation and transfer of technology for coffee cultivation. With financial support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB/FOMIN), ANACAFE staff also received training and access to information and technology to design instruments and measures to assess specialty coffees, improve their competitiveness and gain access to high-quality coffee markets.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

As a result of a dialogue facilitated by IICA, the National Network of Plant Genetic Resources (CONARFI), which forms part of the Mesoamerican Network of Plant Genetic Resources (REMERFI), was reactivated. The member organizations of REMERFI act as a decision-making body for the design and execution of projects focusing on the use and conservation of plant genetic resources.

In 2003, IICA, through the MAGA's Forest Protection Program in Petén (PROBOPETEN), provided technical assistance for a plan to control pine beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*).



4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

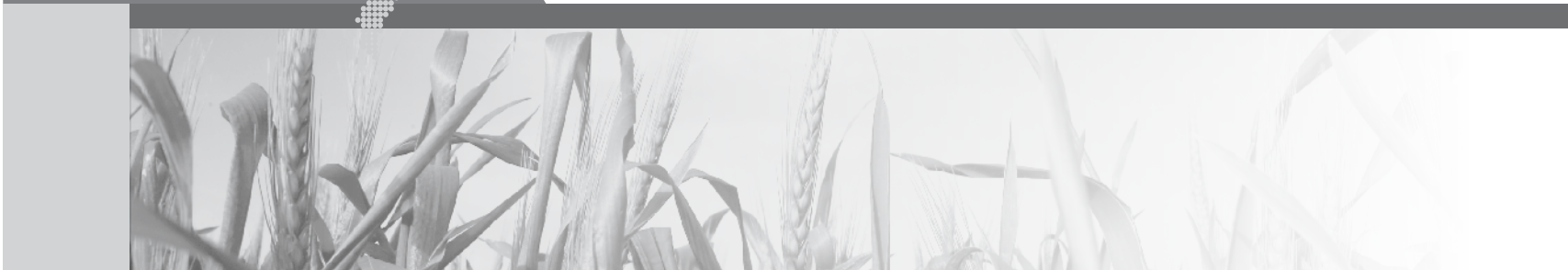
The Institute worked closely with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the IDB on an assessment to identify topics or areas of common interest for technical cooperation in the country. Of particular importance was IICA's partnership with USAID in the area of rural development planning with a territorial approach, in support of the General Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency of Guatemala.

5. Modernization of the Office

As a result of continuous efforts to train the personnel and improve the communications systems and the technological platform in general, the level of staff competence was improved, enabling the IICA Office to deliver more efficient technical-administrative cooperation services.

The design of an operating manual for the administration of technical cooperation projects has also resulted in a better control of the funds and in greater client satisfaction, since the administrative-accounting processes have been greatly speeded up.

IICA Office in **Honduras**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Honduras

Rafael Marte¹

1. Introduction

In 2002, the incoming IICA administration took a number of important decisions. One of the first was to make efficiency, transparency, financial prudence and accountability core principles of the Institute's work. The priorities of the Institute's technical cooperation actions, established in the Medium-Term Plan (MTP), were also adjusted to dovetail with the countries' national, regional and hemispheric plans. Those same priorities and actions were then set out in the National Technical Cooperation Agenda for Honduras, drawn up by means of a process of consensus building with the different public and private actors, and underpinned the National Action Plan. The Office evaluated the plan each year and used the results to prepare reports for all the national stakeholders that were presented at accountability activities.

This comprehensive effort made it possible to provide a more efficient and effective response to the country's technical assistance needs, working in tandem with the public and private sectors, academia, civil society, other regional and international organizations and cooperation agencies. The following is a summary of IICA's technical cooperation actions in Honduras between 2002 and 2008, and of the results achieved during the same period.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Honduras

The Honduran Agricultural Forum (MAH), a body mandated to reach consensus on medium and long-term agricultural policies, was created in 2002. Public and private sector organizations and institutions, community leaders and representatives of civil society and academia all played a full, active part in the forum. From the outset, IICA provided technical assistance for the formation of different working groups and the preparation of basic documents, such as *Implementación de la estrategia agroalimentaria de la SAG*; *Programa Nacional de la Pequeña Agricultura (PEAGRO)*; *Cadena agroalimentaria del maíz como un insumo básico para la MAH (Grupo de Maíz)*; and, *Propuesta para la cadena del azúcar*, with the participation of the Association of Sugar Producers of Honduras (APAH) and the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG). The Office also supported the training of technical personnel in the use of the methodology for preparing the component of the agricultural education policy under the aegis of the MAH.

As part of the process of modernizing the SAG, IICA collaborated in the establishment of the Competitive Agriculture Unit within the Planning and Evaluation of Management Unit

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(UPEG), which is responsible for follow-up to the agreements signed and commitments assumed aimed at promoting the competitiveness of agrifood chains. With technical support from IICA, a methodological document was also prepared to strengthen the unit.

To implement the State Policy for the Agrifood Sector (PESAH), the Office provided technical assistance that helped the SAG formulate and execute the 2002-2006 Agrifood Plan, designed to steer the country's agricultural development along the path established in the policy. IICA also collaborated with the SAG in formulating and executing the 2006-2010 Operational Strategic Plan (PEO), which was coordinated with the private sector, academics and leaders of the agricultural community and the rural milieu.

The Office provided technical support to the Honduran Market System for Agricultural Products (SIMPAH) to help it develop a database and formulate price projection models and econometric models. The work involved a horizontal cooperation action in the area of trade and agribusiness for the Andean Region.

The Institute took part in the preparation and execution of the Food for Progress Program/Honduras. Drawing on U.S. government PL-480 funds, the program donated over US\$15.4 million in grains that were sold locally to finance the implementation of more than 55 projects in fiscal years 2003, 2005 and 2006.

Furthermore, IICA is a member of the Food for Progress Council (CAP), responsible for selecting and following up on the projects executed. The outputs achieved with technical support from IICA were as follows: preparation and implementation of 67 projects aimed at strengthening the SAG's institutional reform process and building the capacities of the private sector and

NGOs to tap the opportunities created with the signing of the trade agreements; the creation of favorable macroeconomic conditions in the country as a consequence of the prices of some agricultural exports; and the pardoning of a large slice of the foreign debt owed to bilateral and multilateral financial institutions.

As part of the technical cooperation provided to the Food for Progress Program, in 2007 the Office evaluated the Food for Progress Agreement for fiscal year 2003, assisted by a hemispheric specialist and four regional specialists from different thematic areas related to the productive sectors that benefited from the program.

Under the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action for Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas, the Office collaborated with the Minister of Agriculture and the Group for Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life (GRICA) in preparing presentations and explanatory documents on the progress made with the implementation of the plan in Honduras. IICA collaborated with the Ministerial Delegate of the GRICA in preparing the national report on the status of the 2003-2015 hemispheric agenda of the AGRO Plan, for which indicators were identified for the 40 strategic actions included in the plan. The Office supported the delegate's participation in the workshop carried out jointly by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and IICA, in Santiago, Chile.

The Institute provided technical support for the process of designing, preparing and implementing the 2004-2021 state policy for the agrifood and rural sector. The policy had a major impact on each of the programs and services on which it focused, especially those related to agribusiness development, the implementation of WTO sanitary and phytosanitary standards and the competitiveness of agrifood chains.

The Office supported and followed up on the technical personnel appointed for each thematic area of the PACA to ensure Honduras' participation in the process, in coordination with the Secretariat of the CAC-CORECA.

IICA assisted with the formulation of the PACA's National Dissemination and Communication Plan, to inform people of the set of measures contained in the policy and to monitor, evaluate and incorporate them into the SAG's work plans.

In order to have an analysis of the agricultural sector, the Office monitored statistics, events and news in the sector. It also drew on the data for two studies on the state of agriculture and rural life in Honduras - one in 2006 and another in 2008 - that contain information about the national situation, changes in legislation and policies and institutional reforms. The studies also included an analysis of the situation, problems and challenges in the fields of trade and agribusiness, agricultural health and food safety, innovation, science and technology, and sustainable rural development.

The Institute helped the SAG formulate the Strategy for Public Investment in the Agrifood Sector using the Production Chains Approach. The strategy was developed with an innovative vision, guidelines and actions for the period 2008-2012 and for the longer term, within the general framework of the country's economic policy. The work drew on the strategic lines of action established in the national policies governing the sector (mainly, poverty reduction, competitiveness and food security), with a broad, systemic vision of agriculture and taking into account the guidelines defined by public and private actors at the regional and hemispheric levels, assisted by hemispheric and regional specialists.

The Office supported information sharing among key actors related to the different strategic areas defined in the National

Technical Cooperation Agenda. As a result, public and private actors involved in competitiveness and agribusiness, agricultural health and food safety, rural development and organic agriculture have an effective virtual platform that includes communities of practice and facilitates the sharing of experiences, coordination and communication. The communities of practice currently in operation are Competitiveness and Agribusiness, Rural Development, Health and Food Safety, and Organic Agriculture.

IICA coordinated the establishment and operation of the National Agricultural Information Network of Honduras (REDNIAH), which in 2008 was renamed the Agricultural, Forestry and Environmental Information Network of Honduras (REDIFAAH). At present, it comprises some 28 institutions in the agricultural, forestry and environmental sectors.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Office assisted the National Agricultural Health Service (SENASA) in preparing the 2006-2010 Strategic Plan and identifying key actors in the animal health, plant protection and food safety sectors to which the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool would be applied. It also facilitated the country's participation, through SENASA, in the international meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Committee) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and implemented activities related to the STDF/IICA project to strengthen the country's SPS capabilities.

Furthermore, the Institute promoted the strengthening of national capabilities for the international agricultural negotiations under the auspices of the WTO' SPS Committee and revised the work plan and operating manual of the National Food Safety Commission. It also assisted the Director of SENASA and the Deputy Director for International Negotiations of the Secretariat of Industry and Trade (SIC) with their participation in the meetings of the WTO' SPS Committee and the presentation of the final report.

IICA helped prepare and obtain approval of the operating regulations of the National SPS Committee, and spearheaded the preparation of the National Agenda for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, in which 16 members of the Committee (representing the public and private sectors) took part. The Office contributed to the elaborating of the Committee's agenda, assisted by a Chilean specialist with vast experience in WTO-related activities.

At the request of the CNMSF and with support from OIRSA, a bulletin was produced containing information about the Committee's National Agenda and other important activities implemented during 2006. The bulletin was used to promote events that the Committee carried out based on the National Agenda. The Office strengthened the capabilities of the public, private and academic sectors related to the implementation of the SPS agreement, providing a series of training courses in risk analysis, epidemiology and the use of the health information system of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE-WAHIS) for traceability.

Some of the members of the group of cooperation and donor agencies, spearheaded by IICA and SENASA, provided technical support for the preparation of the Strategic Plan. The plan addressed sensitive agricultural health issues, such


as the strengthening of the CNMSF through the execution of its National Agenda; the strengthening of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee; the establishment of a national accreditation system for plant protection, animal health and food safety standards; the admissibility of new products for export; the maintenance of the country's sanitary and phytosanitary status; and improvement of the food safety system, including the strengthening of laboratories and export inspection systems.

The agenda of the National Codex Alimentarius Committee was prepared working with public and private stakeholders, as well as Technical Regulations for the Production, Import and Marketing of Seed Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*).

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Under the agreement that IICA signed in 2004 with Canada's Trade Facilitation Office, the Office cooperated with the Agricultural Council of Honduras (COAGROH), the SAG and the Ministry of Trade and Industry to establish an agricultural export platform to promote the access of nontraditional products to markets in Canada and the United States.

Furthermore, working with the "Creating Exporters with Canada" program of Canada's Trade Facilitation Office, IICA coordinated the Honduran Export Platform Program, which was implemented in three stages: a) implementation of eight training modules; b) validation of Honduran products for the Canada market; and, c) *in situ* marketing, with the participation of Honduran entrepreneurs in the Grocery Innovations Trade Show, held in Toronto. A second export platform was also carried out that enabled ten agricultural



entrepreneurs to take part in the SIAL fair, in Montreal, Canada, while another eight received training to participate in the Anuga Trade Fair, in Germany.

Under the third export platform, which targeted the Miami market, the Office supported the identification of commercial opportunities and provided information needed to improve decision making for the opening of international markets. The National Committee for the Agricultural Export Platform was set up, comprising representatives of the public and private sectors. Nine agricultural export companies, selected from a group of 52, were given the opportunity to present their products to at least four importers/distributors. As a result of the negotiations, dairy products were exported and samples of various products, including lemon juice, savory snacks, spices and digestive fiber, were shipped to Miami.

Under a partnership with Canada's Trade Facilitation Office aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of small and medium-sized enterprises in Honduras interested in penetrating the Canadian market, training seminars were held on aspects of that market and support was provided to companies interested in participating in a commercial fair in Montreal, Canada. This led to partnerships between Honduran agricultural exporters and Canadian buyers and distributors that increased Honduran exports (especially sales of mangoes, grapefruit and sweet potatoes) and introduced new products into the market.

The main purpose of the actions was to continue seeking new opportunities for Honduran food products in the Canadian market. Over 100 business meetings with potential clients took place and two new products (grapefruit and mangoes) were exported to Canada. By the end of 2007, exporters had shipped 20 containers of grapefruit and two containers

of mangoes, consolidated the positioning of Honduran sweet potatoes in Canada and established a large number of commercial contacts.

IICA provided technical cooperation for the training of two members of the SAG's Planning and Evaluation of Management Unit (UPEG) and representatives of private sector companies in the use of the CADIAC methodology to analyze agrifood chains and monitor the agreements signed and commitments assumed with respect to the chains concerned.

Through the implementation of the National Agrifood Program, the Office also collaborated in the establishment of the Committee for the Competitiveness of the Dairy Products and Palm Oil Chains. Thanks to the support received from the Dairy Products Exports Project (PROEXLAC), implemented by the SAG with technical support from IICA and financing from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) certified five small cheese and *quesillo* plants, which can export around 300,000 pounds of product to that country every year.

Furthermore, IICA drew up guidelines for a study on the opportunities for establishing links between agriculture and the tourism sector, with the support of hemispheric, regional and national specialists; formulated action plans for the agreements on competitiveness, and the respective committees, for several chains (horticulture, beef, pork, African palm and honey); and produced and published analyses of the dairy products and coffee chains.

With support from the IICA/IDB Project, a workshop was held to determine what short and medium-term actions were needed to reactivate the country's agrifood chains. As a contribution to the development of agricultural production chains, the Office

supported the organization of different activities designed to make the following chains more competitive:

- Dairy product chain: Eight workshops were held to provide training in good milking, transportation and delivery practices for organized producers at the centers where milk is collected and refrigerated in the province of Olancho.
- Cacao chain: IICA supported the implementation of a workshop to update the assessment of the sector, with a view to preparing the action plan for 2008, based on the agreement of all the actors.
- Beekeeping chain: The Office supported the implementation of a workshop to update the assessment of the sector, as the starting point for the preparation of the action plan for 2008.

Working with the SAG and the CAC, IICA supported the organization of the Regional Workshop on Experiences and Policies on Training Needs for the Central American Milk Sector. The activity permitted the organizations taking part to exchange information about priority issues for the sector, discuss the possibilities for cooperation on training and establish a joint work program.

An event was held entitled "Organic Agriculture: An Option for Sustainable Development." Some 75 representatives of the organic sector took part in the activity, which generated inputs to help the SAG and other institutions, organizations and independent groups formulate the National Strategy for the Development and Promotion of Organic Agriculture and Livestock Production in Honduras for 2009. The strategy provides a frame of reference for the different institutions in the public and private sectors and all the agents involved in the development of the organic sector.

The Institute promoted the integrated development of organic agriculture by strengthening the capabilities of small farmers in areas related to the production, processing and marketing of organic cacao, vegetables and cashew and organic livestock production. A number of training actions were carried out with support from GTZ-PRORENA, World Vision, FUNDER, APROCACAO, CREPAIMASUL and Hortifruti.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Technical data was compiled on the successful experiences of the Central American Hillsides Project (IICA/Holanda/Laderas) for consideration in relation to the Work Plan of the National Program for Sustainable Rural Development (PRONADERS). The Office worked with the Rotary Club of Tegucigalpa, the National Rural Development Directorate of PRONADERS and the SAG to design the project Assistance for Small-scale Agriculture - Using Drip Irrigation Systems for Small Producers. It also carried out a technical audit of PRONADERS.

Significant results were achieved under the agreement established with the project Sustainable Rural Development in Ecologically Fragile Areas of the Trifinio Region (PRODERT). They included the following:

- Validation and implementation of the development of methodologies for the application of the territorial approach to rural development.
- Formulation and follow-up of the work plan for the Honduras component.
- Preparation of a technical cooperation tool to strengthen PRODERT, with financing from the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI).

- Implementation of the territorial rural development model for the execution of the project's actions and the establishment of a knowledge management system, with emphasis on the systematization of rural development experiences, in coordination with the Fisdor project and the PRISM foundation.
- Implementation of a process to sensitize PRODERT's technical teams and the NGOs involved in executing the project on the theoretical and methodological aspects of the territorial approach.
- Definition of the criteria for selecting reference territories for the processes of rural development with a territorial approach; identification of five territories; and start up of activities for the initiative in the reference territory of Belen Gualcho, in the Trifinio Region (western Honduras).
- Mapping of actors: Following the methodology developed by IICA, the Office characterized the institutional situation of that reference territory by mapping the social actors, categorizing the individuals and legal entities that have a major impact on the municipality's development according to three criteria: size, nature and area of action.
- Identification and prioritization of leaders: The social actors identified in the mapping exercise were prioritized based on criteria for leadership and positioning in the social network of the community; the Territorial Action Group was created and the first meeting of actors held, with a view to disseminating the results of the actions carried out to implement the territorial approach to rural development.
- Implementation of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Rural Development, which involved representatives of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, including the PRODERT directors and technical teams in each country.

This event made it possible to discuss and standardize the criteria for applying the territorial approach in each country.

- Design and review of national policies under the agreement signed with the National Sustainable Rural Development Program (PRONADERS).
- Formulation of methodologies and preparation of theories on the issue of rural development with a territorial approach.

In 2008, the Office supported the establishment of the Standing Forum on Rural Development and Food Security (FORDESA) with the participation of the SAG, the academic sector, IICA, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other international cooperation partners. The forum was established to provide a mechanism for dialogue, analysis and research on rural development, food security and rural poverty in the country.

The Institute assisted the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and the SAG with the organization of the Central American Meeting on Territorial Rural Development, which laid the groundwork for the preparation of the Regional Strategy for Rural Development with a Territorial Approach.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA provided technical assistance for the process of reorganizing and implementing the National System for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer (SNITTA), contributing to the preparation of a document on the organizational structure, operating mechanisms and the follow-up and evaluation system. The Institute supported the establishment of the



National Council for Science and Technology (CONACTA) and is now a member of the body, representing the group of international donors and cooperation agencies.

The Office collaborated with the SNITTA in analyzing projects to be financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) as part of the Project to Modernize Agricultural Technology Services (PROMOSTA) and in formulating the National Agricultural Program for Competitive Agriculture in the Valleys and Highlands of Honduras.

A project was implemented to promote the improvement of coffee quality. It was carried out with financing from the Common Fund for Commodities and in coordination with PROMECAFE, the Honduran Coffee Institute (IHCAFE), the National Coffee Council (CONACAFE) and the Directorate of Agricultural Science and Technology (DICTA). IICA provided technical cooperation for the implementation of that project and managed the funds. It also collaborated in the organization of the National Coffee Forum, where the final document on the analysis of the coffee chain was presented. Around 150 people, including coffee producers, exporters, traders and roasters and representatives of the international cooperation and donor community, took part.

A workshop was held on the chains approach in trade negotiations, in which 15 people from the private, public and financial sectors participated. IICA helped set up the Technical Committee of the Coffee Chain, with a view to providing follow-up to the agreements and commitments of the Plan of Action for the chain; and supported the drafting of a proposal on coffee policy, as an input for the discussions at the Agricultural Forum of the Coffee Group.

By means of an executive decree, the President of Honduras identified IICA to provide technical support to the SAG,

through DICTA, for the implementation of the Productive Technology Voucher Program. The aim of this program is to help the country as a whole, and small producers in particular, to recover the capacity to produce staple grains through the proper use of improved seed and fertilizer and timely technical assistance. Thanks to the program, not only was it possible to increase staple grain production and productivity but also to restore producers' confidence in the sector's institutional framework and response capacity. Other IICA actions included technical and administrative support for the SAG/DICTA that enabled the unit to achieve the goals and the objectives set in the Productive Technological Voucher Program and systematize the program. The identification of the factors of success and lessons learned will facilitate the design and implementation of similar activities in other countries and regions. IICA, the SAG and FAO prepared a document for that purpose.

To improve staple grain production and productivity, the project Network of the Agricultural Technology Innovation and Transfer System (Red-SICTA), financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (COSUDE), undertook a nationwide assessment of bean-producing areas with an eye to forging partnerships among the actors involved in this crop, promoting technological innovations and improving grain production in Honduras. The following are some of the other results achieved:

- Implementation an assessment of the corn and bean chains in the Trifinio Region.
- Dissemination of methodologies and procedures for the country's research institutions to present proposals to the Competitive Fund of the Red-SICTA.
- Forming of four partnerships among bean producers and technical support institutions to identify, propose and execute projects aimed at strengthening bean production,

processing and marketing and enhancing the management capabilities' of farmers' organizations.

- Strengthening of the knowledge of technical personnel of DICTA, the Center for Entrepreneurial and Business Development (CIEN), the PROLANCHO Foundation and the Jicatuyo Foundation in the use of technologies that improve yields and minimize costs in bean production.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

In support of the Multisectoral Drought Committee (COMUS), comprised of the SAG and the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA), IICA contributed to the formulation and implementation of its work and resource management plan. It also prepared a national proposal to combat desertification, based on IICA's experience in Brazil. The proposal was coordinated with the National Desertification Committee, made up of the SAG and SERNA.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

In Honduras, IICA maintained excellent relations with the different international, regional and national organizations, embassies and consulates accredited in the country, academia and the groups and associations related to the Institute's work. These relations have grown and been strengthened and consolidated over the last eight years, making it possible to avoid duplication of efforts and to pool resources to achieve common, concrete objectives with an enhanced impact.

Some of the most significant partnerships were as follows:

- In partnership with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and North Carolina State University (NCSU), IICA collaborated in the formulation of a proposal to evaluate and promote the qualitative improvement of the National University of Agriculture (UNA).
- The Institute cooperated in the preparation of a proposed irrigation project for small and medium-sized producers (involving an outlay of US\$10 million) for the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and in the development of five economic profitability models.
- The Office provided technical assistance to the SAG with the implementation of projects under the Food for Progress Program, sponsored by the USDA; with the analysis of project proposals in the areas of agribusiness, competitiveness, agricultural health and agricultural policies; and with the management of economic resources.
- Working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and FAO, IICA prepared the IICA/PAHO/FAO Work Plan to strengthen the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System.
- With FAO, PAHO, USDA, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and CIDA, the Institute collaborated with SENASA to formulate a plan to promote the safety of vegetables and fruits.
- The CAC ministers of agriculture asked IICA to apply the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) tool to the beef chain and prepare a document setting out the results. This



action is based on a strategic partnership between the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and IICA.

- The Office helped enhance the expertise of public and private actors with regard to the regulatory processes of the OIE and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).
- The Institute provided technical support to the Safety and Health Commission of the Aquaculture and Fisheries Chain and to the Pork Commission, both coordinated by SENASA.
- IICA helped SENASA prepare for the performance evaluation to be carried out by the OIE and for the process of preparing Honduran Technical Standards. In doing so, the Office played an active part in the work of the technical standard-setting committees for mango and ultra-pasteurized milk, under the aegis of the Honduran Standard-setting Agency.
- Under USAID's Project to Raise Productivity (PROPEP), IICA provided technical support to consolidate the Regional Agricultural Information System for the Comayagua and Choluteca Centers of Competitiveness.

needs through the implementation of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

A number of actions were carried out to achieve the above, some of the most important of which were as follows:

- Relocation of the Office. With larger premises, IICA has been able to provide better services to its counterparts.
- Hiring of additional staff (four new positions were created): Specialist in Project Planning, Design and Appraisal; Specialist in Competitiveness and Agribusiness; National Food Health and Safety Specialist; and Specialist in Information Systems.
- Replacement of the Office's informatics equipment; installation of an IP telephony system that is integrated into IICA's phone network; installation of video and audio equipment in the conference room; and installation of networks for virtual conferences using Adobe Connect and Webcast, all of which is used during seminars, workshops, conferences, congresses and meetings.

5. Modernization of the Office

During the period 2002-2008, IICA modernized its operations and repositioned itself in Honduras as a streamlined, dynamic and efficient technical cooperation agency that provides a timely and effective response to the country's

IICA Office in Nicaragua



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Nicaragua

Gerardo Escudero Columna¹

1. Introduction

This report presents an overview of the most important results achieved by IICA's technical cooperation in Nicaragua over the last eight years by implementing the National Technical Cooperation Agenda. The achievements described have had a significant impact on public and private institutions, benefited 100,000 people directly involved in Nicaragua's agricultural sector, and created local capabilities in large population centers and within organizations in almost every part of the country.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Nicaragua

The Institute drew on all its energy, resources and capabilities to reposition the agricultural sector and rural life in a country where they are a vital component of the economy and the socioeconomic fabric. In particular, IICA worked systematically and continuously to strengthen the dialogue among public and private institutions in the agricultural sector and the rural milieu.

In partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Office contributed to the design and formulation of the National Development Plan (PND) implemented between 2002 and 2006 and during part of 2007. The country's agricultural and rural sector was made a strategic component of the economic plan, which has a 25-year horizon. IICA helped to set up the PROVIA Foundation and provided technical assistance for a lengthy process of dialogue and discussion of policies in which over 100 leaders of Nicaragua's agricultural sector took part.

Working with the European Union (EU), IICA supported the design of the Strategy for Productive Rural Development of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) (2004-2006) and the dialogue with representatives of the sector's most important organizations and associations. The Institute's assistance made a significant contribution to the ministry's capacity to design strategies and dialogue with other public institutions and the productive sectors. The Institute broadened its contributions to design of one of the country's most important programs to date as far as public dialogue and international financing are concerned (PRORURAL, 2006-2009).

IICA also had the opportunity to support the SPAR and MAGFOR, as the head of the sector, in the design of the National Food Program, one of the most important formulated

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in recent years. It included 15 subprograms and involved an estimated initial investment of US\$750 million. The Institute facilitated and coordinated the intensive teamwork of 17 interinstitutional SPAR teams, helping to increase the synergy among the participants and their capacity to formulate proposals and willingness to negotiate coherent, feasible priorities. This effort went a long way to making the dialogue between the government and the international community more productive. The Office also supported the design of policy tools like the “Pound per pound” plan and the “Glass of milk” program, aimed at improving the marketing of milk and getting food into the hands of the poorest segments of the population.

IICA contributed to the participatory design of the coffee subprograms and a regional milk dehydration plant that call for an investment of around US\$140 million and are going to have a decisive impact on the future of these activities in the country. Preinvestment resources were obtained and, in principle, the investment itself.

Under an agreement with Austria, the Institute was also very successful in providing technical support for the design of strategies for promoting organic production and marketing in the country, as well as livestock production and modernization and the development of biofuels.

The Office also had a positive impact on regulations and legislation. It supported processes such as the discussion of the Forestry Act and its implementing regulations with the main actors (all the way through to its enactment by the National Assembly), the regulations resulting from the negotiations and approval of the free trade agreement involving Central America, the United States of America and the Dominican Republic (DR-CAFTA) and other laws related to microfinance,

fiscal equity, the environment, seeds and the registration of cultivars, and the bill to promote organic agriculture.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Some 30,000 small and medium-sized producers who are members of approximately 100 associations and cooperatives, some 50 small and medium-sized companies and 300 schools strengthened their capabilities and improved their use of good agricultural and manufacturing practices, traceability, optimal use of chemical and organic fertilizers, insecticides and fungicides, food and handling techniques, the control of pests and diseases, rules and regulations (health, protection, genetically modified organisms), laws (anti-bioterrorism act), sanitary procedures for exports and imports, quality development and the control of environmental impact.

Thanks to countless partnerships with entities such as USAID, the Centre for International Cooperation of Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MASHAV) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), IICA supported the sector’s main agricultural chains by means of training in health and safety, direct technical assistance and advisory services to producers’ companies and organizations, information sharing, studies, assessments and informational material, the exchange of internal and international experiences, seminars and workshops, and study and observation visits to 17 countries (Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Chile, Dominican

Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Israel, Mexico, Peru and the USA) where producers were able to see the progress made in agricultural health and food safety first hand.

In the public sector, thanks to alliances with the USDA and the Nicaraguan Import Company (ENIMPORT), the Office strengthened the MAGFOR's General Directorate for Agricultural Health Protection (DGPSA). Thirty senior administrators and technical personnel from the central offices and others in the provinces enhanced their ability to design, carry out and monitor six of the country's most important projects: a) brucellosis and tuberculosis; b) classical swine fever; c) Mediterranean fruit fly; d) avian influenza; e) shrimp diseases; and, f) traceability and good manufacturing practices. For the past four years IICA has been furnishing systematic, permanent support to these projects, from its offices and out in the countryside, providing follow-up to execution, conducting surveys and polls in the territories, assessing proposals, revising and preparing monthly, quarterly and final reports for the decision makers at the MAGFOR and the USDA to use, and training DGPSA staff in these subjects and in the entire project cycle.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Through partnerships with JICA, USAID, Austria, Finland and COSUDE (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation), the Institute helped channel resources that benefited 70,000 producers who received training to enable them to develop their agribusinesses, integrate successfully into markets and become more competitive. As a result, over the last six years the agrifood sector become more diversified and exports rose from US\$500 million to US\$1200 million per year.

Thanks to the support they received from IICA, producers have more markets and more expertise for developing agribusinesses, an export development strategy, over 500 commercial contacts, experience in fairs, and national and international business matchmaking. They also toured and visited over twenty countries and are better equipped to organize the sharing of experiences, design business plans, assimilate training and technical assistance, engage in trade negotiations and construct export platforms.

Working with 250 organizations and with funding from USAID, the USDA, Austria and JICA, the Institute arranged for producers to take part in some fifty national and international fairs, in some cases more than once. For example, producers attended the Biofach Fair in Nuremberg, Germany on five occasions (2003-2007). Around 100 German companies came into contact with 30 organic companies and producers of sesame, cardamom, coffee, cacao, lemon grass, hibiscus tea and honey. Other important fairs included Grocery Innovations (Toronto), Latin Products (Los Angeles, California), Nicaragua Week (Miami), the fairs of the Association of Producers and Exporters of Nicaragua (APEN) from 2003 to 2008, the Nicaragua-Honduras Binational Fair, where 14 communities exhibited and marketed their products, the Third Small Farmers' Agricultural Fair in Mina Rosita (Asoagro/IICA), the Honey Fair in El Viejo that 6000 people attended, the annual fairs promoted by the Institute for accountability purposes and to present its annual report, which are used to promote agribusinesses, and 20 mini-fairs used exclusively to negotiate with international buyers.

To consolidate the capacity to do business in Nicaragua, international buyers were encouraged to visit the country. Some of those who did were Juden Marketing of Washington; S&M of Texas, which supplies large markets in California and Florida; Rio Grande Food, which controls 70% of the ethnic

market in Central America; and Mama Lycha of Houston and Ritter of Germany, which purchase and export organic cacao.

IICA helped enhance capabilities by means of international tours to promote and negotiate products. The event held to launch Nicaraguan organic meat in Washington is a case in point; buyers were able to taste and purchase the products on offer. The countries visited included El Salvador, Guatemala, Dominican Republic and the United States. Pumpkins were exported to the U.S. for the first time, as was jumbo onion. An agreement was signed with Rio Grande Food under which 11 small and medium-sized enterprises began exporting to the United States. Some 40,000 crates of okra were exported; 4000 quintales of black beans were exported to Guatemala and Costa Rica; 420,000 pounds of black beans were sold to Mexico; and Rio Grande Food purchased 120,000 pounds of beans.

With support from the Institute, 2000 producers of cacao, honey, corn, beans, coffee and goats gained practical experience in drawing up business plans and engaging in commercial negotiations. Another 39,000 farmers produced onion, pumpkin, okra, tomatoes, bananas, cheese, meat, tilapia, coffee, sesame and other products. The private sector and the government have a general and a product-specific strategy for developing agricultural exports and replacing imports; and market surveys of 20 Nicaraguan products in eight countries (Canada, USA, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica and Panama). Some 500 commercial contacts were identified; studies were conducted of 16 agricultural chains in Nicaragua; and the factors of success of 87 Nicaraguan agricultural exporters were identified.

Thanks to technical support from IICA, the private sector and export promotion organizations have the experience and

methodology of the export platforms carried out with Canada and the United States (Los Angeles, Miami). Some 50 small and medium-sized enterprises took part in the platforms and 60% managed to obtain buyers for their products.

The Institute provided cooperation in support of the processes for the negotiation and management of trade agreements. Technical personnel and officials from MAGFOR and the organized private sector enhanced their capabilities and skills by taking part in seminars and workshops on the treaty negotiation processes: CA4-Canada FTA, CA-USA FTA, Nicaragua-Dominican Republic and Central American Common Market and DR-CAFTA.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Two initiatives involving the territorial approach stand out. In Ciudad Campana and El Guabo, in the municipality of Muelle de los Bueyes in the Southern Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS), over 250 kilometers from Managua, work has been ongoing since 2003. With financial support from USAID, IICA coordinated the rehabilitation of the San Francisco-La Campana road, 47 kilometers of feeder roads that are very important to the more than 9000 local inhabitants and some 450 producers of dairy products, plantains and other products.

The rehabilitation of the road went hand in hand with technical assistance aimed at introducing better varieties of plantain, providing training in the production of 10 different types of cheeses, expanding the acreage and production of cacao, as well as promoting the marketing of these products through participation in commercial tours and national and international fairs. The Institute also strengthened the

organization of the cooperatives and obtained legal status for them. It supported a process of setting up school gardens and every year 20 of the best students aged 10-14 received a week's training at IICA in the use of computers and the Internet. The schools in the communities concerned also received computers and books.

IICA contributed to the development and expansion of organic cacao production in the communities, providing assistance with efforts aimed at modernization, improved processing, certification, marketing and exports.

The other area where the Institute had a major impact on the well-being of the population at the territorial level was in the north of Chinandega province, along the border with Honduras. In 2004, IICA began assisting the northern "4 Santos" municipalities (San Juan de Cinco Pinos, Santo Tomas del Nance, San Pedro de Potrero Grande and San Francisco de Guajiniquilapa) with the implementation of a participatory strategic planning process that made it possible for civil society and the authorities to develop a single vision and undertake joint action in those districts. A strategic, sustainable rural development plan was drawn up with 25 project profiles, followed by a major effort to secure resources for their implementation. One of the first actions carried out in the second stage was related to bean production and marketing. IICA prepared and implemented a business matchmaking activity with a view to producers exporting beans to El Salvador and Honduras. This resulted in 17,000 quintales of beans being sold for US\$26 each, when the price normally obtained at the time was less than US\$20.

IICA's partnership with the Rural Development Institute (IDR) and the Sectoral Development Program (PRODESEC) made it possible to promote beekeeping micro-businesses in Cinco Pinos and facilitate training for cooperatives and associations

of producers. This directly benefited 3500 families living in the "4 Santos" area. The "Mujeres del cerro" association was created in the municipality of Cinco Pinos, which later became the "Cooperativa Pinarte," a group of 36 women artisans who use different parts of pine trees to make ornaments. These producers took part in fairs and tours and hosted visits by businesspeople from overseas who wished to see the region's production first hand with a view to purchasing merchandise. The Institute also supported the improvement of quality of the beans produced with the introduction of micro-irrigation (50 designs were prepared and five demonstration units set up), new seed varieties, water harvesting and improved processing for beans for export. A binational action was implemented with Honduras for an entire year to implement the pilot rural development project in the upper watershed of the Rio Negro.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Cooperation related to technology and innovation was provided for Nicaragua's most important agricultural products: corn, beans, mung beans, broom millet, cacao, organic meat and honey, coffee, milk and dairy products, beef, lamb and goat's meat, organic grasses, tilapia, shrimp, onion, pumpkins, tomatoes, manioc, plantains, okra, sesame and sesame oil, fruit trees, fruits and juices, jams, hibiscus tea, lemon grass and vegetables in general. IICA was active in parts of 12 of the country's 15 provinces and in one of the two autonomous regions. In general, the results were: a) an increase in production, yields and the quality of products; b) an increase in value added through the selection, cleaning and packaging of products and the industrial processing of products and by-products; and, c) producers' organizations have enhanced management capabilities and greater prospects of successfully



integrating into markets. Some examples of this cooperation are described below.

The support for the production of dairy products - IICA supported technological innovation throughout the chain -, was largely the reason for the take-off and transformation of national production and exports. The Institute's cooperation led to the diversification of production by introducing techniques for producing types of cheese for which there is strong demand in international markets (e.g., mozzarella, cotija, Philadelphia, panela, ranchero, ricotta, petit suisse, Oaxaca, feta, quesillo, port-salut, Manchego, morral, botanero, Gouda, provolone and Edam). The actions involved training for Nicaragua's main cheese producers (some 50 processing plants) provided by experts from Mexico and the United States. This was complemented with training in health and safety issues at the farm level. Many small-scale producers assimilated technologies adapted to their specific conditions. Other work carried out included market studies, designs for refurbishing plants (Lactosam, Nicarao, Alianza Nova and San Francisco de Asis), the setting up of a trading and exporting company (Comercial Exportadora Nicaraguense de Productos Lacteos - CENILAC) based on a partnership involving five medium-sized plants, and assistance with the packaging, labeling and marketing of cheeses.

The efforts to promote organic stock raising entailed a wide-ranging process of technological innovations throughout the chain, the creation of the organic meat cluster and an intense, innovative marketing and promotion campaign. The certification of over 20,000 manzanas of organic grazing land and 9000 head of cattle on 32 farms, good agricultural and livestock practices and the promotion of the production and marketing of organic veterinary inputs are just some of the results achieved by mobilizing many actors and

implementing activities such as the setting up of a certified organic slaughterhouse and meat advertising and tasting in national and Central American supermarkets (for example, in El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica). Nicaraguan organic meat was promoted in one of the best restaurants in the United States, in Washington D.C., where IICA and its partners organized a tasting activity for potential buyers with assistance from the U.S. government, the U.S. embassy in Nicaragua, the ministers of agriculture and industry, and many other high-profile members and leaders of the livestock sector.

Another important achievement to which IICA contributed was the introduction of technology for the slaughtering and butchering of pelibuey sheep for 500 women stock raisers in Malpaisillo, in the province of Leon. These small farmers received training in butchering and packing practices and health and safety procedures for pelibuey meat, with a view to replacing imports from New Zealand. This type of meat is consumed in restaurants and hotels and sold in supermarkets, both locally and in other parts of the country. The design, construction and implementation of a mini-slaughterhouse, managed on a business footing by the women themselves, was a key innovation that made it possible to raise their income. The mini-slaughterhouse, adapted to the conditions of this social cluster, turned out to be a strategic factor in creating the pelibuey chain, which has great potential in the country.

In the field of tunnel farming for small-scale producers, the Institute supported the introduction of over 100 tunnels in different provinces. These use micro-irrigation and plastic to produce vegetables under controlled conditions and afford high productivity and less use of inputs and agrochemicals. This experience had multiplier effects, since tunnel farming has since expanded and been replicated in many areas of the national territory.

Innovations were also achieved in the production of corn and beans through SICTA (Regional Agricultural Innovation Network), a joint project of IICA and COSUDE (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation). The results included higher yields, fertilization based on soil analysis, the use of bean harvesters and biodigestors, micro-irrigation on slopes, the production of cacao liqueur and products such as honey-based shampoos, soaps, creams and conditioners, and school orchards. At the Office's initiative, modern cashew production techniques were introduced from Brazil, pig technology from Chile, cacao-grafting technology from Ecuador, and filleting technology and tilapia packaging and modern techniques for plantain production from Honduras, through the Honduran Agricultural Research Foundation (FHIA).

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Described below are four successful examples of the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment involving 40,000 actors (20,000 students, parents and teachers, 8000 members of families that engage in organic agriculture and 600 in coffee, and 9000 people in the Nicaragua-Honduras border project).

The Nicaragua-Honduras border project. Thanks to cooperation from Austria, IICA was able to expand the communication network by installing 12 solar-powered radio communicators that use a single frequency and are connected to municipalities in the two countries. This action also made it possible to install telephone lines. The network's effectiveness was demonstrated during Hurricane Felix and the leptospirosis epidemic, when it permitted the smooth, continuous exchange of information among mayor's offices, Civil Defense, the Ministry of Health

(MINSA) and municipal institutions. The border communities found it to be a useful tool for rustling investigations and for facilitating the transportation of sick people and pregnant women.

This binational project led to a series of meetings involving residents of the border areas of both countries. Some 164 families benefited from training in safe water management designed to improve the quality of life, environmental health and production. Women's groups were the focus of the efforts to diversify the rural economy: by manufacturing handicraft goods and producing wines, jams and jellies, the women were able to set up small funds of their own and begin putting the groups on a formal footing. IICA also created the institutional conditions for work on a common agenda on border issues. The document "Management plan for the Rio Negro watershed" became the main tool for facilitating sustainable development in the border municipalities responsible for managing the watershed.

The IICA/Austria project to promote organic farming and marketing had a clear environmental impact, given the regulations involved. The country has a national strategy for the development of organic agriculture, draft policies and legislation on which there is broad agreement and a public-private forum for the discussion of organic issues. The MIFIC (Ministry of Development, Industry and Trade) has a trained accreditation unit, while MAGFOR's unit in charge of record keeping and the control of organic products was strengthened and trained in the use of nationwide, online record-keeping systems. A subprogram for the development of organic certification was designed and incorporated into the National Food Plan and funding is being sought. As many as 1000 producers of organic cacao and honey also benefited directly. Following three years of cooperation efforts, they received international certification as organic producers, with

the consequent positive impact on the prices of their products. These producers are applying good agricultural and beekeeping practices to continue increasing yields and the quality of their products. They are well trained, have internal control systems, infrastructure for processing, drying and storing their products, and good arrangements with international buyers. The latter, in addition to paying good prices, offer technical assistance and resources for certification for the following year.

School vegetable garden project. Over the last four years, the Institute has worked with the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) and coordinated with FAO to establish over 300 school kitchen gardens with good sanitary and food safety conditions, where natural inputs and fertilizers are used to avoid polluting the environment. These primary schools are located in 13 of the country's 15 provinces and in one of its two Atlantic Autonomous Regions (in Chinandega, Leon, Managua, Rivas, Masaya, Granada, Carazo, Matagalpa, Jinotega, RAAS, Chontales, Boaco, Nueva Segovia and Madriz). The more than 20,000 students, educators and parents permanently involved in this cooperation now have vegetable gardens, seeds, implements and manuals. They also possess the knowledge needed to manage their gardens correctly and produce a range of healthy, environmentally friendly vegetables.

Working with the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the International Coffee Organization (ICO), IICA also supported the Wet Coffee Processing Project. This set of actions had a clear, positive environmental impact and improved the quality of coffee, particularly in the Matagalpa and Jinotega regions. It also provided a wake-up call for the rest of the country's coffee growers, who realized they must stop polluting the rivers, lakes and water table of the main coffee-growing regions as a matter of urgency. The Institute is promoting the incorporation of technological innovations to save water in the wet coffee processing plants and ensure

correct management of run-off waters to prevent pollution of water sources in those areas. Some 600 producers are benefiting from the project.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

In 2002, the Institute initiated a process of establishing strategic partnerships with international and regional organizations, governments and cooperation agencies, producers' organizations, local governments, universities and Nicaraguan government agencies. These alliances strengthened the Office's capabilities, made it possible to mobilize substantial economic, technical and institutional resources to increase the benefits for large sectors of the rural population and make the actions carried out sustainable. The execution of the Institute's technical cooperation in many areas of the country was made possible by these alliances, which are underpinned by 100 memorandums of understanding and letters of collaboration.

5. Modernization of the Office

At the beginning of the 21st century, the IICA Office in Nicaragua embarked upon a process of comprehensive modernization (involving physical and technical issues, communications, equipment and office space) that enabled it to position itself positively and permanently among the institutions and organizations that operate in Nicaragua. The strategic vision was to project the Office as part of an organization of technical

Table 21: Important Strategic Partnerships in Nicaragua.

Type of partnership	Institutions
Technical strengthening and financial resources	The United States of America (USDA/USAID), Japan (JICA), Finland, European Union, Austria (Austrian Development Agency, ADA), Switzerland (COSUDE), International Coffee Organization (ICO), Common Fund for Commodities (CFC), World Bank (WB) and Denmark (Danish International Development Agency, DANIDA).
Technical strengthening	Israel (Mashav), Germany (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, GTZ), the Netherlands (Netherlands Development Organisation, SNV), Taiwan and Spain (Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, AECID), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) Tropical Agriculture Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Organization of American States (OAS), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Care International (CARE), Central American Agricultural Council (ACC), Cooperative League of the United States (CLUSA), International Agricultural Organization (OIA), International Specialized Inspections (ISI-Surveyor), Empresa de Servicios de Asesoría y Capacitación Técnica Agropecuaria (Technoserve), Chemonic Int. Inc., Carana Co, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Michigan State University (MSU), Regional Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA), International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA)
Universities	Central American University (UCA), International School of Agriculture and Livestock (EIAG), National Agrarian University (ONE), National Autonomous University of Nicaragua, Leon campus (UNAN-Leon), Catholic University of the Dry Tropics (UCATSE), University of Commercial Sciences (UCC), University of the Autonomous Regions of Nicaragua's Caribbean Cost (URACCAN), American University (UAM).
Partnerships for execution	Asociación Nicaragüense de Marañoseros (ANIMAR), Asociación para el Desarrollo Económico y Social del Espino (APRODESE), Comercial Exportadora Nicaragüense de Productos Lácteos (CANISLAC), Consejo Nacional del Café (CANACAFE), Conglomerado Agroindustrial de Frutas y Vegetales (CANAFRUBE), Comisión Nacional Ganadera de Nicaragua (CONAGAN), Consejo Nacional de Semillas (CONASEM), Federación Centroamericana de Arroz (FECARROZ), Fondo de Desarrollo Agropecuario (FONDEAGRO), Fundación para el Fortalecimiento del Sector Privado para la Formulación de Alternativas (PROVIA), Unión Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos (UNAG), Asociación Comité de Desarrollo del Municipio de Muelle de los Bueyes (ACODEMUBE), Asociación de Productores Agropecuarios de El Rama (APAR), Asociación de Cafetaleros de Matagalpa (ASOCAFEMAT), Asociación de Productores de Santa Lucía (ASOPROL), Corporación Nicaragüense del Café (CAFENICA), Cámara Nicaragüense del Sector Lácteo (CANISLAC), Comisión Nacional Ganadera (CONAGAN), Cooperativa de Servicios Múltiples Nueva Unidad de Producción (COSENUPL), Federación de Asociaciones de Ganaderos de Nicaragua (FAGANIC), Organización para el Desarrollo Social y Ambiental (ODESA), Asociación de Apicultores de El Sauce (APIELSA), Asociación para la Diversificación y Desarrollo Agrícola Comunal (ADDAC), Corporación Agrícola, S.A. (AGRICORP), Asociación Nicaragüense de Formuladores y Distribuidores de Agroquímicos (ANIFODA), Asociación Nicaragüense de Productores de Sorgo (ANPROSOR), Asociación Regional de Servicios Agropecuarios de Oriente de Honduras (ARSAGRO), Asociación de Desarrollo Social de Nicaragua (ASDENIC), Asociación Nicaragüense de Instituciones de Microfinanzas (ASOMIF), Asociación de Productores y Exportadores de Nicaragua (APEN), Asociación de Productores de Semilla de los Cuatro Santos (ASOPRO), Asociación de Productores de Santa Lucía (ASOPROL), Certificadora Latinoamericana (BIOLATINA), Cooperativa Apícola (CAP), Comisión para el Desarrollo Rural (CODER), Comercializadora Jinotegana de Café (COJICAFE), Camarones de Nicaragua S.A. (COMANICA), Cooperativa Multisectorial de Productores, Orgánicos de Muelle de los Bueyes (COOMPROMUB), Cooperativa Agropecuaria de Producción de Mujeres Unidas por el Desarrollo Económico Familiar (COOPAPROMUDEF), Cooperativa Productora de Leche (COPROLECHE), Cooperativa de Servicios Múltiples Nueva Unidad de Producción (COSENUPL), Distribuidora de Insumos Agropecuarios (DISAGRO), Distribuidora Nicaragüense de Petróleo, S.A. (DNP), Empresa Nicaragüense de Importaciones (ENIMPORT), Movimiento Orgánico de Nicaragua (MONICA), Asociación para el Mejoramiento de Cultivos Orgánicos (OCIA), Compañía Centroamericana de Productos Lácteos, S.A. (PROLACSA), Asociación TECUILCAN (TECUILCAN & VOLANS), Unión de Cooperativas Agropecuarias El Sauce (UCASA), Unión de Cooperativas de Servicios Múltiples del Norte (UCOSEMUN) Unión Nicaragüense de Cafetaleros (UNICAFE), Cooperativa Unión de Productores Comarcales R.L. (UPROCOM), Cámara de Comercio Americana (AMCHAM), Socios para el Desarrollo Rural Productivo (SDRP) and mayor's offices of over 30 municipal districts throughout the country



Table 21 (Cont.)

Type of partnership	Institutions
Public partnerships	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAG-FOR), Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA), Ministry of Development, Industry and Trade (MIFIC), Ministry of Education (MINED), Ministry of Health (MINS), Rural Development Institute (IDR), National Forestry Institute (INAFOR), Rural Credit Fund (FCR), Nicaraguan Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA), Nicaraguan Institute for Cooperative Development (INFOCOP), National Assembly, National Forestry Council (CONAFOR), National Seed Council (CONASEM), Foundation for the Agricultural and Forestry Development of Nicaragua (FUNIC), Institute for Development and Democracy (IPADE), Nicaraguan Women's Institute (INIM), Investment Promotion Agency (PRONICARAGUA) and National Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation in Nicaragua (RENIDA)

excellence geared to achieving results that have a big impact. The Office has had a high profile in the press and on radio, television and the Internet, while it has trained an average of 2000 people per year through its various activities.

Strategic changes were made to help position the Office and the Institute as a hemispheric organization that exerts leadership and can help the countries attain their priority objectives. The changes included annual accountability processes, the preparation of annual reports and the updating of the National Agenda, as well as transparency, based on regular internal and external technical, administrative and financial audits, and the strengthening of links with the regional specialists.

IICA Office in **Panama**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Panama

Guillermo Villanueva¹

1. Introduction

This report is a summary of IICA achievements in Panama from 2002 through 2008, in cooperation with national authorities, partners in the agricultural sector and other strategic allies. The results are presented in accordance with the strategic objectives of the Institute's 2006-2010 Medium Term Plan and the National Technical Cooperation Agenda for IICA in Panama, which was developed with the participation of public and private sector authorities, representatives of academia and nongovernmental organizations, and members of the country's professional associations and agri-food chain groups.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Panama

IICA supported the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MIDA), the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES) and the National Secretariat for Coordination and Monitoring of the Food Plan (SENAPAN) in preparing, monitoring and evaluating social policies with an emphasis on fighting poverty in rural communities. This cooperation facilitated the development of programs to improve food security for vulnerable rural

populations. An intersectoral social committee was set up, with the participation of IICA, to monitor the implementation of social policies.

IICA helped MIDA promote dialogue with national public- and private-sector leaders to examine the situation of the country's agri-food and rural sector. It also provided technical cooperation for delegates from the Group for the Implementation and Coordination of the Agreements on Agriculture and Rural Life of the Summits Process (SIRG) to implement the biennial agendas for 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 and undertake the Plan Agro 2015.

IICA lent technical cooperation to help the MIDA comply with the Central American Agricultural Policy (PACA) by holding two national consultations to obtain input for the country component. Representatives of indigenous and farming communities and rural women's organizations took part in these consultations. The cooperation enhanced implementation of Panama's agricultural policy.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

Technical cooperation activities conducted in 2002-2008 were consistent with terms agreed upon with leaders of the

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Panamanian agri-food and rural sector, and after 2006, with commitments acquired in the National Technical Cooperation Agenda. Of particular note was a joint effort by international donors and cooperation agencies in the areas of sustainable rural development, agricultural health and food safety, trade and competitiveness of agribusiness, and technology and innovation for agriculture.

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA helped Panama's delegates prepare reports and serve in their official capacity at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. It was the first time Panama had sent delegates to these meetings, as in the past the country had been represented by its embassy in Geneva, Switzerland. By lending this cooperation, the Institute injected new energy into Panama's participation in these technical meetings, and the country was able to learn much more about the decisions of these bodies and begin to play an active role. Meanwhile, IICA was also lending technical support for setting up the National Intersectoral Committee for Application of WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), having been appointed to serve as Technical Secretary of the Committee. In this role, it developed and published the National SPS Agenda for 2008-2012, with the participation of stakeholders from the public and private sectors. By implementing this Agenda, Panama will be able to carry out the mandates of the WTO SPS Committee on a more well-planned footing.

IICA also supported the MIDA with institutional strengthening for public agricultural health and food safety services with an eye toward setting up a quality management system. Panamanian technical specialists received training in the use

of the quality management system as a tool for strengthening the country's agricultural health services, through horizontal cooperation with the Livestock Department of Chile.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA technical cooperation emphasized the agri-food chain perspective. Ultimately, this approach received broad social and economic acceptance in Panama, and today representatives of all links in the chains (dairy, rice, corn/sorghum and fruits) sit down to talk at the same table. The chains thus become more successful as they adopt Competitiveness Agreements (Plans of Action) under the responsibility of chain committees. This cooperation took place in interaction with multiple stakeholders and in coordination with the MIDA. Also involved were spokespersons from groups representing consumers, industries, marketers, input and product distributors, and members of other institutions associated with regulating and promoting the activity. This includes the Ministry of Trade and Industries (MICI), the Ministry of Health (MINSAs) and the Authority for Consumer Protection and for the Defense of Competition (*ACODECO*).

For the first time, the corn/sorghum and rice chains succeeded in attracting participation by the most rudimentary producers, those whose traditional production systems begin with a wooden digging stick, along with small-scale rural agribusinesses. In providing technical cooperation for the MIDA and for stakeholders in the agri-food chains, IICA helped the dairy, rice, corn/sorghum and food production chains develop plans of action (competitiveness agreements) and set up a chain committee for each one. The plans of action identify activities that should be undertaken over the short, medium and long term and assign people to be responsible.

The task of each chain committee is to carry out the plan of action and the competitiveness agreement. These committees sit on the National Product Advisory Commissions, mandated by national legislation to serve as mechanisms for consultation and consensus-building on actions affecting agri-food chains. In direct technical cooperation with the MIDA in the area of the chains, IICA helped prepare a ministerial ruling to designate technical secretaries for those agri-food chain committees that have adopted a plan of action.

One of the outcomes of the chain competitiveness agreements was that IICA was able to work with the Dairy Chain Committee and the MIDA to develop a proposed payment system based on milk quality. The content includes: a) a methodology to determine quality-based milk prices for highland and lowland dairy production; b) strengthening and/or creating a network of reference laboratories; c) technical and administrative staff to launch the system; d) laboratory equipment; e) standardized protocols for taking, handling and analyzing samples of raw milk to measure quality and set price; f) an operating manual for trainers; and, g) technical content for a workshop to train trainers. Members of the dairy chain met several times with IICA and MIDA facilitators to create a mechanism for setting reference prices and tables of premiums and discounts based on milk quality. Work is also moving ahead to set up a network of laboratories that will operate independently and objectively to assess the quality of milk delivered by producers and provide a basis for the payment system.

The Institute's technical cooperation with the dairy chain in Panama began with a horizontal cooperation project in which Colombian producers and industrialists were able to talk to members of the Panamanian chain and share their successful experiences with a quality-based milk payment system. In particular, the Panamanians learned about the experiences of the reference laboratory network run by the

Colombian Agricultural Research Center (CORPOICA) to provide independent quality certification of milk delivered by producers.

This joint work with the dairy chain proved to be a landmark effort in the country because the chain participants themselves decided to strike an agreement on competitiveness and, as a body, asked the government to formalize it. The initiative sets a standard for other chains, such as rice, corn and sorghum, for which similar processes will be encouraged.

In order to promote international trade, the Institute offered technical support to help the MIDA prepare a compendium on exporting to markets with free-trade agreements, and another on trade promotion between Panama and its main trading partners. The technical group selected the 10 product lines with the greatest potential for each market under consideration (European Union, United States, Singapore, Taiwan, Chile and Central America) and prepared technical checklists for each product entering these markets.

The work benefited specialists and managers responsible for promoting agricultural exports. They gained in-depth knowledge about the scope of the free trade and trade promotion agreements that Panama has negotiated and learned to identify products holding high potential for export to those markets. Once the compendia have been published, they will be distributed to extension agents and representatives of producer and agro-export trade groups. The cooperation is expected to boost exports to those markets.

IICA cooperation also culminated in the preparation and publication of a document on export development strategies that will allow agricultural products to benefit from free trade agreements; it was produced with the participation of various entities from the public agricultural sector.



A second published document provided a methodology for developing compendia on exports and markets as a tool for operating under free trade agreements. This methodology may be useful in other countries of LAC.

IICA is also interested in developing human talent. It lent technical cooperation to the MIDA and the agri-food sector to train specialists in negotiating, monitoring and administering free-trade agreements. Moreover, it contributed to training activities in the public and private sectors in the following areas: dispute settlement, benefits of free trade agreements, opportunities in the United States for agricultural products and organic produce, the agri-food chain approach and traceability.

It also cooperated with the MIDA in performing studies on citrus fruits for the US and European markets; these studies later served as the basis for a plan of action for fruit chains.

Further activities took place under a technical cooperation agreement with the Panamanian Agricultural Insurance Bureau (ISA). As a result, IICA was present at the Tenth Conference of the Latin American Agricultural Insurance Association (ALASA), where it sponsored a lecture about the effects of climate change on production and competitiveness of the region's agri-food sector. Specialists from the ISA and other institutions of the public agricultural sector and private banking had the opportunity to exchange successful experiences with delegates from several countries that use the deposit insurance model, such as Brazil, Colombia, Chile and Mexico.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA worked with the MIDA National Rural Development Department to prepare a staff manual, a financial manual and an operating manual for the Participatory Development and Rural Modernization Project (PARTICIPA), financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). It also lent technical cooperation to the National Department of Rural Development to bring it into compliance with the project's conditions of effectiveness and financing.

The Institute worked with the MIDA and IFAD to implement the Sustainable Rural Development Project in the Provinces of Panamá, Coclé and Colón (Triple C). This cooperation was successful in building up the project management team and the counterpart agency.

IICA took part in a forum for the exchange of rural development experiences in Panama, which led to several initiatives, including the Contest for Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs. It also promoted adoption of the territorial approach, and a key factor was the decision to establish a reference territory in the Province of Darién, in partnership with the MIDA and IFAD. As a result of this cooperation, the communities, producer organizations and rural women's groups upgraded their skills in project management and resource use. The residents of these communities also saw improvements in their income and quality of life.

The use of information and communication technologies (ICT) has fed the growth of a virtual rural development community in Panama, and eventually a website was created and launched. In addition, a geo-referenced database is being prepared with agro-ecological information and virtual maps applicable to sustainable tourism and rural development. ICT's

are also being used for a geographic information system (GIS) to develop a virtual tool on family farming for the Agricultural Extension Service.

In cooperation with the IICA Center for Leadership in Agriculture, young people and leaders from the agricultural sector were encouraged to take part in exchange programs and internships, and all this helped build up their leadership skills. One Panamanian youth who took part in the First Forum of Young Leaders is now in Peru working and learning about agricultural health and food safety standards and regulations that apply to exports for the United States and European markets. Upon his return, with the knowledge he is acquiring, he will continue to work as a consultant to Panama's agricultural exporters. Another participant is now helping to organize the National Forum of Young Leaders and supporting the agribusiness activities of an intern from Trinidad and Tobago.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA lent technical support for strengthening and restructuring the MIDA agricultural extension system with the use of three instruments: the operating manual, the implementation plan and the proposal for coordination with agricultural research. These tools were developed in a participatory approach through national workshops held with local counterparts including producer associations and academia. The proposals were documented and introduced to authorities for decision-making. As a result of this cooperation, a comprehensive agricultural extension system is being developed with links to research, credit, insurance and marketing institutions.

IICA also provided technical support to the Panamanian Agricultural Research Institute (IDIAP) and MIDA for

implementing national-level projects and components as part of the SICTA Agricultural Innovation Network (RED-SICTA), the Mesoamerican Network of Plant Genetic Resources (REMERFI), the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO), the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), the Regional Cooperative Program for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Cultivation (PROMECAFE) and the Biotechnology and Biosafety Project. With the SICTA Network, IICA developed a project on cassava production, marketing and processing that promoted the use of appropriate technology among organizations of small-scale producers in two different regions. These producers were able to solve production problems involving crop pests and diseases. With FONTAGRO, IICA facilitated implementation of regional projects to improve tomato and potato crops using technologies developed and validated by IDIAP.

IICA also lent technical support for developing a document to strengthen the National Research and Technology Transfer System (SNITTA), in order to make more efficient use of resources available in the public and private agricultural and academic sectors.

The Institute facilitated horizontal technical cooperation between specialists from the Panama's MIDA and IDIAP in the Dominican Republic to observe commercial plantations of mangoes, avocados and other tropical fruits. Exchanges also took place to strengthen germplasm banks run by IDIAP and by the private and academic sectors and to develop a human resources training program on plant nursery management. Host institutions were the Secretariat of State for Agriculture (SEA), the Dominican Agroforestry Research Institute (IDIAF) and private fruit growers from the Dominican Republic. Following the technical exchange, authorities from the two countries remained in contact to organize training activities for



nursery operators offered by specialists from the Dominican Republic and to exchange fruit crop genetic material.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

In coordination with the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), IICA provided the MIDA with technical support for defining and implementing a strategy to build business skills among small and medium scale rural businesses in such areas as agricultural health, food safety and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). The Institute also helped develop a national policy plan for agroindustry. Application of Good Manufacturing Practices and food safety techniques will equip agribusinesses to penetrate new local and international markets.

In cooperation with the MIDA, IFAD and other agencies from the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development, IICA held a workshop to validate the methodology it had developed for systematic knowledge management on rural tourism in the Province of Darién. As a result of this interagency work, IICA was able to help in implementing the Sustainable Local Tourism Project in Darién, funded and supervised by IFAD. Lessons learned in the knowledge management workshop were incorporated into the implementation plan for the Sustainable Local Tourism Development Program.

In conjunction with the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development, IICA also produced a document to assess the state of inter-agency cooperation for rural development in Panama, the purpose of which is to help make better use of technical and economic resources by preventing duplication and dispersion of efforts.

In partnership with the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), IICA worked on applying the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument and addressed plant protection issues in the fruit growing sector of the country.


Finally, with sponsorship by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), IICA trained specialists and academics from the agri-food sector on Codex Alimentarius standards for animal health and plant protection, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

5. Modernization of the Office

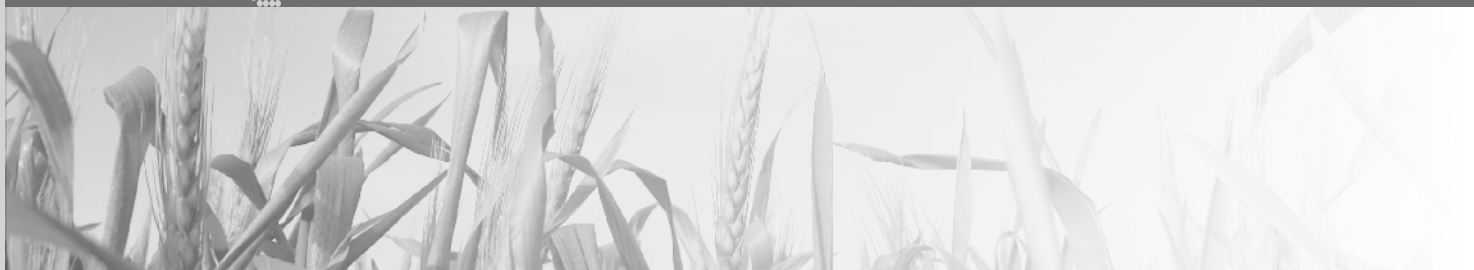
IICA held annual forums to give an accounting of its achievements for the years 2006, 2007 and 2008, fully outlining its work to implement the Institute's National Technical Cooperation Agenda for Panama. These reports provide clear evidence that IICA cooperation was efficient, effective and useful, in turn fulfilling the provisions of the cooperation agenda and strengthening strategic alliances with other partners.

Fresh talent was brought into the office with the addition of two national specialists in competitiveness and rural development and a regional rural development specialist, all of whom helped inject greater energy into implementation of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda.

The new IICA technical cooperation model facilitated corporate strengthening and more inter-thematic work in the office.



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the **Northern Region**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Northern Region

David C. Hatch¹

1. Introduction

The priorities of the Northern Region are established according to the regional technical cooperation agenda and IICA's Medium-Term Plan. Two mechanisms are used to define the regional agenda: the Tri-national Council² and the Cooperative Program in Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE).³

The U.S. Office is also home to the Directorate of Operations for the Northern Region (DORIN). The Directorate is the center of operations for Canada, Mexico, Spain and the United States, and for the coordination of the regional horizontal technical cooperation agenda. Over the years, the DORIN has sought out opportunities in emerging areas, including biotechnology and biosafety, plant and animal health and food safety, trade and agribusiness, and biofuels/agroenergy.

The various initiatives, projects and programs implemented by IICA's Northern Region have all contributed to strengthening agricultural sector institutions, horizontal technical cooperation and partnerships within the region and other countries in the hemisphere.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Northern Region

The Northern Region undertook actions to capitalize on opportunities to promote technology and innovation, agricultural trade and environmental protection aimed at improving rural communities and agriculture in the Americas. The most recent actions were those designed to help the Member States cope with climate change by adapting their

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2 The Council comprises delegates from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC) and the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico.

3 PROCINORTE is a cooperative program in agricultural research and technology that facilitates cooperative actions of mutual interest to the three countries of IICA's Northern Region (Canada, Mexico, and the USA).



agricultural production systems to the new conditions, and promoting a safe and responsible use of biotechnology. To that end, IICA provided technical support to FONTAGRO to develop a request for proposals for climate change adaptation in LAC.

Efforts were made to enhance institutional presence and image as a credible and effective organization. As a result, IICA saw a significant increase in requests to participate in regional and hemispheric events and activities. These activities were conducted in partnerships with government organizations, private enterprises and educational institutions. The region strengthened its alliances with clients, strategic partners and organizations that work at the regional and hemispheric levels, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research.

The results that the Office achieved during the period under review were as follows:

- Participated in and facilitated IICA senior officials in relevant regional events and made formal presentations in the areas such as food security, climate change, agriculture insurance, biotechnology, animal health and food safety, technology and innovation, sustainable development and the Summit of the Americas Process.
- Held periodic informative meetings with U.S. government officials, including USDA and the U.S. Department of State to inform on institutional activity.
- Developed the concept and secured the approval of two projects with USDA: 1) a joint IICA/USDA accessible database of technical information that aims to form the basis of a virtual extension service for member countries and research institutions, designed for the benefit of small to medium-sized farmers in particular; and, 2) a formal review of IICA/USDA-FAS National Agendas. Projects of this kind are unprecedented and offer significant potential for promoting future collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and USAID.
- IICA and the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an eye to strengthening cooperation between the two entities for the purpose of assisting IICA member countries to achieve the objectives and activities of IICA's Hemispheric Biosafety and Biotechnology Program (HBBP). The agreement will also facilitate mechanisms for the development, management and use of products of agricultural biotechnology by IICA member countries. As a result of this MOU, the action plan between IICA and BIO was implemented and work continues to date to encourage the acceptance of agricultural biotechnology by aiding countries in identifying their needs when implementing this technology.
- IICA and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) signed an MOU entitled "Strategic Alliance Between the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for the Promotion of Health and Prosperity in the Rural Communities of the Americas." The document also established a framework and legal basis for future agreements arising from shared concerns. As a result, a resolution was later adopted at the Thirty-sixth Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly, where IICA and

PAHO were mandated to coordinate regional avian and pandemic influenza preparedness and response plans.

Furthermore, IICA and PAHO developed an avian influenza risk communication strategy for implementation. This entire effort created a very effective model to follow when addressing future outbreaks of various types.

At the regional level, IICA and PAHO adopted a Joint Plan of Action covering four areas of cooperation: public health and animal health (zoonoses and food safety); significant contributions to the summit process; exchanges related to planning, monitoring and evaluation; and the exchange of information and experiences. Cooperative activities were conducted in Argentina, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, in areas such as the design of national food safety programs, the review of legislation on the subject and the creation of national food safety committees. As a result, smooth and effective working relations were established between IICA's Directorate of Agricultural Health and Food Safety and the PAHO at the hemispheric level. Additionally, the two organizations worked together to organize the Inter-American Meeting, at Ministerial Level, on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA 15): Agriculture and Health: Alliance for Equity and Rural Development in the Americas. The Government of Brazil hosted the conference.

- IICA and the OAS agreed to work closer together on concerns related to the development of agriculture and designed to better the lives of people in the Americas. As a result, they organized numerous events together, such as briefings and seminars. These activities served as platforms for discussion and helped raise the level of awareness to achieve food security, rural prosperity and competitive agriculture within the Member States.
- Participation in the 2006 Caribbean Week of Agriculture in The Bahamas, addressing the issue of the role of the media in the New Agriculture and participating in biotechnology workshops. This activity raised the level of awareness among the regional press and afforded them the opportunity to further engage in regional concerns for food security and prosperity of the peoples in the Americas.
- The implementation of IICA Day at the OAS in 2005 resulted in OAS recognition of the event as an annual activity that is to take place during a session of the OAS Permanent Council. This event is a stand-alone activity that lends the Institute an opportunity to address relevant issues, such as the impact of climate change and food security on the agricultural sector of the Americas. This event is of critical importance to the Institute and its stakeholders because it highlights hemispheric concerns as they relate to agriculture and also promotes the Institute's activities in the Member States. Speakers have included IICA's Director General; Dr. Thomas C. Schelling, 2005 Nobel Laureate in Economics and Distinguished Professor at the University of Maryland; and the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Food of Guatemala, Bernardo Lopez Figueroa.
- Participated in the OAS Haiti Task Force and Haiti Group of Friends. As a result of the Office's active participation, awareness of IICA activity in Haiti was raised in Washington D.C. and at the local level in the member countries. Issues raised included: reforestation, microcredit, agriculture insurance, sustainable development, technical assistance, fruit growing and control of avian influenza and fruit fly disease. Furthermore, the Institute received numerous requests for constant updates on activities at the local level.



- IICA and the International Food Information Council (IFIC) agreed to carry out joint initiatives in improving stakeholder and public understanding of food safety and nutrition issues. In 2008, IICA and IFIC collaborated in an event where they engaged the Washington D.C. public and private sectors on the importance of partnerships in food safety and risk communication strategies.
- IICA and CropLife Latin America signed an MOU to promote technology that will benefit rural farmers and families in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Presented IICA's annual reports to the Member States via special sessions of the OAS Permanent Council. The presentation of the Institute's annual report provides the Member States with details of IICA's most recent activities in the hemisphere and addresses the challenges facing the sector.
- In efforts to strengthen the veterinary infrastructure in the Caribbean Region, IICA obtained a one-year extension of the APHIS-IICA agreement for the VEP Project, which secured funding of US\$200,000.
- The Office supported IICA/Canada's role in working with the North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) on international sanitary and phytosanitary measures (ISPM) in the Americas. This has led to the training of health specialists in the Northern Region in quarantine and other animal and plant health protection measures, and developed the capacities of national institutions for dealing with quarantine and new pests and diseases.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Northern Region gave top priority to the efforts to strengthen agriculture health and food safety systems in the region. IICA achieved the following results:

- The consolidation of institutional and interagency efforts to address the potential threat of avian influenza, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, foot-and-mouth disease and fruit fly.
- IICA promoted the execution of horizontal technical cooperation plans in the field of AHFS, with veterinarians from the Northern Region sharing their experiences with their counterparts from Colombia and Chile.
- The Institute participated in meetings of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS), providing follow-up to the DOHA Round of the WTO negotiations and supporting South-South cooperation initiatives.
- In conjunction with the Argentine Codex delegation, the Office hosted a CCLAC Coordinating Committee and Western Hemisphere Consultation (WHC) meeting in Chiba, Japan in 2006. IICA facilitated the attendance of all but one of the targeted countries; hosted a Hemisphere Consultation Meeting before the formal Codex meeting; and provided the needed technical assistance to delegates (24 participants from seven Member States at the pre-meeting).



- Working with PAHO, joint briefings were held for OAS ambassadors and the local private sector (World Bank, IDB, IFIC, FAO, private sector), and workshops on outbreak communications related to avian influenza. The briefings contributed to further discussions and possible solutions at the local level aimed at defining steps to control potential pandemics.
- The Office promoted the PVS instrument as a national veterinary capacity-building tool, most particularly with the World Bank and IDB, intended to characterize the performance of national veterinary services. The PVS instrument helps countries to establish the level of performance of a given organization, promote a common vision between the private and public sectors, define well-grounded priorities and facilitate strategic planning. As a result, the instrument was applied in the veterinary services of more than ten countries and in plant protection organizations in at least four countries.
- The Institute signed an MOU with the International Food Information Council (IFIC) to collaborate on avian influenza risk communication efforts and to jointly promote rural prosperity. The agreement is aimed at improving public understanding of food safety and nutrition issues through communication of credible, science-based information. As a result, IFIC and IICA defined and implemented a work plan to address the promotion of biotechnology in the Americas.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

- IICA secured support from the Vice President and Minister of Agriculture of Uruguay for a conference on agriculture insurance, scheduled for 2009 in Montevideo. Discussions resulted in legislation being introduced in the Uruguayan legislature to improve the regulatory environment for more private-sector participation.
- The Institute provided yearlong support for, and took part in, the session of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) aimed at addressing issues in the negotiating process for the Fifth Summit of the Americas. Active participation secured favorable language on the importance of agricultural development and food security in the declaration, signed by the countries of the Americas.
- The Office supported Mexico's experience and the lessons it learned in negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and the United States. In this regard, the Institute helped to promote trade and the competitiveness of agribusiness. In addition, it also made available to the Central American and Caribbean countries Mexico's experience and lessons learned.
- IICA supported the Mexico-Canada Bean Congress and, working with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, sponsored and supported the 2006 Forum on Agriculture. This forum, which focused on Brazil's experience in developing agribusiness, took place in Montreal under the aegis of the 12th International Economic Forum of the Americas. The Institute shared its experiences in good management practices.



- The Institute partnered with the Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association (CCAA) to bring an international perspective to the 2007 North American Consulting School, which was held in Banff, Alberta.
- An initiative spearheaded by IICA, the establishment of the North American Consulting School Program will allow the Institute to support Canada's local IICA Office in reengaging with the Americas in the areas of agriculture.
- Various conferences and forums were held in conjunction with international organizations on the themes of hemispheric integration, regional trade, the importance of agriculture and agricultural health. IICA experts also provided information and analysis of current trends regarding agricultural health, food safety, trade and agribusiness, rural development and avian influenza. These activities promoted the Institute as being a flexible organization that was receptive to the expressed needs of its Member States.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

- IICA provided significant technical support to FONTAGRO in conceptual aspects of its activities, such as the calls for projects and technical reports. Through its extensive network of contacts and partners in the USA, IICA also contributed with FONTAGRO⁴ to outreach to other organizations, such as USDA.

d. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

- IICA contributed to the production of reports of workshops, where FONTAGRO-funded projects presented their progress and acted as co-organizers of one of the three technical workshops held by FONTAGRO. IICA contributed significantly to the development of the conceptual framework for the call for projects on "Adaptation of Agricultural Production Systems to Climate Change in the Hemisphere."
- The Office participated in seminars on sustainable development and intellectual property rights.
- The Institute took part in workshops for the Latin American Program of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada in Montevideo, Uruguay.
- The Office produced a video on climate change and food security for IICA Day at the OAS.

e. Promoting Regional Integration

There are two mechanisms that IICA's Northern Region utilizes to achieve its goals in achieving regional integration: the Tri-National Council of the Northern Region and the Cooperative Program in Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE).

⁴ A regional fund for agricultural technology sponsored by IICA

The Tri-National Council

In 2007, IICA organized and facilitated the Eighth Annual Meeting of the Tri-National Council of the Northern Region, in Cancun, Mexico. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss future strategic areas of importance to Canada, Mexico, and the United States at the national, regional, and institutional levels.

With IICA's Northern Region Office serving as the technical secretariat, participants from the governments of Canada (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), Mexico (SAGARPA) and the United States (USDA/FAS) reaffirmed: (1) agricultural health and food safety; (2) biotechnology/biosafety; and (3) strategic partnerships as priority areas. They also made recommendations for consideration and inclusion in the Institute's Northern Region work plan and the respective IICA national technical agendas. The Tri-National Council also made a number of recommendations specific to the overall mission and effective administration of the Institute. These institutional recommendations include assessing and improving IICA's technical capacities and continuing to review and take steps to improve governing body meeting processes to ensure that the discussions result in productive debate. The Northern Region of IICA continues to support and coordinate the Council.

IICA partnered with several national (mainly the government counterpart) institutions such as USDA, AAFC, and SAGARPA. To this end, priorities were established by the Tri-National

Council, focused on specific thematic areas like agricultural health and food safety (AHFS); technology and innovation; sustainable rural development (SRD); and agribusiness and trade.

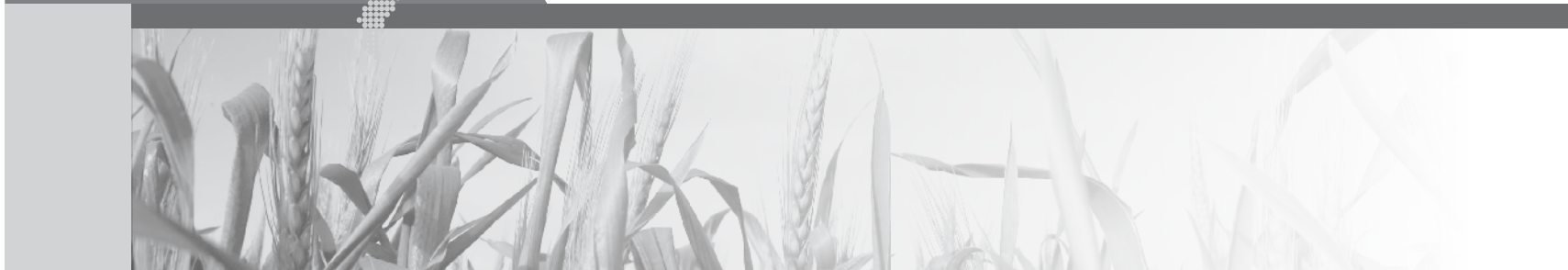
PROCINORTE

PROCINORTE facilitates cooperative actions in agricultural research and technological innovations of mutual interest to the three countries of IICA's Northern Region.

The various projects and programs implemented by IICA have all contributed to strengthening the agricultural sector institutions, horizontal technical cooperation and partnerships within the Region as well as with the rest of the hemisphere. The DSP led IICA into several strategic alliances, in many cases backed by memoranda of understanding, and several of them resulted in development and implementation of joint projects.

The Institute emphasized its commitment to continue supporting PROCINORTE, now with the additional technical backstopping of the recently created position of Technical Coordinator for the Northern Region. As such, PROCINORTE will not only receive the administrative support historically provided by the IICA Mexico Office but also the technical backstopping required for moving the PROCINORTE to a new position of becoming an active cooperation mechanism among the northern institutions in the area of agricultural research and technological innovations.

IICA Office in **Canada**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Canada

Michael Bedoya¹

1. Introduction

Between 2002 and 2008, IICA/Canada's contribution to the development of agriculture and rural communities in the Americas was focused on engaging Canada as a proactive member involved in the improvement and modernization of agriculture and rural life in Latin America and the Caribbean. This engagement was carried out following the guidelines and initiatives of the current IICA administration such as the national agendas and transparency policies, under the leadership of the Director General. Drawing on them, a strategic plan was developed and specific objectives set, including the expansion of the stakeholders' framework (to involve more private and academic stakeholders), the definition of cooperation instruments (expertise exchange program and support for events), and the delivery of technical cooperation in three operational phases (awareness, knowledge and involvement). The achievements of this transformation are documented in the IICA/Canada National Agenda and the annual reports. In this report, we have summarized IICA/Canada's main achievements in all the six areas of technical cooperation. We would like to acknowledge the hard work, involvement and strong commitment of our Canadian stakeholders and partners as major contributors to the success of our accomplishments. This change in Canada's role within IICA and the renewed interest of the Government of Canada in the Americas enabled

IICA/Canada to prepare, jointly with its stakeholders and partners, the Canada-IICA Partnership proposal document. During 2008, which marked the 25th Anniversary of IICA in Canada, the Director General presented the proposal to senior government officials.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Support for the structural reform processes of agricultural institutions and agencies in Chile, Peru, Colombia and Haiti by sharing the Canadian models.

IICA/Canada supported and sponsored events and missions from the ministries of agriculture and related agencies of these countries, using its technical cooperation instruments. These events, which included seminars and field visits, made it possible to familiarize these countries' officials with current Canadian structures and models, and to provide them with key information about the development and implementation stage of those new structures and models. As a result of this collaboration, the countries mentioned are in the process of transforming their agricultural institutions and agencies to improve their performance, drawing on the lessons learned by Canada. In the case of Chile, a Canadian expert participated

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in a forum organized by the Chilean National Senate. This was followed by a visit to Canada by a mission that included representatives of different branches of Chile's Ministry of Agriculture (professionals, senior human resource officials and the employees' union). In the case of Colombia, the mission was organized and sponsored by the Office of the President under a special modernization project. The mission focused on the structure of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), considering the new responsibilities of the National Surveillance Institute for Drugs and Food (INVIMA). The missions from Peru and Haiti included the Ministers of Agriculture and other senior authorities and focused on the Canadian models of institutions dedicated to agricultural credit and insurance.

Facilitating the development of new agriculture policy frameworks among IICA member countries using Canada's model and experience. The technical cooperation was delivered through seminars and meetings with the missions from Peru and Colombia and by sharing the publications compiled with other IICA member countries. The process followed by AAFC included the evaluation of current agricultural policies and the development of a new policy framework following several consultation events. As a result, these countries were provided with a framework to develop their own policies.

Sharing with Canada initiatives and strategies related to food security in Latin America and the Caribbean. The food security initiatives and strategies developed during 2008 by LAC countries were shared in several Canadian

forums. IICA supported the participation of speakers from LAC countries in international forums held in Canada. These forums were organized by academic institutions such as McGill University and the University of Ottawa, professional organizations such as the Alberta Institute of Agrologists, and NGOs such as the Bill Gates Foundation. As a result, these Canadian organizations and the people who attended the forums are better informed of the situation prevailing in LAC countries, especially in Haiti and Jamaica, and about how to improve their actions in order to mitigate the impact of the shortage and high food prices.

Networking and knowledge sharing on international economic trends and issues impacting agriculture.

IICA was an active supporter, sponsor and participant in the International Economic Forum of the Americas, better known as the Conference of Montreal. This yearly event brings together very high-level participants from the political, business and academic world, such as presidents, ministers, chief executives and other senior officials of public and private, national and international banks, companies and economic organizations. The IICA Director General and experts from headquarters participated as key guest speakers or chairs in different events held during the conferences, such as the agribusiness forums organized by AAFC. Other events, such as an agribusiness networking event, were directly organized by IICA. As a result, IICA and other important agricultural organizations were able to improve their networking capacity. It also allowed them to share their knowledge on economic issues and agricultural trends with senior Canadian and international economic officials.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation


a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Capacity building in foreign animal diseases for LAC using Canadian expertise and experience. Joint capacity building events were held between CFIA and IICA in Canada and LAC. The field experience acquired by Canada during the consecutive BSE and avian influenza (AI) outbreaks, coupled with the laboratory expertise developed in other foreign animal diseases, such as foot and mouth disease (FMD), were shared with IICA member countries. International meetings, seminars and training courses were delivered with the support and sponsorship of IICA in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Colombia, Belize, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia and Mexico, sharing Canada's successful emergency response to BSE and AI and FMD preparedness. The capacity building events covered the latest epidemiological models, emergency response, preparedness experiences and molecular diagnostic techniques developed by experts of the National Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory. Some of these events were part of the Counter Terrorism Capacity Building Project financed by the Canadian government. Another important partner in several of these events was the Pan American Health Organization's FMD Centre. As a result of these activities, veterinary services in these countries received training and were strengthened. IICA/Canada prepared publications with included the compilations of the presentations and documents generated in most of these events and shared them with other IICA member countries.

Mitigating the risk of plant pests in wood packaging and citrus in LAC. IICA/Canada supported and sponsored three regional seminars and workshops organized by the North

American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO) and the countries' national plant protection agencies. These events, which were held in Mexico, Argentina and Peru, focused on enhancing the awareness in LAC countries of the importance of implementing ISPM standard #15. International Standard 15, or Guidelines For Regulating Wood Packaging Material In International Trade, was adopted by the International Plant Protection Organization (IPPC). This was an important initiative designed to harmonize the wood packaging treatment procedures in order to minimize pest transfer. As a result, the countries in the Americas were able to minimize pest risks associated with international movements of shipments that involve wood packaging. In addition, IICA supported two international seminars on HLB, or citrus greening, by facilitating the participation of speakers and participants from LAC. These seminars were organized by NAPPO and held in Mexico. This enabled the participating countries to acquire the capacity to improve their preventive measures to protect their citrus industry.

Exchange of food safety expertise with the Caribbean and Latin America. Under its expertise exchange program, IICA/Canada supported and sponsored the development of an HACCP program for cocoa growers in Trinidad and Tobago. This was a joint collaboration initiative with McGill University and the University of the West Indies. This technology was put together in a quality insurance package called Commodity Technology Package and is designed to improve the safety quality of cocoa beans and thereby enable the Caribbean cocoa industry to comply with existing international standards. Additionally, IICA supported and sponsored, jointly with PAHO, speakers and participants from LAC in the Ninth World Meat Hygiene and Inspection Congress organized by CFIA and held in Niagara Falls. This was followed by a workshop with all the participants from LAC. As a result, the meat inspection services of Dominican Republic, Argentina, Brazil, Guatemala,



Honduras, Mexico and Chile were exposed to the latest developments and international standards in meat inspection procedures. Other activities related to food safety supported and sponsored by IICA/Canada under the expertise exchange program were the traceability seminars and workshops in Central America (Costa Rica), Canada (BSE Surveillance and Traceability, organized by TDV Global) and Mexico (PANVET). The knowledge acquired in these events by the LAC - and especially Central American - countries enabled them to develop or improve their traceability systems drawing on the Canadian experience.

Canada's involvement in the Hemispheric Sanitary and Phytosanitary Initiative Project. Under the leadership of IICA, a project involving a hemispheric SPS initiative was delivered with the support of the U.S. and Canada. Canadian experts were involved in providing training to the participating countries. These training activities took place in advance of the meetings of the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee. In addition, Canadian experts were part of the Steering Committee that managed the project. Canadian experts also participated in the second phase of the project, which consisted of reviews of individual countries' capacity to implement the SPS agreement. The CFIA experts undertook missions to Haiti, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Guyana. The countries that participated in the hemispheric project were able to increase their participation in the SPS Committee and improve the functioning of their national SPS committees.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Improving agricultural consulting services in IICA member countries with Canadian expertise. IICA/Canada

has been supporting and sponsoring the North American Consulting School (NACS), which provided training to agricultural consultants from Canada and other countries to improve their consulting knowledge and skills. This yearly event is organized by the Canadian Consulting Agrologists Association. Senior agricultural officials and private consultants from Chile, Mexico, Ecuador and the Caribbean have shared their experiences with their Canadian counterparts. Canadian consultants have also participated as speakers in meetings and congresses of agricultural experts in Mexico and the Caribbean. As a result, experts from LAC countries acquired and made use of new skills that enabled them to provide a better response to their clients. Improving consultants' skills is becoming crucial in today's world where the agriculture sector has been modernized and all countries have developed their export industries. Some of the relevant topics covered during the NACS were best management practices in farming, the new generation of agricultural cooperatives, value chain management, crop insurance and precision farming.

Canadian integrated beef production experience shared in international congress. IICA supported and sponsored the participation of a Canadian expert as a key speaker at an international meat congress (SICARNE) organized by the Mexican Feedlot Association and the University of Guadalajara in Mexico City. The Canadian expert who owns and manages a feedlot in Alberta (capacity of 70,000 heads per year) provided the congress participants with the latest statistics on beef production in Canada and some details of feedlot management, which includes organic production, manure treatment and a biogas plant that generates power for 800 homes. The Canadian experience was shared with participants from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, the U.S. and European countries.

Supporting Canada-Mexico Bean Congresses focusing on issues of mutual interest in production, research and health. Under the leadership of Pulse Canada, three Canada-Mexico Bean Congresses were organized with the support and sponsorship of IICA offices in Canada and Mexico. The congresses included parallel events, such as visits to farms and research facilities in both countries. The approach followed by Pulse Canada has been to identify issues of mutual interest or convergence in order to work together. Although it was an agribusiness initiative at the beginning, it has now evolved into a broader relationship that has led to common research projects and campaigns to promote the health benefits of beans. This has resulted in meetings among bean researchers and an international forum on health and beans in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. More than 30 Mexican producers have visited Canadian farms and agricultural facilities. As a result, producers of both countries have developed a close relationship to exchange experiences, including through a mentoring program for young producers.

Canadian expert support to the IICA hemispheric agri-tourism initiative. The Director of the Agri-tourism institute of the Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, traveled to Barbados to participate in a seminar and prepare a basic manual. This initiative was supported by IICA/Canada and IICA/Barbados with the sponsorship of the Organization of American States. The knowledge acquired helped IICA develop a framework to launch the hemispheric agri-tourism initiative.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

Supporting the exchange of knowledge between young farmers in Canada and the Americas. IICA and

the Canadian Young Farmers Forum signed an agreement to promote, support and sponsor the exchange of knowledge between young farmers from Canada and LAC. This began with a CYFF mission to Chile and Argentina, with meetings and field visits with their counterparts in both countries. The Leadership Centre at IICA Headquarters organized two major events in which four young Canadians from different provinces took part. In Canada, the CYFF organized the Young Farmers Summit of the Americas, which was supported by IICA with three key guest speakers from IICA Headquarters, including the Deputy Director General and the participation of young producers from Mexico, Haiti, Jamaica and El Salvador. This event included a workshop on Best Management Practices (BMP). As a result of these events, a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge was delivered in topics such as leadership and BMP, enabling young farmers in the Americas to improve their networking capacity and continue working on joint initiatives and future exchanges.

Sharing rural development experiences in LAC with the Canadian Rural Secretariat. IICA was an active participant in, and sponsor of, events organized by the Canadian Rural Secretariat of AAFC. During the Third National Rural Conference in Red Deer, Alberta, IICA supported and sponsored a key guest speaker from Headquarters, who shared IICA's experiences with rural women projects. These events provided a platform to facilitate dialogue with Canadian rural communities. The Rural Secretariat invited IICA to participate in the annual meeting of the Rural Development Network in Ottawa with a key guest speaker on biofuel initiatives in LAC. IICA's participation in these events provided an opportunity to strengthen communication and build bridges with rural communities in Canada.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Facilitating and supporting Canada's participation in regional and hemispheric research and innovation events and networks in the Americas. IICA facilitated the participation of key Canadian researchers and senior AAFC officials in regional and hemispheric meetings and forums. Regionally, it gave continuous support to all the PROCINORTE events, including some of the working groups' activities, such as the Mexican mission to Canada and the Canadian mission to FONTAGRO. The PROCINORTE meeting hosted by AAFC in Ottawa included the participation of the presidents and secretariats of PROCISUR and PROCIANDINO. Chief scientists from the AAFC Research Branch were guest speakers in several hemispheric meetings, such as the FORAGRO event. IICA/Canada played an active role in the development of the PROCINORTE strategic plan and its implementation. This support improved Canadian participation in PROCINORTE and led to the development of an action plan for PROCINORTE.

Exchanging experiences in biofuels with Brazil and Mexico. IICA supported and sponsored the exchange of experiences among Canada, Brazil and Mexico. The national coordinator for the biofuels program at the Ministry of Agriculture of Brazil shared his experience with the development of technologies and policies for ethanol production as a key guest speaker at the annual Banff Conference of the Albertan Institute of Agrologists (AIA). This exchange of experiences during these events provided a basis for the receiving countries to develop a platform for their own research and technology transfer.

Facilitating participation and capacity building for biotechnology international forums for LAC. Canada,

working with IICA, offered support to LAC countries to facilitate their participation in the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and Codex Alimentarius meetings, where issues related to biotechnology were discussed. This support from IICA included the organization of meetings where specialists from LAC openly discussed issues to be addressed in the international meetings. In addition, a proposal for a biosafety capacity-building project for the Caribbean countries was prepared jointly by IICA and McGill University. As a result of these activities, the countries were able to participate actively in these international forums and were knowledgeable about the issues discussed.

Sharing the Canadian experience in defining national priorities in agricultural research to meet new challenges. IICA shared the Canadian experience in defining national priorities in agricultural research by preparing and sharing a document that was compiled following the Canadian consultation process. Under this process, AAFC consulted key players from government agencies, academic institutions and private organizations to elicit their views as to what Canada's research priorities should be. The compilation document was shared with agricultural research institutions and governments in Latin America and the Caribbean. This document provided information to those countries in LAC interested in reforming their institutions and in redefining their national agricultural research priorities.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Supporting capacity building for the development of agro-environmental policies in LAC based on the Canadian model. IICA and AAFC, with funds from the Canadian International Development Agency, developed a

series of modules on the development of agro-environmental policies to be used in capacity building events in LAC. The modules were prepared using the Canadian model and other experiences and were employed in a joint pilot training activity with the Government of Costa Rica and the IICA Office in that country. The modules are now available to the LAC countries interested in developing or modernizing their agro-environmental policies.


Facilitating the establishment of a Canada-Brazil network of researchers in natural resources and the environment. IICA facilitated the establishment of a Canada-Brazil network dedicated to promoting research in natural resources and the environment, under the leadership of Professor Richard Heck of the University of Guelph. The project is being funded by the Kinross Gold Corporation and focuses on the use and remediation of soil and water. The IICA Office in Brazil has helped facilitate the network with researchers and has a formal agreement with the University of Guelph. IICA's support in Canada and Brazil has facilitated the integration and operation of the network.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

Enhancing collaboration between IICA and Canada. IICA/Canada enhanced the collaboration between IICA and the Government of Canada by developing a partnership proposal entitled IICA-Canada Partnership for Agriculture Development in the Americas. The proposal was developed jointly with key stakeholders and is designed to provide a framework under which IICA and the Government of Canada could enhance their collaboration in the Americas on matters related to agriculture using IICA's presence, knowledge and experience.

IICA Director General Chelston W. D. Brathwaite formally presented the document to senior Canadian government officials through a letter to the ministers of agriculture and foreign affairs, and in his meetings with AAFC, CFIA and CIDA during his visit to Canada in 2008. As a result, the Canadian government and IICA have increased their collaboration, with the implementation of projects in the Caribbean (Haiti and Jamaica) and with other proposals under discussion or in the pipeline, such as an agricultural credit and insurance project in Haiti and a hemispheric policies project with CIDA.

Expansion and diversification of Canadian stakeholders. The strategy goal of the IICA/Canada office was the expansion of the number of Canadian stakeholders involved with IICA, to include more participants from the private and academic sectors as well as other, related government agencies. Between 2002 and 2008, IICA/Canada increased the number of Canadian stakeholders interested in collaborating with the LAC countries. This extended base of stakeholders now includes important players such as Pulse Canada, Manitoba Pulse Growers, Alberta Association of Agrologists, Oxfam Quebec, University of Guelph, Simon Fraser University, McGill University, University of Saskatchewan, Alberta Association of Colleges and Technological Institutes, Canadian Livestock Genetics Association, Canadian Pork Council, George Morris Center, North American Plant Protection Organization, University of Ottawa, Carleton University, Governments of Alberta and Manitoba, Environment Canada, TDV Global, La Financière Agricole du Québec, Développement Desjardins International, Highmark Renewables/Growing Power, National Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory (CFIA), Veterinarians Without Borders- Canada, Health Canada, Canadian Young Farmers Forum, AAFC Research Centers in Manitoba (beans) and Prince Edward Island (potatoes), University of PEI, and Canadian Animal Health Coalition. This expansion has also increased the number of



beneficiaries and experts from LAC. Thanks to this strategy of diversification, IICA is better positioned institutionally to provide technical cooperation and respond to the demands and needs of its stakeholders in Canada and in other IICA member countries.

5. Modernization of the Office

Integrating a participatory team into IICA/Canada able to respond to modernization challenges. In order to respond to the new cooperation model developed by the current the IICA administration, IICA/Canada developed a team capable of responding to the challenges of modernization. The strategy consisted of integrating senior AAFC officers into the IICA team, through a secondment process, for a period of two years. The strategy also included the involvement of Canadian honorary senior advisors, experts in their fields and familiar with IICA, to support the Office. This change demanded a more open management policy with a leadership role of the Representative in Canada. Another major change was the renewal and training of the administrative staff, which also included a change in their responsibilities to allow them to participate in meeting the challenges mentioned above. This transition was accomplished in coordination with, and with the participation of, IICA Headquarters. This modernization

strategy has resulted in an IICA/Canada Office that enjoys solid technical support and a modern management-administrative structure that allows it to respond to the ongoing demands, and that exercises leadership in the Northern Region.

The continued alignment of IICA/Canada with the demands for modernization of Canadian stakeholders.

The modernization strategy based on the guidelines from the IICA Administration also involved aligning the work of the Office with the demands for modernization from Canada, in order to provide high quality technical cooperation. The process began with a general assessment by an external group of private consultants that reviewed documents and undertook a general survey of Canadian stakeholders and authorities, delivering a document containing a series of guidelines and recommendations. This was followed by an internal administrative assessment, which included a review of expenses and budget allocation. The results were discussed in a brainstorming session with a group of stakeholders and partners in order to define priorities and develop a strategy. The final phase was a detailed review of all relevant agricultural documents involving priorities and policies of the Canadian government to assure our alignment with the countries interests. This process has continued with annual revisions with stakeholders as part of the IICA accountability and transparency policy, permitting IICA/Canada to adjust to ongoing process of Canadian modernization.

IICA Office in **Mexico**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Mexico

Gino Buzzetti¹

1. Introduction

During the period covered by this Report, the IICA Office in Mexico worked closely with the government authorities responsible for implementing the country's agricultural policies, in line with the Institute's strategic programs and areas. The Institute contributed to improvements in the public agricultural sector and provided support services for the execution of programs, projects and actions related to agricultural policies. These actions were carried out in the context of technical cooperation and administrative support agreements, signed primarily with the Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA), but also with other governmental and private organizations and higher agricultural education institutions.

In 2002, Mexico's new Sustainable Rural Development Law (LDRS), promulgated the previous year, came into force. This law provided a framework for the Institute's 2003-2006 Technical Cooperation Program, also known as the "*Zócalo Rural de México*" (ZRM). In 2003, in the context of the "Dialogue for the Countryside," work groups comprising producers' organizations, peasant groups, and various Federal government institutions participated in a discussion and consensus-building process, which resulted in the National Agreement for the Countryside (ANC). This

Agreement defined a State policy aimed at achieving the comprehensive, competitive and equitable development of Mexico's rural areas. In 2004, IICA prepared a document for the ANC, which analyzes the impact of the new United States Farm Bill and of the Free Trade Agreement on Mexican agriculture. That same year, the enabling regulations of the LDRS were approved, facilitating the Institute's participation in various sustainable development projects with a territorial approach.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Mexico

One of the most important actions of IICA's National Agenda was the "*Zócalo Rural de México*" (ZRM), implemented between 2003 and 2007. Its aim was to facilitate the transfer and exchange of innovative experiences and knowledge among the country's different territories and their stakeholders, within the framework of the LDRS. It also included projects such as the design of the Masters Degree and Diploma programs in Territorial Rural Development, and a project to implement measurement indicators for the monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of the Municipal Rural Development Councils.

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In 2005, in the context of the institutional modernization process, IICA submitted - and discussed with the respective authorities - the results of an evaluation of two of SAGARPA's strategic institutions: the National Institute for Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP) and the National Agrifood Health, Safety and Quality Service (SENASICA). IICA also prepared an analysis of the *Programa Especial Concurrente-PEC* (Special Concerted Program for Sustainable Rural Development), conducted a study to assess the efficiency of public spending in rural areas of Mexico and carried out a prospective study of the institutions created by the Sustainable Rural Development Law (this last study commissioned by the Chamber of Deputies).

In 2007 and 2008, IICA supported efforts to strengthen SAGARPA's Agrifood Information Service (SIAP-SAGARPA), through the National Information System for Sustainable Rural Development (PSNIDRUS) and its general components, by providing assistance with studies, training and dissemination within the coffee and sugar production chains, which are strategic for 12 of Mexico's states.

In the area of education and training, IICA was actively involved in creating the Masters Degree and the Diploma course in Rural Development Management. The Masters Degree aims to provide the theoretical and practical bases for capacity building in territorial planning, management and development. The Masters program is imparted at the Postgraduate School and receives support from nine of the country's most prestigious national research and training institutions.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

With IICA's support, SENASICA carried out an external evaluation of institutional performance, utilizing the "Evaluation, vision and common action" tool developed by the Institute.

The Institute provided training in the diagnosis and laboratory testing of diseases, through technical meetings, courses, seminars, and national and international workshops. It also coordinated fact-finding missions, consultancies and internships for laboratory personnel. In 2007, IICA provided technical assistance for the implementation of an epidemiological surveillance project and the application of geographic information systems (GIS).

After signing a new General Technical Cooperation Agreement with SAGARPA in 2007, IICA supported three operational projects implemented by SENASICA. The first involved the mass production of sterile fruit flies at the MOSCAFRUT facility in the State of Chiapas, which produces around 220 million specimens of "Mexican fly" (*Anastrepha ludens*), 50 million of "West Indian fruit fly" (*A. obliqua*) and 50 million individuals of the *Diachasmimorpha longicaudata* parasitoid each week. A second program, MOSCAMED, was aimed at detecting and eradicating Mediterranean Fly (*Ceratitis capitata*) in the border areas with Guatemala in order to prevent this pest from establishing itself and spreading in Mexican territory.

The third program, "Technical support to prevent the introduction of exotic or under campaign pests and diseases

in Mexico,” involved implementing inspection procedures for agricultural products at the country’s ports and airports, to prevent the introduction of pests that affect international trade. In 2008, a training program was carried out with inspectors stationed in the country’s ports, airports and border posts, using materials in DVD format.

To minimize the risk of introducing exotic diseases that affect livestock production, IICA supported an inspection program for imports of de-boned and matured meat from Uruguay. As a result, there is now a permanent team of four Mexican inspectors responsible for overseeing the application of risk mitigation and safety measures for imported meat products. IICA also collaborated with a program to detect toxic residues in samples of imported meat.

Similarly, with IICA’s support, SENASICA prepared “General guidelines on inspection procedures” for 14 different plant products and AHFS officials received training to ensure that fruits imported from Chile, the United States and Argentina comply with phytosanitary standards.

During this period IICA participated in six Technical Committees and two Work Groups of the National Advisory Council on Animal Health (CONASA), which discussed recommendations on animal health and public health policy and submitted these to the Animal Health Authority. In addition, IICA provided technical assistance for the operation of the National Advisory Council on Plant Health (CONACOFI).

In addition, the Institute provided technical support to the National Advisory Committee on the Standardization of Animal Health Protection (CONAPROZ) and the National Advisory Committee on the Standardization of Phytosanitary Protection (CONAPROF) in drawing up Mexico’s Official Standards and in reviewing and updating these standards.

Between 2003 and 2007, IICA supported SENASICA in developing a program for the Regional Monitoring and Control of Agricultural Health Inspection Offices (OISA) and Federal Internal Verification Points (PVIF).

In 2008, in partnership with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnia of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the University of Michigan, IICA organized the seminar “The eco-health connection: new approaches to human health, animal health and the environment,” in which 35 technicians from different institutions participated.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

In this thematic area, IICA prepared documents and studies and implemented training activities at the request of various government institutions. It also provided horizontal cooperation through forums and technical meetings.

In order to promote the competitiveness of agriculture, the Institute offered a training course on participatory approaches for enhancing the competitiveness of agrifood systems, and contributed to a study on “Agricultural Competitiveness: an agrifood chains approach”.

IICA also prepared a study on the impact of the United States Farm Security and Rural Investment Act (Farm Bill 2002) on the Mexican agricultural sector, and a study on the establishment of the Mexican Center for Agribusiness Development, *Fundación México Fértil*, “Diagnosis and prognosis for the business plan: Trends in Agribusiness”.

In support of the ZRM, IICA prepared a proposal for “An optimal model of public intervention: the bean market in

Mexico,” together with a market study on bean prices. In addition, 27 documents were published on different topics related to agricultural trade and production.

The Institute participated in the organization of the Seventh International Expo of Non-Traditional Agricultural products in Guadalajara, in 2003, and in the Second Organic Fair.

IICA produced a compact disk containing the presentations of a training module on localized agrifood systems (SIAL), entitled “Localized agrifood systems: an option for strengthening rural agroindustries in the context of globalization”.

In support of the General Directorate for Agricultural Development of SAGAR, the Institute prepared the proposal “Dynamic information system and analysis of the agricultural sector (SIAPA).” IICA also prepared 11 documents to support the agricultural statistics system and elaborated a preliminary proposal for a Law on Rural Storage that was analyzed and approved by the Secretary of State for Agriculture.

With regard to horizontal cooperation, the IICA Office in Mexico organized a course at the Faculty of Earth Sciences of the National University of Costa Rica (UNA), and supported the Association of Agronomy Schools of MERCOSUR and the Secretariat of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) in the implementation of the Second Regional Workshop on International Policies and Agricultural Trade, held in Santiago de Chile.

In addition, the IICA Office in Mexico supported the following activities: visits by four missions of representatives from Panama’s public and private sectors to discuss the issue of trade negotiations and the necessary policies to accompany the transition to free trade; two missions from Peru and Ecuador attended workshops on “Experiences of bilateral negotiations

with the United States”, and two lectures on “The impact of NAFTA on Mexico’s agricultural sector” and “Experiences in agricultural negotiations between Mexico-United States;” in support of the IICA Office in the Dominican Republic, a training course on international trade negotiations was organized for that country’s Ministry of Agriculture officials.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

As part of efforts to strengthen rural communities, IICA, together with various federal government institutions, organized the following events:

- International Seminar on Capacity Building in Rural Territories, in partnership with the National Training Institute for the Rural Sector, A. C. (Inca Rural).
- Third International Meeting (2004) of the Technical Committee on Statistics and Geographic Information for Sustainable Rural Development (CTEIGDRUS).
- Special Congress of Latin American Organizations of Small Producers and Peasant Farmers, convened by Mexico’s National Peasant Confederation (CNC).
- Seminar “Toward the consolidation of an inter-institutional post-graduate program in rural development with a territorial approach.”
- International Seminar: “From rural development to territorial development,” in the context of the Masters Degree in Territorial Rural Development.
- Second International Seminar on Capacity Building in Rural Territories.

- International Seminar: “Rural development and the agrifood sector: future strategies.”

IICA produced several publications on these issues, including:

- *“Construyendo el desarrollo rural en los territorios de México”* (“Building sustainable rural development in Mexico’s territories”), SAGARPA-IICA- INCA (2005).
- *“Prospects for the institutions created by the Sustainable Rural Development Law”*, Center for Studies on Sustainable Rural Development and Food Sovereignty (CEDRSSA) of the Chamber of Deputies of the Mexican Congress, IICA (2007).

In 2007, with the change of Federal government authorities at the end of 2006, IICA and SAGARPA negotiated the terms of a new General Technical Cooperation Agreement for the period 2007-2012. In this context, four operational programs were also designed: MOSCAFRUT, MOSCAMED, a program to prevent the introduction and spread of exotic pests and diseases, and a project to develop agricultural information systems with SIAP-SAGARPA. As a result, the IICA Office in Mexico has assumed new administrative and management responsibilities for different initiatives, which are being implemented in partnership with the Mexican Government authorities to promote the wellbeing and progress of Mexico’s agricultural and rural sectors.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA supported the participation of Mexico’s National Institute of Forestry, Agriculture and Livestock Research (INIFAP) in the following events: Second Meeting of the

Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO); the organization of the International Symposium on “Biotechnology and how plants respond to stress”, in partnership with the Mid American International Agricultural Consortium (MIAC) and INIFAP; Meeting for the coordination of international projects with Texas A&M University; Exhibition of Agricultural Technology and First International Meeting of Agricultural Research Institutions, held in Brazil; Mid Term Meeting of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR); First International Sorghum Symposium; meetings of the Governing Council of FORAGRO and the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO); First International Rice Symposium; the Twenty-first National Congress, Ninth National Course and First Technology Expo on Biological Pest Control; Meeting on the Modernization of Coffee Production, held in Colombia; First Latin American Symposium on Agroforestry Systems and Second National Meeting on Lowland Deciduous Forests.

In partnership with INIFAP, IICA is implementing the Integrated Program for the Control of the Moniliasis in Cacao, which prioritizes two lines of work: introducing disease-tolerant or resistant varieties of cacao, and training technical staff and farmers in the management of cacao plantations.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The Institute continued to support the Masters Degree in Territorial Rural Development, which focuses on the management, conservation and sustainable use of resources. The Masters Degree covers topics such as environmental policies, management, administration and economy, addressed from a theoretical, practical and methodological perspective.



The Institute prepared a project proposal that includes an assessment of environmental services and the inclusion of best practices as a condition for granting subsidies and assistance, based on the standards defined by the Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT).

In partnership with SEMARNAT, IICA helped to organize and implement an event entitled Monterrey Bridge: the Mexico Action Summit, a meeting to discuss various proposals for reducing rural poverty and conserving biodiversity and the environment. It also provided technical and financial support for a meeting to discuss “Poverty, agriculture and biodiversity: a call to action,” and for the seminar on “Environmental Services,” in which participants reviewed successful experiences in agro-environmental management and analyzed successful initiatives by eco-businesses to sell environmental services.

The Institute also participated in the organization of the Sixth Congress of the Mexican Association of Rural Studies, held in Veracruz, Mexico, in 2005.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

In 2006, the IICA/CIRAD/CATIE consortium was selected to implement the Project for Integrated and Sustainable Social Development (PRODESI), financed by the European Union and the State Government of Chiapas, and focusing on the development of rural micro-enterprises, environmental management and geographic information systems. The work carried out by CIRAD and IICA mainly involved the application of the CADIAC methodology (Chains and Dialogue for Action) in different regions of Mexico - an approach that has been widely disseminated in Latin America - and promoting

the development of rural agroindustry as a mechanism for revitalizing rural and local development.

Based on the cooperation agreement signed between IICA and the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, a Masters Degree program in Rural Agroindustry, Territorial Development and Agro-tourism was developed in conjunction with the Institute of Political Science of Toulouse, research and cooperation institutions such as IICA, CIRAD and the Cooperative Program for Agro-industrial Rural Development (PRODAR). This Masters program is directed at Mexican and Latin American students.

IICA also implemented development projects in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca in partnership with the Ayu Foundation, the Mixteca Development Institute, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and CIRAD. Parameters were established for measuring the potential of the natural resource base and for assessing the relative sustainability of the production systems implemented by the Ayu Foundation in that region.

Through SEMARNAT's Rural Prosperity and Conservation Initiative, the Institute and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a project aimed at rural communities in the protected areas of Oaxaca and Chiapas. This involved the preparation of municipal rural development plans with an emphasis on natural resource management, in line with existing legislation on this issue.

Through the Technical and Scientific Cooperation Agreement signed between the IICA Office in Mexico and the Secretariat of Foreign Relations, AHFS professionals from Trinidad & Tobago, Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis received training at SAGARPA's Fruit Fly Eradication Program. Mexican specialists also advised the Caribbean countries on issues related to

sugar cane and cacao production and pink mealy bug. At the request of the Government of the Dominican Republic, IICA provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of Belize for the modernization of its agricultural health systems.

In support of the MAG/IDB/FOSEMAG project, and with IICA's collaboration, SAGARPA specialists provided technical assistance in identifying priorities and planning plant and animal health activities. Some 45 professionals from Nicaragua's Ministry of Agriculture received technical training in Mexican academic institutions.

IICA organized an international workshop on organizational strengthening in response to changes in the higher agricultural education system, in which 28 professors from nine Central American and Caribbean countries participated. In addition, five workshops were imparted on strategic planning, curriculum development and analysis of agricultural profiles, with the participation of 86 professors of the University of Chapingo and of other national universities. IICA assisted the Autonomous University of Chihuahua (UACH) in the implementation of the Work Plan of the Doctorate in Higher Agricultural Education Sciences and the Diplomas in Agricultural Education.

In 2006, the Institute, in conjunction with technical teams of the World Bank, FAO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), published the document "Priority issues for agrifood policy and rural development in Mexico."

SENASICA has been one of IICA's main partners and has implemented joint efforts with international, hemispheric and regional organizations to promote animal health, public health and food safety. For example, in 2008 IICA, together with the General Directorate of Agrifood Safety and Quality

of SENASICA, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA), organized the seminar "Current situation, challenges and outlook for food safety in the agriculture, livestock, aquaculture and fisheries sectors." This event took place in Mexico City and was attended by 300 professionals.

Together with the regional offices of FAO and the OIE (World Organization for Animal Health), IICA participated in the Seventh Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on Avian Health, held in Guadalajara, Jalisco, to discuss surveillance and prevention measures against avian influenza (AI).

In 2005, in collaboration with PAHO and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of UNAM, IICA organized a course on geo-referencing and epidemiological surveillance. The Institute also organized three virtual seminars on food safety, animal health and plant health, in support of international reference organizations such as the Codex Alimentarius, the OIE and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Similarly, IICA facilitated the participation of the president of Mexico's National Animal Health Council (CONASA) in the Professional Accreditation Seminar, held in Montevideo, Uruguay, and at a meeting convened by PAHO-WHO in Mexico to analyze the status of national programs for the prevention of brucellosis and zoonotic tuberculosis. The Institute also supported the National Bioethics Committee of Mexico with a presentation on food supply and food safety at the International Bioethics Conference.

Thanks to IICA's support, a representative of SENASICA participated in a seminar on the safety of foods produced by biotechnological means, imparted by the Pan-American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPAZ) and PAHO-WHO, and held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In 2008, a



national meeting was organized to discuss the challenges and outlook for plant, animal and fisheries safety, in collaboration with international technical cooperation organizations such as PAHO and OIRSA. Together with PAHO and OIRSA and with the support of UNAM's University Food Program, the Institute organized two courses on the microbiology of fresh meat and meat products. These events were attended by 100 participants.

In 2007, IICA, together with FAO, the World Bank and ECLAC, published the document "Priority issues for agrifood policy and rural development in Mexico," followed by another document on "Experiences of evaluation of agricultural policy in Mexico." The Institute also provided technical cooperation for the transfer of the SIAL methodology and for the establishment of a dairy cluster in the north of the State of Mexico, in collaboration with UNAM's Research Center in Agricultural Sciences (CICA).

Nine case studies were completed on business interactions between farmers and supermarkets. This work combines the efforts of researchers and professionals of the University of Chapingo, the University of Guelph in Canada, and of Mexican labor and business organizations, such as

the National Peasants' Confederation (CNC) and the National Association of Self-service and Department Stores (ANTAD).

5. Modernization of the Office

Given the demands placed upon IICA by the National Cooperation Agenda, a major effort was undertaken to improve the Office's capacity and infrastructure. This process continued throughout the 2002-2008 period and included personnel changes, capacity building in specific areas, new tools and mechanisms for implementing actions and, in general, a reengineering of the IICA Office in Mexico. In 2008, IICA contracted the firm Price Waterhouse Cooper to carry out an assessment of the Office's needs and provide advisory services. The firm proposed an overhaul of the Office's instruments, personnel and staff training requirements, and defined the processes to be followed in the different areas of action. The Office now has the necessary capacity and processes to meet current demands, and this has produced positive reactions among our strategic partners and counterparts.

IICA Office in the United States of America



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in the United States of America

David Hatch¹

1. Introduction

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has a special historical relationship with the USA. The U.S. Department of Agriculture was instrumental in founding the Institute in 1942 and over the years has provided nearly 60% of its core operating resources to promote the advancement of science and cooperation in agriculture throughout the hemisphere. IICA's partnership with USDA and other agencies in the United States has undergone renewal due precisely to agricultural globalization issues and the importance of trade to U.S. agriculture and food safety to U.S. consumers.

The role of IICA in the United States of America (USA) is to build an active and diversified constituency for national, regional and multinational IICA programs within the USA, leveraging resources, influence and knowledge to promote hemispheric food security and rural prosperity. It has enhanced relationships with existing and new partners by means of comprehensive dialogues on critical issues such as food security, climate change, poverty reduction, agricultural insurance and risk management, technology transfer, and knowledge management. IICA in the USA facilitates linkages between U.S. institutional, financial, professional and technical resources of the public and private sector to improve the capacity to trade in the hemisphere.

However, the Institute in the United States also works with other regional and country Offices to identify opportunities, generate resources and seek partnerships with multilateral and bilateral international organizations and donor agencies, universities, foundations and the private sector. It serves to advance new partnership arrangements - and strengthen existing ones - to promote rural prosperity, food security and sustainable development throughout the hemisphere. The Directorate of Strategic Partnerships (DSP), also managed by IICA in the United States, develops cooperative agreements and mutually beneficial partnerships that provide other forms of support to IICA management units and country offices so that producers and policy makers in all 34 IICA Member States can enhance their capacities for development and change. Over the years, the DSP continued to furnish leadership and contacts to leverage resources for agricultural and rural development actions.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas

Actions were undertaken to expand the capacities and opportunities of U.S. public institutions, the private sector and centers of learning in technology and innovation to

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improve rural communities and agriculture in the Americas. The importance of agriculture and agricultural health in the Americas was strengthened by organizing various conferences and forums on themes of hemispheric integration, regional trade and agricultural health. Additional events were organized where IICA experts provided information and analysis of current trends regarding agricultural health, food safety, trade and agribusiness, as well as education and rural development. Quarterly informational sessions were also coordinated with the Caribbean Central American Action (CCAA) to help promote dialogue on specific topics. With the Organization of American States (OAS), the Institute organized an ambassadorial briefing on avian influenza. The event, held in collaboration with the OAS and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) served to address the potential threat of a pandemic. Another important development was the establishment of “IICA Day” at the OAS. As a result of the above, the OAS, an important strategic partner, recommended that IICA be afforded the opportunity to inform the members of the OAS Permanent Council and representatives within the Inter-American System of activities and areas of concern related to agriculture in the hemisphere. This annual activity has been in place since 2005 and continues to reap benefits for the Institute and influence the development of agriculture in the Member States. It ensures that IICA’s programs and the challenges facing the agricultural sector are addressed and promotes the Institute with the ambassadors, agricultural attaches and other representatives from the permanent and observer missions to the OAS. In an activity with the donor community, three project proposals were developed and presented to the Inter-American Development Bank, positioning IICA favorably within the bank and the donor community. In efforts to increase the visibility of the Institute’s programs, IICA maintained a consistent communications effort. At given opportunities, target audiences and the general

public were informed via radio interviews, press conferences, organized events and the dissemination of press releases.

Strategies were shared in relation to food security and agricultural insurance. IICA in the U.S. worked diligently to heighten awareness of the importance of developing initiatives and strategies related to food security and agricultural insurance.

IICA Day 2008 brought together ambassadors to the OAS, representatives from the public and private sector, academia and civil society to hear the sobering realities of science-based observations by Dr. Thomas C. Schelling, 2005 Nobel Laureate in Economics and Distinguished Professor at the University of Maryland, on the threat to agriculture due to climate change. On the heels of this event, IICA began to lay the groundwork for an upcoming institutional strategy on food security.

Similarly, the Institute led the initiative for the signing of an agreement between IICA and the World Food Programme (WFP) to help rural communities implement projects aimed at addressing the challenges posed by food insecurity and climate change. One initiative recently launched under the agreement is the Purchase for Progress (P4P) project, which calls for using the purchasing power of the WFP to acquire the food produced by low-income farmers and distributing it among the beneficiaries of the WFP’s humanitarian aid programs.

In recent years, interest in promoting and strengthening agricultural insurance has been growing in the region, basically as an instrument that contributes to making agricultural production more competitive in response to trade liberalization. The Institute responded to a mandate issued in 2005 in Guayaquil, Ecuador, instructing IICA to assist countries in the development and establishment of agriculture insurance

programs in the region. Agricultural insurance is an essential risk management instrument for improving competitiveness, stabilizing producers' income, preventing the loss of capital and facilitating access to insurance and credit.

Currently, IICA in the U.S. is assisting a number of member countries with agricultural insurance and risk management programs. In some cases, IICA's role has been to provide a review of existing insurance programs to ensure they are as effective as possible. In other cases, we are helping ministries of agriculture design insurance programs. We have also advised ministries of agriculture on the importance of agricultural insurance to the agriculture economy, fundamental insurance concepts, and what steps should be taken to create a successful and enduring risk management program. These efforts led to a regional conference on agricultural insurance that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Additionally, the Institute helped secure a commitment from a number of Spanish insurance companies (ENESA, AGROSEGUROS and POLITECNICA) to providing advisory or consulting services in developing agricultural insurance programs for Latin America and the Caribbean.

IICA in the U.S. provided backstop support to the Director of the Summit of the Americas process during the meetings of the Joint Summit Working Group and the Summit Implementation Review Group. Support was also provided to the U.S. ministerial delegate assigned to provide follow-up to the summit process as it relates to agriculture and IICA's mandate to develop and implement the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan of Action.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA stakeholders identified agricultural health and food safety as the top priority for the National Agenda. Joint activities were held with strategic partners including the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Food and Information Council (IFIC), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), PAHO and the private sector, to name but a few. The Institute worked with the IDB and the World Bank to promote the Institute's Performance Vision and Strategy (PVS) instrument for use as a tool to help build veterinary capacity at the country level. As a result, more than 10 countries in the Americas are currently using the tool to help develop their capacity.

Furthermore, the team contributed to raising awareness of animal health and food safety concerns in the Americas by initiating, and aiding in the successful completion of, the fifteenth Inter-American Meeting at the Ministerial Level on Health and Agriculture (RIMSA), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Extensive meetings with officials from USDA, Agri-Food Canada and Mexico's Secretariat of Agriculture made it possible to mobilize new resources for continued efforts that support delegations from all the Member States of the Americas to participate in the meetings of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures. IICA also facilitated the attendance of delegates from targeted countries to the CODEX meeting in Chiba, Japan. The Institute hosted hemisphere consultation meetings before and during the formal Codex meeting and provided needed technical assistance to delegates

(24 participants from seven Member States at the pre-meeting). This activity led to a deeper understanding of essential elements of food safety that were used in the meetings of CODEX and its results.

IICA provided support and input in the design of the Food Safety Institute of the Americas, an initiative promoted by the Food Safety and Inspection Service of USDA.

IICA in the U.S. was actively involved in the organization and implementation of events related to the crisis surrounding bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) or mad cow disease, at the request of USDA. To this end, a seminar was organized for the OAS Ambassadors and IICA stakeholders in Washington, D.C. to learn about the steps being taken by USDA, IICA and the private sector so that market access could be reestablished. IICA also worked with PAHO to include a one-day session on BSE at the International Foot and Mouth Disease Conference held in Houston. Both these events provided USDA with an opportunity to describe their ongoing efforts to analyze the situation of BSE in the United States. Additionally, IICA facilitated private-sector involvement between CARGILL and the National Poultry Association at the conference. This positioned the Institute as a key player among the private sector in the U.S. and as a driver in the development of agriculture in the hemisphere.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

Facilitation of senior IICA officials as presenters in regional and international conferences remains a high priority. One such opportunity presented itself at the first Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit, held in Washington D.C. The Institute also provided support for the organization and implementation

of the Summit Expo, where agrotourism reading material was displayed and a video was shown of the activities taking place in the region, thus promoting awareness of the IICA's work in the Americas. This summit provided a significant opportunity to develop the Caribbean tourism infrastructure, thus reinforcing the Institute as a credible and premier partner of choice.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

The purpose and objectives of Supporting Rural Flood Victims in Gonaives, Haiti, included providing immediate support to flood victims and communities affected by the situation by creating temporary jobs and developing local institutional capacities to manage and coordinate those efforts, with an eye to the communities becoming key actors in watershed management and disaster prevention. IICA in the United States worked closely with IICA in Haiti and the OAS to help address the needs of Haiti's people and enable them to live better lives. This emergency response project provided jobs that reconstitute productive infrastructure and aid in reducing future disaster risks. Communities in both Desbarrieres and Ennery identified these as high priorities. In the future, IICA will be using project resources to help develop and strengthen the capacities of local organizations to manage the relief effort and prevent future disasters. A similar project developed for another Haitian region, Petit Goave, has received funding through the European Union.

Most recently, the Institute signed an agreement with the governments of Brazil and Argentina and with Oxfam, Quebec to develop and execute projects in Haiti where strategic partnerships are welcomed for food security advancement.

The Institute promoted efforts to link agriculture to the tourism sector in the Caribbean region. By organizing a technical presentation on agrotourism at partners such as PAHO, IDB and the World Bank, senior officials were able to better understand conditions for farmers and its ties to the wellness and health industry.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA signed an agreement with a consortium of private-sector companies that advocates the industry's positions to elected officials and regulators. The agreement called for cooperation in the adoption of agro-biotechnology in the Americas, as part of IICA's Hemispheric Biotechnology and Biosafety Program. As a result, and after a work plan had been developed, IICA organized a hemispheric technical meeting on responsibility and compensation in Brazil that included discussion of aspects of the implementation of Article 27 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). This meeting was a necessary preparatory step for the world meeting convened by the CPB Secretariat in Montreal, Canada. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), USDA and BIO helped fund the convocation of the meeting and 15 countries from the hemisphere took part. IICA presented a working document on the legal aspects of implementation of Article 27 of the CPB, which served as the basis for meeting discussion.

In other areas, the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO) has been an integral link for IICA in the United States and its links with the Inter-American Bank. IICA has supported the expansion of FONTAGRO'S hemispheric efforts by facilitating administrative support, technical assistance and logistical support.

The Office in Spain continues to strengthen its communication and outreach activities. At least five events showcasing the Institute's work were organized and targeted at European national and multinational organizations. Weekly news from the Institute is disseminated by the Office among national and European organizations within the region. Furthermore, the Office continues to promote the diversification of agricultural products from Central America and Venezuela with European agencies.

In 2007, a cooperation agreement was signed between IICA and Murcia to promote development and transfer of greenhouse technology to Central America and the Caribbean. An initiative with COINSA, a private greenhouse manufacturer, and the Ministry of Agriculture in Costa Rica to develop an integrated greenhouse operation that includes small farmers has been supported by the Office in Spain. The initiative has been used to promote greenhouse technology with Caribbean island ministries, multilateral lenders and reinsurers. The Office in Spain has moved to expand IICA's presence in Europe to the EC as well as other bilateral agencies in the UK, Netherlands and France, among others.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partnerships

The Institute has enhanced relationships with existing as well as with new partners by means of comprehensive dialogues on critical issues such as food security, climate change, poverty reduction, agrotourism, agricultural insurance and risk management, technology transfer and knowledge management. Among the new partnerships, IICA was able to



secure a US\$400,000 grant from the IDB's Regional PGP, which aims to enhance the capacity of the Caribbean labor force to improve competitiveness of the agriculture sector. As a result, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago have joined forces to collectively develop a regional strategic plan that will include a toolbox with public policy guidelines, an information-sharing system and a set of pilot training events.

IICA signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of California and the College of Natural Resources to promote two-way learning, scientific exchange and innovation in the fields of sustainable agriculture, rural development, environmental management and collaborative leadership. IICA will also be collaborating with Cornell University and the University of California, Berkeley in the preparation of case studies in agriculture as part of the Agriculture Bridge Program financed by the USDA.

IICA and the Alberta Association of Colleges and Technical Institutes agreed on several initiatives after IICA participated in a conference organized by the Canadian Young Farmers Forum.

Cooperation with other regional and international organizations has been a focal point and instrumental in raising the visibility and interaction with regional and international organizations over the last eight years. To this end, exploratory sessions were held with senior officials from organizations such as PAHO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the OAS, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the World Food Prize Foundation, the World Cocoa Foundation, Technoserve, Starbucks, CropLife America, the Economic

Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Such approaches made it possible to broaden cooperation in strategic fields that are a high priority for Member States. The synergies created have resulted in more relevant activities and have made it possible to improve efficiency and expand the coverage of services provided.

Active participation in the Institute's regional 'Caribbean Week of Agriculture' event has fostered good relations with press and media entities in the region. Each year IICA ensures that messages and results that come out of the annual event are disseminated throughout the region, thus ensuring continual dialogue on agricultural issues that can improve the lives of the peoples of the Americas. The event is usually held in cooperation with FAO, the local ministry of agriculture, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), CARICOM and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI).

With another strategic partner, the IDB, IICA has over the years collaborated to promote agricultural production, trade, food safety and agricultural health, and to reduce poverty, in public projects in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, to name but a few. Both organizations have been members of the Interagency Group for Rural Development, which promotes dialogue, training and technical support activities.

The key partnerships for IICA in the U.S. are those with the USDA, the Department of State, the World Bank and the IDB. Relationships with those institutions are productive, transparent and effective.



5. Modernization of the Office

The staff has worked with great flexibility to respond to internal requests and partner demands. The focus has been on results, transparency and accountability. Internal assessment of the Office and job responsibilities began so that the team could respond to the needs and demands of the Institute.

Additionally, during the past year, the Institute redesigned its official website and the Washington Office developed its local site to reflect the progress and activity of the Office in the U.S. and Headquarters.

The Office continued to develop institutional capacity to forge partnerships at the local level. Efforts continue to establish contacts and build relationships with a broad range of potential partners from the international agricultural and rural development community, including multilateral and bilateral agencies, private enterprise, nongovernmental organizations, trade associations and key individuals.

IICA Permanent Office for Europe



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Permanent Office for Europe

Cristina Belda¹ and Soraya Villarroya²

1. Introduction

The Permanent Office of IICA for Europe (POE) was established through a specific agreement with the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA), resulting from an initial cooperation agreement signed in 1977 between IICA and the Kingdom of Spain. The POE was inaugurated in 2001 with the mission of promoting strategic partnerships with European institutions dedicated to cooperation for development, research, the exchange of experiences and knowledge, and the funding of projects in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC).

During the 2002-2008 period, the POE introduced the Institute to the leading European institutions that provide technical cooperation and cooperation for development in the Americas. As of 2008, the POE had helped to secure €1,540,000 and US\$700,000 for the execution of cooperation projects in various LAC countries.

This report describes the results achieved by IICA through the POE.

2. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Together with the National Institute for Agricultural and Food Research and Technology (INIA), five seminars were organized on various AHFS topics including traceability, project design for planners, good agricultural practices and Ibero-American cooperation.

These training activities were implemented with joint funding from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA) and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID). MAPA provided the specialist instructors while AECID financed the stay of the participants and provided a space for the training sessions.

In 2006, the Seminar on Traceability in Beef and its Products was held in Cartagena de Indias, specifically aimed at the Andean countries. This event was so successful that the experience was replicated in other countries of the region.

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b. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA contributed to improving the technical capabilities of its member countries through education and training efforts, such as courses, seminars, exchanges and other activities, including the following:

- Seminar “Rural Development and Ibero-American Cooperation. A New Vision of Rural Development: the Territorial Approach.”
- Two seminars on Spain’s experience in rural development (2003 and 2004).
- International course on rural development (2004).
- First meeting on efforts to combat desertification, canal and watershed management (2004).
- International seminar on rural development (2005, Cartagena de Indias).
- Exchange with the National Horticultural Corporation of Costa Rica (2005).

The abovementioned training activities benefited more than 250 people from countries such as Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and the Caribbean nations. The participants included officials from the ministries of agriculture, national agricultural technology institutes and government institutions, as well as IICA specialists. The participants improved their knowledge of new approaches to

rural development (territorial approach), and the LEADER methodology, with a view to applying these in their countries’ rural development programs.

In addition, seven international courses on rural development (three of these directed at Central Americans) took place. The students analyzed and compared their own countries’ experiences with those of Spain in the areas of policies, instruments, organization, strategies and methodologies for rural development. The courses enabled participants to update their knowledge on new approaches to rural development, based on their own experiences and on case studies carried out during field visits to different communities in Spain. This initiative was jointly funded by MAPA and the AECID. MAPA provided specialists and facilitated the space for the training courses while the AECID covered the participants’ travel costs and financed their stay in Spain.

MAPA and the AECID also organized two meetings to exchange experiences of rural development with a territorial approach. The seminar on “Rural development and Ibero-American Cooperation: a New Vision of Rural Development: the Territorial Approach” was financed by MAPA and the Agrarian Association Agrarian of Young Farmers (ASAJA).

c. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

IICA obtained financial resources from the AECID (€340,000 in 2006 and US\$700,000 in 2007 and 2008) for the Regional Program “Protection of Coffee Quality, Linked to its Origin”, implemented in Panama, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica. The program is aimed at regionalizing the measures adopted in different countries and reinforcing the regional integration process. The idea is to strengthen regional coffee institutions

by taking greater advantage of value added processes and protecting coffee quality linked to its origin.

Services were provided to IICA by institutions such as the National Farm Insurance Corporation (*Empresa Nacional de Seguros Agrarios- ENESA*), whose Director General gave two presentations for IICA and included the Institute as a partner of Indra Systems to disseminate the final report of the European mini-project “Jaguar” (Remote Sensing as an Instrument to Manage Risks and to Develop Agrarian Insurance in the Rural Sector) in the Americas.

d. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

In 2006 the European Union provided financial resources (€1,200,000) for the program “Forest planning and management: sustainable use of timber and non-timber forest resources, under organizational strengthening models, as a development strategy for the municipalities of San Jose del Guaviare and El Retorno, Department of Guaviare, in Colombia.”

3. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

The most significant actions in this area included the signing of cooperation agreements with important institutions, the organization of seminars and events, IICA's participation in various activities organized by leading cooperation agencies and visits to various institutions for the purpose of introducing IICA and its work.

The Institute also strengthened its relations with European technical cooperation and cooperation for development institutions, international organizations, Spanish and European donors and with other entities. Among the agreements signed were the following:

a. Cooperation Agreements Signed with Government Institutions

- Cooperation agreement between IICA and the Ibero-American Program for Science and Technology for Development (CYTED), aimed at improving member countries' access to technology in order to benefit agriculture and rural development (2002).
- Framework agreement signed with the AECID with the objective of providing a framework for more specific future agreements, operation contracts or letters of understanding, aimed at addressing common concerns, at the proposal of one or other of the signatory institutions, in areas of cooperation linked to the agricultural and rural development sectors, as well as in agricultural health and food safety (2002).
- Specific cooperation agreement signed between MAPA and IICA, for the purpose of expanding technical cooperation in the areas of rural development, rural tourism, irrigated croplands, integrated production systems, agribusiness, negotiations in supranational integration processes, traceability and agricultural health and food safety (2005).
- Agreement with the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (2003).

- Cooperation agreement on sustainable development programs signed between IICA and the Government of the Autonomous Community of the Region of Murcia (2007).
- Agreement with the Agrifood Research and Technology Institute of Catalonia (IRTA) (2007).


b. Cooperation Agreements Signed with Non-Governmental Organizations

- Cooperation agreement with the Rural Women's Federation (FEMUR), an NGO made up of local rural women's associations (2005).
- Agreement with the World Rural Forum (WRF) to improve access by IICA's Member States to technology for the development of agriculture and the rural milieu (2003).
- Agreement with the Association of Rural Women and Families (AMFAR) to strengthen the institutional capacity of public and private-sector organizations working with rural women in Spain, Latin America and the Caribbean (2003).

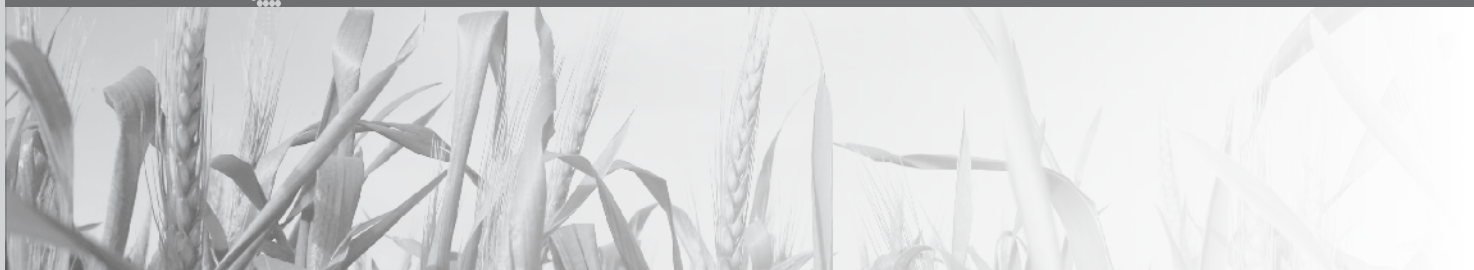
c. Cooperation Agreements Signed with Private Companies

- General Technical Cooperation Agreement with the Agrarian Technologies and Services Corporation (TRAGSATEC).
- Agreement with the Spanish Federation of Food and Beverage Industries and with Reed Exhibitions (2003).
- General cooperation agreement between IICA and the Arca Consortium, with two main objectives: firstly, to promote institutional strengthening and capacity building in public and private institutions responsible for trade policies, administrative reform, open markets and exports; and, secondly, to promote the identification, implementation and evaluation of development projects in different aspects of institutional reform and administrative modernization. (2007).

Finally, IICA organized a day of celebrations to commemorate IICA's 60th anniversary, inviting representatives of the diplomatic corps, MAPA, AECID, CYTED and other partner organizations.



IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the **Southern Region**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA's Contribution to the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Southern Region

Gonzalo E. Gonzalez¹

1. Introduction

IICA's contribution between 2002 and 2008 can be divided into two periods: before and after the establishment of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS). This report summarizes the main results achieved by the Institute, in accordance with its medium-term plans (MTP).

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in the Southern Region

Establishment and strengthening the CAS and its support groups, as a regional system for the coordination of the agricultural sector and cooperation activities, proved to be a milestone in the repositioning of agriculture in the countries of the Southern Region in the regional and global context. The region is now recognized worldwide

as an agrifood producer. It also plays a leading role in the coalitions of countries that define the international agreements on agriculture, such as the Cairns Group and the G-20, which is active in the negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

IICA has provided clear, continuous support to the CAS, both in its capacity as the Technical and Administrative Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and most of its regional technical support bodies, and by means of specific technical cooperation actions implemented at the request of the ministers to address priority issues in the region's agricultural sector.

The regional policy of the CAS focuses on seven strategic emphases: a) new trends in food markets; b) animal and plant health; c) sustainable agricultural development and climate change; d) family agriculture; e) international negotiations and agreements; f) biofuels; and, g) technological innovation, development and research. The Institute was responsible for disseminating information about these emphases among the institutional frameworks of the various countries and international organizations.

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Since 2003, the Cabinet of the CAS has held 16 regular and 8 special meetings. IICA has provided constant technical and operational support to the ministers, who have adopted resolutions that have positioned the sector at the regional and global levels and helped to establish guidelines for international cooperation.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Institute supported the organization of national and regional courses, seminars and workshops for key public, private and academic actors responsible for the production, control and certification of, and trade in, agrifood products. The aim was to enhance the capabilities for implementing the international agreements of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Codex Alimentarius and the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP).

Training in the use of the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool made it possible to assess the performance of the agricultural health services and develop a common vision and prioritized strategies for actions in the areas of animal health, plant protection and food safety.

The Institute strengthened the operation of the national committees on sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) through the sharing of experiences and cooperation among the region's national agricultural health services.

IICA's support for the establishment of joint activities among countries of the region made it possible to improve the control of emerging and reemerging pests and diseases that pose a threat to animal, plant and public health.

The Institute prepared proposals and projects to strengthen the capacity to prevent transboundary diseases; supported the development of traceability guides and systems; and took part in the preparing of legislative bills and regulations to update, modernize and consolidate agricultural and plant health and food safety services.

Other important results included:

- IICA's support for the formulation of the Regional Program to Eradicate Foot-and-mouth Disease
- Co-organization, with FAO, of the First Hemispheric Meeting on International Border Control in Animal and Plant Health
- The Institute's participation in efforts to eradicate the fruit fly in border areas, under the Chile-Peru Binational Agreement
- IICA's active participation in the strengthening of the institutional framework and modernization of the quality and animal and plant health services (SENACSA and SENAVE) of Paraguay, in partnership with Chile's International Cooperation Agency (AGCI)
- The Institute's active support for the setting up and strengthening of the national SPS committees, to ensure the countries took part in the meetings of the WTO Committee on SPS



- IICA support for the formulating of Paraguay's Organic Agriculture Act
- Institute assistance for the formulation of the project Strengthening and Modernization of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Services and the proposals for establishment food safety agencies in Argentina, Paraguay and Chile
- The Institute's support for the preparation of pest control plans, including those for the boll weevil, the codling moth and forest pests (*sirex*), and the project Prevention of Avian Influenza in Argentina (with the World Bank)
- IICA technical assistance and coordination for the formulation of the project Prevention of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)
- IICA's support for the preparation of the project Avian Influenza and Other Transboundary Diseases, at the request of the CAS. The project was implemented with the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP) of the Southern Cone, adopting a regional and participatory approach and the mechanism of horizontal cooperation
- The Institute's collaboration in the production of the "Guide to the livestock traceability information system for animals and meat products"
- Implementation of horizontal cooperation actions in the field of agricultural health between countries in the region, to promote the strengthening of animal and plant health systems (SAG-Chile-SENACSA/SENAVE-Paraguay; SAG-Chile-ICA-Colombia)
- Strengthening of the technical capabilities of laboratories responsible for diagnosing transboundary diseases (swine fever, avian influenza and foot-and-mouth disease), in cooperation with the laboratory in Winnipeg, Canada
- Strengthening of the regional agricultural health organizations, the Plant Health Committee of the Southern Cone (COSAVE) and the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP) of the Southern Cone, to which IICA provided technical assistance and support for the operation of their secretariats.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

IICA supported the Network for the Coordination of Agricultural Policies (REDPA) and its technical groups, and the Informal Group of Agricultural Negotiators (GINA-Sur) with: a) the implementation of technical workshops to share information, reach agreement on methodologies and prepare analyses, proposals and joint positions; b) the establishment of information systems on policies and markets that the countries can access directly; c) studies on the agrifood situation, harvest forecasts and the outlook for markets of agrifood chains that are important for the region (e.g., meat, cotton and soybean); d) the preparation of analyses and proposals on the status of, and outlook for, the international agricultural negotiations, trends in agricultural policies, and the impact of global economic changes on the region's agricultural sector; and, e) the design of projects for presentation to external funding sources intended to strengthen REDPA's analysis and information capabilities.

The Institute helped prepare documents and technical studies on agricultural policies, international agricultural negotiations and the regional integration of the agricultural sector; and organize regional, interregional and national courses, seminars and workshops on those topics for government officials and technical personnel of the region's private and academic sectors.



IICA supported the efforts to strengthen alliances with strategic partners such as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the WTO, the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean (INTAL) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the European Union, France's Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and others with important activities related to policies and trade. The Institute performed this work under agreements, as a permanent observer to the bodies concerned and through the implementation of joint activities such as studies, forums, workshops and courses.

IICA helped disseminate in the Northern Region the experience acquired in coordinating policies in the Southern Region, through presentations at the meetings of the North American Agrifood Market Integration Consortium (NAAMIC).

The Institute consolidated the regional networks for the coordination of agricultural policies (REDPA) and agricultural negotiators (GINA-Sur) as mechanisms for consultation, interaction and consensus building among individuals responsible for the region's agricultural sector and trade policies. REDPA was positioned as the main advisory body of the CAS Council of Ministers, and the region's ministries of agriculture can now update the information systems on agricultural policies and markets directly.

IICA conducted a set of studies comparing the agricultural policy of the countries of the Expanded MERCOSUR and the region as a whole with those of the European Union, and studies on the state of the international agricultural negotiations and the regional integration they engendered. Furthermore, as a result of the Institute's cooperation, a group of 800 professionals

from the region's public, private and academic sectors received updating training and training in agricultural policies, international agricultural negotiations and agreements, and regional integration. IICA also formulated a one million dollar project (which was approved and financed by the IDB) to strengthen the REDPA's capabilities for analyzing policies and information systems in order to reduce agricultural risk.

At least 70 professionals from countries in the region received training via the Institute's export platforms, which afford small-scale producers access to international markets. Furthermore, IICA consolidated its partnerships with ALADI, the WTO, ECLAC, the European Union, the IDB/INTAL and CIRAD. The Institute became a permanent observer to ALADI and the WTO Aid for Trade initiative and took part in over 20 forums and technical workshops; it was also involved in the preparation of ten studies and analytical documents with its partners.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA focused on the management of rural territories and made efforts to position the territorial approach to sustainable rural development on national agendas. The approach provided a framework for implementing policies and investments in the agricultural and rural sector and seeking ways to institutionalize specific units within the ministries of agriculture to handle interaction with the sector. The main results achieved were the characterization and definition of family agriculture as a first step in designing differentiated policies for this segment of society and production; and the dissemination of the conceptual framework of the territorial approach among all the countries (initially only Brazil was using it).

IICA contributed to the preparation of the “Register of family farmers,” which was established in all the countries and shared at the Specialized Meeting on Family Agriculture (REAF), based on a survey designed with the Institute’s support. The book *La agricultura familiar en el Cono Sur* was also disseminated, which analyzes the socioeconomic status of the sector in each country of the Southern Region.

Furthermore, IICA helped institutionalize specific units for family agriculture: the Deputy Ministry for Rural Development was created in Argentina and a General Directorate for Rural Development within the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP) of Uruguay. Like the units established by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA) of Brazil (in 2000) and the INDAP of Chile, their specific task is to design, provide follow-up to and evaluate differentiated policies for the sector.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

During the period under review, IICA provided technical support to the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agrifood and Agroindustry Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) and was directly involved in its management. The PROCI’s five strategic lines of action were designed to help: a) guarantee environmental sustainability; b) assure the quality of agrifood chains; c) foster the use of modern technologies to improve competitiveness; c) expand the development of organic agriculture; and, d) promote inclusion and the sustainable development of family agriculture.

The results achieved via PROCISUR included: a) the implementation of regional technological platforms (RTP),

technical cooperation areas (TCA) and networks; and, b) the establishment and development of numerous cooperative projects with various strategic partners and funding sources. The latter included the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology (FONTAGRO) (seven projects); Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) / International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) (one project); the European Commission (three projects); the World Bank (one project); the consortium comprised of Uruguay’s National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), Spain’s INIA, the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) (one project). PROCISUR also carried out five projects with its own resources.

During the period 2002-2008, the Institute focused on a wide range of strategic issues in response to changes in the regional context. Some 19 publications were produced, along with a number of institutional documents. The existence of PROCISUR directly benefits all the partners involved: the technological integration of the NARIs strengthens the national systems and gives them international projection, while for IICA it is an efficient way to implement cooperation mechanisms in the field of technology and innovation.

Relations among PROCISUR’s partners were strengthened during this period, as reflected in the subsequent renewal of IICA’s cooperation agreement with the NARIs. Progress was also made in enhancing the management model, including improvements to the key areas of prospection, programming and follow-up and evaluation.

All of the above made it possible to secure additional resources for the program and establish partnerships with world-famous science and technology institutions, with the

consequent strengthening of the capabilities of the Southern Cone. The arrangement of projects in which PROCISUR participated enabled the member institutions to establish links with 50 research and development institutions. The projects implemented attracted external financing of around 10 million dollars.

Furthermore, in the area of biotechnology and biosafety, IICA supported the efforts of the member countries to develop and incorporate biotechnologies that would help make the agricultural sector more competitive. It also facilitated the sharing of information related to compliance with international agreements.

The main results were:

- The identification of regional needs in the area of biotechnology and greater knowledge of the regulations governing the use of genetically modified organisms in the region. These activities were carried out within the framework of Working Group 5 (WG5), comprised of the technical personnel specializing in biotech public policies of the ministries of agriculture of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, and of REDPA, with support from IICA.
- The setting-up of a group of delegates from the countries for the discussions and negotiations of the Cartagena Protocol and Codex.
- Greater knowledge of biotechnology and biosafety, through capacity building activities and the dissemination of information.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

The results of the Institute's technical cooperation in this field include: a) the positioning of the issue in some countries of the region, where IICA worked to achieve the sustainable management of natural resources; b) the countries of the region (Paraguay in particular) have enhanced professional capabilities thanks to the training workshops held on pertinent topics.

f. Promoting Regional Integration

The Institute's main contribution to regional integration was the support provided for the establishment and implementation of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) as a regional system for coordinating the agricultural sector. The Council's legal status was consolidated by means of a partial scope agreement signed by the states within the framework of ALADI, an integration body of which IICA is a permanent observer.

The agreement creating the CAS was signed in 2003 and the first meeting of the Council of Ministers took place in Brasilia. This marked the establishment of a real system for the regional coordination of the agricultural sector, headed by a political forum and underpinned by a number of regional technical support groups made up of the directors of different public agricultural services. Two regional advisory forums were also set up, comprised of the agronomy faculties of 30 universities in the region and regional organizations representing the private agricultural sector.



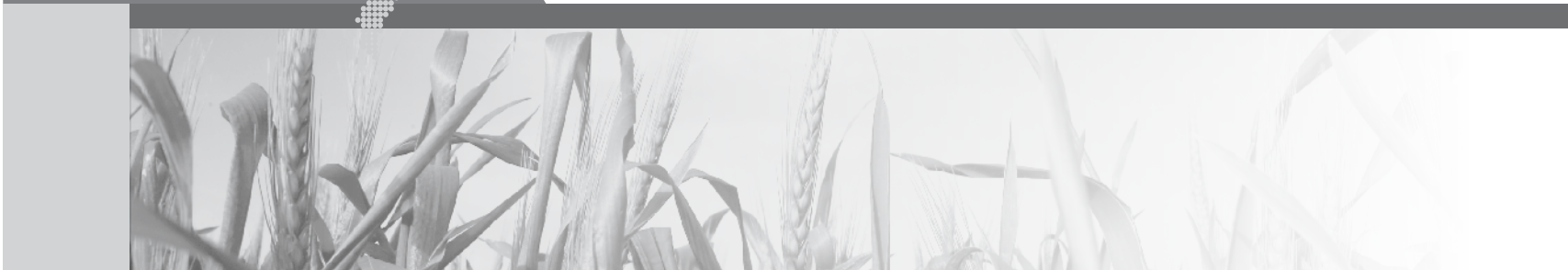
In 2003, at the request of the first meeting of CAS ministers, IICA assumed responsibility for the Technical and Administrative Secretariat of the CAS and, subsequently, the secretariats of REDPA and the GINA-Sur. The Institute already operated the secretariats of PROCISUR and the Forum of Agronomy Schools, to which it also provided strong technical support. From that point onwards, IICA lent major technical and logistical support to the CVP, COSAVE and the regional forums of the private agricultural sector, such as the Federation of Rural Associations of MERCOSUR (FARM) and the Confederation of Organizations of Family Producers of MERCOSUR (COPROFAM).

The Directorate of the Southern Region today has an increasingly clear vision of the true needs of the agricultural

sector, thanks to its privileged position as the Secretariat of the CAS and the information it provides with respect to the international cooperation actions needed.

Previously, collaboration among countries had been weak and disorganized, with regional mechanisms that operated in isolation. Now, with cooperation from IICA, there is a true articulated regional system, with fruitful interaction among the different technical support bodies that underpin the ministerial forum, composed of individuals responsible for formulating or implementing policies for the agricultural sector. The system provides a medium- and long-term vision for national and regional policy guidelines for the agricultural sector and for the international institutions that support the development of agriculture.

IICA Office in **Argentina**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Argentina



Víctor Arrúa¹, Edith S. de Obschatko² and Ricardo A. Lässig³

1. Introduction

This Report describes the results of IICA's actions in Argentina during the period 2002-2008, based on the National Technical Cooperation Agenda and on the Institute's new cooperation model. These actions were aimed at promoting agricultural development, rural prosperity and institutional strengthening, and provided an opportunity for IICA to contribute the efforts and experience of its technicians, its institutional capacity in management and administration and the attitude of service of all its personnel in Argentina, to benefit the country's agriculture.

2. Repositioning Agriculture and Rural Life in Argentina

The Institute consistently worked towards the objective of repositioning agriculture and rural life with the aim of contributing to the country's economic and social development. It actively promoted the Government of

Argentina's participation in the process of the Ministerial Meetings on "Agriculture and Rural life in the Americas," launched in 2001 in the context of the Summit of the Americas, as the leading hemispheric forum for discussion and decision-making on agricultural policy. In compliance with the Hemispheric Ministerial Agreements (HMA), IICA supported the participation of government officials (Foreign Ministry and Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food, SAGPyA) in that process, and in the preparation of the National Report on Agriculture and Rural Life and the Biannual Hemispheric Agenda.

In 2005, the Institute launched a series of studies in coordination with SAGPyA's Program for the Development of Small Producers (PROINDER) to highlight the importance and contribution of family agriculture. The findings were disseminated through several publications and seminars, particularly the book entitled "Small-scale producers in the Republic of Argentina: importance in production and employment, based on the 2002 National Agricultural Census." These studies filled a major information gap that dated back several decades, making available census data on 218,000 small farmers, and information concerning their contribution in terms of the area under cultivation, as well as production and employment. The studies also provided SAGPyA with new input for defining

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national policies on family agriculture and rural development and for establishing its position at the MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Family Agriculture, instituted in 2006. These studies have also benefited institutions such as the Center for Research and Technology Development for Small-scale Family Agriculture (CIPAF-INTA).

In the context of an agreement with the Provincial Agricultural Services Program (PROSAP II), IICA provided technical cooperation for the design of the Agricultural Development Programs (ADP) and, more recently, of the Provincial Agrifood Sector Strategies (EPSA) in most of Argentina's provinces. These agricultural policy documents, prepared in conjunction with the provincial governments, provide a framework for planning investments, identifying projects, preparing profiles and securing funding from multilateral lending institutions.

Since 2005, the Institute has provided technical cooperation to SAGPyA in order to contribute to knowledge and policymaking on agro-energy and biofuels. In this context, a study was carried out on the potential use of biofuels as an alternative source of energy for the country - an issue of major importance, in light of the future depletion of fossil fuels and the probable impact of climate change. Biofuels also offer a major opportunity for growth for Argentina's agroindustrial sector. As a result of these efforts, the country's national and provincial officials, academic authorities, and the agricultural community as a whole, were informed and updated about the situation, trends and outlook for biofuels within the country and at regional and global levels. The IICA Office also prepared and disseminated studies, strategic proposals and technical documents on key issues such as the availability, competitiveness and sustainability of agro-energy crops.

In the area of knowledge management, the community of agriculture and rural life in Argentina benefited from IICA's efforts to disseminate studies, books and publications of numerous topics and through the IICA web site and its Digital Library. Similarly, the Institute facilitated access to knowledge and innovations implemented in other parts of the continent, through the information generated by IICA Headquarters and by the IICA Country Offices, utilizing the technical information management system *InfoAgro*, the *Agroenlace* radio program, the *Communiica* magazine, technical forums and publications produced by all the IICA Offices. The IICA Office in Argentina also operates as a node of the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC), and has incorporated 100 databases of Argentinean agricultural libraries into this System, providing the country's users with access to a store of more than 250 agricultural libraries of the American continent. At the beginning of 2008, Red SIDALC Argentina became a member of the Association of Specialized Information Networks of Argentina (RECIARIA).

In relation to institutional modernization, in 2002, IICA designed and submitted to the authorities an Institutional Restructuring Program for the Public Agrifood and Agroindustrial Sector, based on a detailed study of the institutions that comprise the national agrifood sector. In addition, most of the projects implemented during the 2002-2008 period included institutional modernization or strengthening components, particularly those related to the National Agrifood Health and Quality Service (SENASA), the National Seed Institute (INASE), the National Institute for Agricultural Technology (INTA), the National Institute for Fisheries Research and Development (INIDEP) and specific programs implemented by SAGPyA.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The Institute promoted the eradication of several animal and plant pests and diseases and worked to maintain and/or improve the country's sanitary status, in order to facilitate market access. IICA supported SENASA in various initiatives designed to strengthen its agrifood health and quality services, such as the National Plan for the Control of Residues and Food Hygiene (CREHA Plan), the National Program for the Eradication of Cotton Boll Weevil, and the Program to Combat Carpocapsa.

IICA also assisted in the design of agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) projects, such as the National Plant Health Program, which included projects to combat pests of economic importance, such as carpocapsa, fruit fly and forest pests (Sirex), as part of its support to the Provincial Agricultural Services Program (PROSAP). In addition, the Institute supported SENASA in a project to monitor and prevent foot-and-mouth disease, including the construction and operation of modern laboratories and the implementation of a traceability system for livestock.

As part of a program to secure disease-free status (from the OIE) for Argentina in relation to classic swine fever, the Institute prepared various publications, including the "Manual for swine producers" and biosafety manuals for farmers and veterinarians, and also sponsored the publication of traceability guides prepared by the relevant institutions.

In addition, IICA worked with SENASA on the design and subsequent implementation (from 2003 to the present) of a project for the Prevention of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) in Argentina, an initiative executed jointly with SAGPyA, SENASA and INTA, funded in part by the World Bank. As a result of this cooperation, in 2007 and 2008 the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) once again recognized Argentina as having a "negligible risk" as regards TSE. Thanks to IICA's cooperation, the country's animal health institutions now have a risk analysis document on TSE, an epidemiological surveillance program, an up-to-date contingency plan, and the reference laboratories of INTA and SENASA have been reequipped and staffed with trained personnel. During the execution of this project, more than 6,000 people (farmers and professionals of the public and private sectors) received training on these diseases and on the mechanisms for prevention and surveillance, which resulted in the creation of a national early warning system. In 2006, IICA also organized the Fifth Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE).

The Institute supported the national authorities in their efforts to prevent emerging and reemerging health problems. Specifically, IICA designed—and currently coordinates, along with SENASA and PROSAP—a project for the Prevention of Avian Influenza in Argentina, financed with national resources and with funds from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

With regard to the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement, and the analysis of its implications for Argentina's production and trade, since 2004 IICA has provided training for technicians, national and provincial government officials and



representatives of the private agrifood sector on international agricultural health and food safety standards, and particularly on the structure and regulatory processes of the SPS Agreement, the Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

IICA contributed to the institutional strengthening of SAGPyA through a technical analysis of the standards and documents of the SPS Agreement, the IPPC and the European Union-MERCOSUR agreement, in aspects of animal health and food safety. It also supported SAGPyA in its dual role as Focal Point of the Codex Alimentarius and Chair of the Codex Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean by analyzing technical documents, preparing reports and participating in work groups and meetings. Together with SENASA, IICA organized training seminars and workshops on the scope and objectives of the SPS Agreement and courses on trade policy for the member countries of the Latin American Association for Integration (ALADI). In 2008, IICA Headquarters organized a series of videoconferences entitled “The regulatory process of the Codex Alimentarius and You,” with the participation of public and private-sector technicians.

IICA also worked to disseminate and analyze SPS among farmers’ and producers’ organizations, such as the Federation of Rural Associations of MERCOSUR (FARM), and through the electronic bulletin of the SPS Codex Forum.

Since 2006, IICA has supported efforts to disseminate good agricultural practices throughout the country by providing technical cooperation to SENASA’s Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Program and organizing information and training events on the basic concepts of GAP, directed at farmers, private-

sector professionals, authorities of the provincial agricultural services, officials of SENASA and university students.

With respect to the institutional modernization of the national agricultural health and quality assurance services, in 2003 IICA technicians prepared a proposal for SENASA to facilitate the planning and organization of tasks related to agrifood health and quality. Since 2007, IICA has supported the dissemination, training and application of the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool for the National Food Safety Services, in close collaboration with the local Office of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO). In 2008, IICA promoted efforts to disseminate knowledge on AFHS topics and transmitted videoconferences on traceability in Uruguay and Argentina. Together with the OIE, IICA organized a videoconference-workshop on the “Project for a cost-benefit analysis of official veterinary services.”

In the context of the Southern Cone Plant Health Committee (COSAVE), and after several years of work with IICA’s cooperation, the national agricultural health services implemented a Regional Strategy for the Control of Cotton Boll Weevil, a pest that seriously threatens cotton crops, which are of major importance to several countries of the region. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) provided a non-reimbursable loan to carry out studies, meetings and seminars to formulate the strategy.

Since 2008, IICA has coordinated the efforts of Argentina’s sanitary authorities in the Regional Project on Avian Influenza and other Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD). This joint initiative of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS), the Permanent Veterinary Committee (PVC), the World Bank and IICA, is aimed at building and strengthening regional capacities to prevent and/or address a possible outbreak of avian influenza in the region.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusiness

In this area of action, the Institute worked to create a favorable context for a competitive agriculture by generating and disseminating vital and useful knowledge for the sector's long-term development, in order to meet the various challenges facing the country's economy and address new emerging issues. To this end, the Office continuously monitored the status of agriculture and rural life, the sector's economic and social importance, its characteristics and outlook and the factors that influence the performance of production and external trade, through the preparation and dissemination of studies, periodic reports and books. These publications provided the different actors of the agrifood sector with systematized, regular and up-to-date information on the various aspects that influence the competitiveness and performance of agriculture as a whole, and of each sub-sector. IICA added value to the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from public institutions by systematizing and analyzing the information. Thanks to this process, public sector officials and technicians were able to use this information as input for policymaking and evaluation of results, while the private sector used it for decision-making. The results of these efforts were published in the quarterly reports on the Argentine Agrifood Sector (from 1998 to 2004), in the annual publication "Argentina in Figures" and in the books "The Contribution of the Agrifood Sector to Argentina's Economic growth" and "the Argentine Agrifood Sector 2000-2005."

IICA also provided technical and financial assistance to SAGPyA in the organization of three meetings to discuss the outlook for agriculture—the most important local event on this issue. Participants analyzed the prospects for the agrifood sector in general, and then for each production chain, from

different perspectives. The first event, in 2003, focused on "Agriculture as the engine of the economy"; the second, in 2004, on "The countryside as a hub of society"; and the third, in 2005, "Regional agricultural integration: a force for a new role in markets."

In response to emerging situations - such as the grave economic crisis that affected Argentina at the end of 2001, and culminated with the default and a severe recession - IICA, together with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the IDB, supported the recovery of exports through cooperation efforts with the Ministry of Economy. These included the preparation of twenty studies and reports on the export potential and competitiveness of various commodities, including products of high value; the preparation of agribusiness profiles for various product chains; analysis and policy proposals for promoting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and agrifood exports; and the compilation of a "Directory of Agrifood Export Firms." In the context of the Federal Agrifood Export Program, a joint initiative of SAGPyA and the Export-Ar Foundation, IICA organized training courses for farmers and agribusiness entrepreneurs on "How to export agrifoods;" provided support for holding two seminars in the United States on the potential of Argentina's agrifood sector, in cooperation with the Argentine Embassy in the US; and facilitated the institutional presence of SAGPyA at major international food fairs, such as SIAL-Paris, SIAL-MERCOSUR, SIAL-China, Anuga (Germany), Apimondia (Ireland) and Hofex (Hong Kong). These events provided Argentina's producers with a valuable opportunity to showcase their high-quality food products, in many cases under the banner of "natural products." In response to the Bioterrorism Law approved by the United States in 2002, the Institute organized three seminars, in different parts of the country, to discuss the possible impact of this legislation on



Argentina's agrifood exports and published a document on this subject.

In subsequent years, IICA carried out studies on the agrifood sectors of China and India, and on Argentina's trade relations with those countries. These studies were compiled and published in the books "China in the Global Agrifood Market" and "The Agrifood Sector in India", and presented at various events and seminars held in Argentina and Uruguay.

In response to concerns over climate change and the future depletion of fossil fuels, and based on an agenda agreed with SAGPyA, the Institute provided technical cooperation for a study to assess the status of and outlook for the country's agro-energy sector. It also promoted and organized a visit by SAGPyA and IICA officials to Brazil to learn about the Brazilian experience in the production of bio-diesel and ethanol. Other efforts in this regard included studies, publications, videoconferences, an international seminar on water and energy, and training sessions and seminars in Argentina and other countries. In addition, the IICA Office in Argentina included a special section on biofuels in its web page and published a monthly electronic bulletin entitled "International and Argentine Biofuels Market News," which is circulated to more than 800 subscribers. These cooperation efforts served to improve the formulation of policies and decision-making in both the public and the private sector.

In order to promote competitiveness through rural investment, the Institute helped Argentina to secure funds from various multilateral organizations. These resources were used primarily for agricultural and rural development projects in the provinces, particularly for investment in rural infrastructure (irrigation systems, electrification and roads), in public agricultural services and to support small and medium-scale agricultural enterprises. More specifically, IICA

provided technical cooperation to the SAGPyA- PROSAP II (Provincial Agricultural Services Program) an initiative that receives funding from IDB and the IBRD and that includes irrigation projects, rural electrification and roads, plant health components and local development projects in the provinces covered by the program.

In addition, feasibility studies were carried out for more than 25 investment projects and a project portfolio is continuously being designed and evaluated. Other actions included various economic-financial evaluations, the application of COSTAB, environmental and social impact assessments, the implementation of surveys and the preparation of budgets, etc.

IICA assisted PROSAP in preparing and submitting to the IDB a new loan proposal for the second stage of the program (PROSAP II), known as CCLIP (Conditional Credit Line for Investment Projects). This line was designed to provide access to continuous credit to finance recurring activities, of a similar nature and in the same sector. It was approved at the beginning of 2008 for investment projects worth US\$ 600 million, with a term of 25 years. At the end of September 2008, the World Bank also approved new loans for US\$300 million, to be executed over a six-year period.

With regard to new credit and risk coverage mechanisms, the Institute disseminated and promoted alternative agricultural financing mechanisms, particularly trust funds, which have achieved a significant level of growth. IICA also promoted the institutional strengthening of SAGPyA's Agricultural Risk Office (ORA), which provides information and training to national and provincial authorities, and the agricultural community in general, on risk assessment and the status, trends and outlook for agricultural insurance.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA's efforts in Argentina focused on building capacity and creating opportunities in order to improve living conditions in rural communities and to promote their active participation in the development of agriculture. The Institute's actions in the different strategic areas directly or indirectly benefited rural communities in different ways: improving their competitiveness, agricultural health, technology innovation, agribusiness and natural resources. The most direct results were seen in the agricultural and rural development projects and in the training of human resources at different levels.

With regard to development projects, IICA designed and evaluated projects in support of the PROSAP program. These translated into investments that improved the infrastructure of rural communities, and into projects that secured non-reimbursable funding to develop non-traditional activities with small and medium-scale producers.

IICA's contribution to the management of the Modernization, Diversification and Technification Program in the country's tobacco growing areas contributed to improve the situation of small-scale tobacco farmers. IICA supported efforts to modernize, restructure, complement and diversify production in the tobacco growing areas, both in primary production and in related agroindustrial chains. These efforts included reconversion projects, investments in infrastructure, laboratories and other facilities that added value to local tobacco production.

In addition, IICA assisted in the management of the "Rural Change" program in Buenos Aires Province, with the aim of promoting technological and market innovation,

and associativity in small and medium-scale agricultural enterprises. For several years, IICA also supported a micro-credit program operated by the "De la nada" organization, which provides poor women in semi-rural areas with credit for small enterprises.

The publication of a study on small-scale farmers, in 2006 and 2007, and the subsequent organization of discussion and dissemination activities with national and provincial government officials, representatives of INTA and producers' organizations, contributed to an improved knowledge of this particular sector of Argentina's agriculture and to the formulation of policies and programs to benefit family agriculture.

In the area of developing human capital, IICA's training activities have benefited large numbers of technicians working with national and provincial projects, as well as public officials, farmers and private-sector professionals. Several thousand people have attended courses in the context of the Institute's projects, in a wide range of topics such as prevention of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, good agricultural practices, food quality, local/territorial development, strategic planning tools and project design and management. Similarly, IICA awarded scholarships to postgraduate students in the Agribusiness Program and the Rural Development Program, both imparted by the Faculty of Agronomy at the University of Buenos Aires.

Various educational institutions also benefited from IICA's cooperation efforts, including the Rural Development Institute of Mendoza Province and the National University of Cuyo, which received support in training rural and territorial development promoters. IICA also assisted two leading national universities (National University of Cuyo and the National University of

the Northeast) in their external evaluation process, at the request of the National Commission for University Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEAU). In 2007, IICA prepared a study on the status of agricultural education in Argentina, as part of a regional assessment on this issue.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

In the area of agricultural research and innovation, IICA provided support to Argentina's National Agricultural Technology Institute (INTA) through a series of technical and administrative cooperation agreements, which facilitated external evaluations in some regional centers and in other departments of the INTA. Other actions included the implementation of a human resources management program, the analysis of an institutional decentralization model and development of a computer platform (Intranet) for carrying out administrative-accounting procedures.

Argentina's fisheries benefited from IICA's cooperation to INIDEP in the area of research and innovation. IICA supported basic and applied research projects and programs related to fishery resources, algae, marine biodiversity and rational exploitation of marine resources throughout the national territory. This initiative included a program to inspect commercial fishing fleet vessels at sea in order to obtain biological information on fisheries, then process the data and have it validated on land by specialists.

IICA also contributed to the institutional strengthening of the National Institute of Viniculture (INV) and the National Seed Institute (INASE), enabling these institutions to carry out their work more effectively and improving the level of technology applied in their respective activities.

In the area of agro-biotechnology and biosafety, the Institute provided valuable information and knowledge for policymaking in those areas. It also facilitated SAGPyA's participation in the UNEP-GEF Global Project, aimed at formulating a national framework for safety in biotechnology, in line with the requirements of the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol. Officials, technicians and the agricultural community in general received information on this topic through the dissemination of numerous studies. Surveys were conducted on people's perceptions of biotechnology, and training activities and seminars organized in different parts of the country.

IICA contributed to advances in agricultural research and to the dissemination of its results, through its support to the Cooperative Program for Agrifood and Agroindustrial Technology Development in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR), whose member organizations are IICA and the national agricultural research institutes of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Seminars were organized to disseminate the advances and results of joint projects and IICA provided administrative and logistical support to enable dozens of Argentinean experts in agricultural science to participate in the workshops and technical meetings of PROCISUR. These meetings were convened to discuss the advances made in research on relevant and strategic topics selected by the Steering Committee of PROCISUR, including: traceability in the beef chain, organic agriculture, genetic resources, technology supply-demand, irrigation networks, potato genome sequencing, climate change, agricultural engineering, agrifood chains, agro-environmental management, economic variability in energy production systems, environmental sustainability, institutional strengthening, pre-improvement of plants, olive production, meat, poultry, forest and oilseed chains, health- agroindustry-technology chains, agrifood and agroindustrial development, family agriculture, environmental sustainability, genetic resistance to Asian soybean rust,

irrigation networks, organic agriculture, genetic resources, precision agriculture, nutritional genomics, biofuels and biotechnology supply-demand.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA promoted efforts to strengthen institutional capacities and technical knowledge for the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment, and to create awareness on these matters. Actions in this area included the organization of a symposium on “Water and Energy,” studies carried out on the topic of agro-energy with the aim of preventing competition with food production, and the design of a national framework for safety in biotechnology. The IICA Office also supported INIDEP in the management, control and conservation of fishery resources and contributed to the design of water management projects in various provinces. In 2008, the Institute supported SAGPyA in the launch of an organic agriculture program and the creation of an “Advisory Commission for Organic Production.”

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

The Institute carried out its activities in close collaboration with its main local strategic partners: SAGPyA and its decentralized organizations (INTA, SENASA, INIDEP, INASE).

IICA also established strong interagency links with international organizations, particularly with the IDB and the World Bank, working closely with these in the context of the Provincial Agricultural Services Program (PROSAP/SAGPyA), and in the



identification, design and preparation of studies, programs and projects financed by these bodies and by the Government of Argentina. In addition, the IICA Office worked with other agencies in specific areas, such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), PAHO, the Pan-American Institute for Food Protection and Zoonoses (INPAZZ), ECLAC, the International Development Research Center (IDRC), the United States Embassy in Argentina, the Pan-American Dairy Federation (FEPALE), the Regional Association of Oil and Natural Gas Companies in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARPEL) and the Latin American Center for Rural Development (RIMISP), among others.

At local level, IICA worked closely with the Argentine Council for International Relations (CARI), the Export-Ar Foundation, the University of Buenos Aires, the Secretariat for Science and Technology, the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INDEC), the Buenos Aires Grain Exchange, the Chamber of Exporters of Rosario, the Patagonian Phytosanitary Barrier Foundation and other institutions.

5. Modernization of the Office

The Office continuously applied the principles of efficiency, transparency and quality in its technical and administrative endeavors. For a number of years, IICA adopted a quality management system, certified under ISO 9001-2000 standards, which subsequently enabled it to apply these standards using its own systems.

A central feature of IICA’s management style was its transparency and accountability. In addition to regular financial reports, IICA organized an annual event in order to present a



report on its actions and cooperation activities to Government officials, partners and the general public. On these occasions, the Office invited the senior authorities and officials of the institutions that benefited from IICA's cooperation, mainly SAGPyA and its decentralized organizations, who expressed their satisfaction with the Institute's efforts.

In order to improve its technical cooperation services, the Office tried to ensure that its technical and administrative personnel were continuously kept up-to-date and informed through courses, seminars and training sessions in their respective topics or areas of action. The Office also tried to provide staff with the necessary computer tools and facilities to develop language skills.

The purchase of videoconferencing equipment and new computer programs benefited IICA's strategic partners and facilitated communications between the Office in Argentina and other IICA offices. In 2008, 12 videoconferences were organized, with an average of 15 participants in each one. The installation of new desktop and laptop computers and servers, as well as the digitization of documents, improved the Office's efficiency in carrying out its work and enhanced its communications with other IICA offices and with the outside world.

IICA Office in **Brazil**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Brazil

Carlos Américo Basco¹

1. Introduction

This report summarizes the main technical cooperation activities of the IICA Office in Brazil over the period 2002-2008, in the various areas of work defined by the Institute as a whole.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Brazil

IICA sponsored a number of studies and events. Among the most important studies were those dealing with: “Methodologies for assessing the impact of technical cooperation projects” and “National Situation Report and Outlook for Agriculture in Brazil,” while notable events included the Second International Forum on Public Policies and the Seminar on Employment and Labor in Brazilian Agriculture.

With the Ministry of National Integration, IICA pursued a number of technical cooperation activities, including preparation of a proposal for programs under the national integration and development themes, and their impact on regional and national development.

The Office prepared an explanatory guide to understanding the Bioterrorism Act and its implications for Brazilian agribusiness exports to the United States.

A technical cooperation project is underway with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA) to enhance strategic and operational management and in-house education, starting with an analysis and reformulation of strategic planning processes, knowledge management and training, as a contribution to the sustainable development of Brazilian agribusiness.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

The principal results from IICA’s technical cooperation efforts in Brazil during the period covered by this report are summarized below, under the various thematic headings:

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

- Coordination between IICA and MAPA on a project for implementing the plan to eradicate the Carambola fruit fly (*Bactrocera carambolae*) along the northern border of Brazil. The pest has been detected in the State of Amapá, where it

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has spread from Surinam, Guyana and French Guiana. The intention is to halt its spread to other fruit-exporting states of Brazil.

- Support for implementing the national program for milk and milk products quality control and improvement, in conjunction with the Brazilian Farming and Livestock Confederation (CNA) and MAPA.
- Participation in planning and preparatory meetings for the International Conference on Agrifood Product Traceability in MAPA, including systems of conformity, identification of origin, and traceability through the agrifood chain.
- Organization and facilitation for the hemispheric conference on avian flu surveillance and prevention, held in Brasilia, highlighting its hemispheric nature and its importance for articulating a surveillance and prevention plan for this disease in the Americas.
- Diagnostic study of pests that attack the seeds of important vegetable crops and which pose a potential threat to Brazil, as part of the work on Pest Risk Analysis, with a view to formulating a phytosanitary policy.
- Characterization of national phytosanitary and veterinary services and proposals for modernizing them, jointly with the MAPA agriculture superintendencies and the state agriculture departments.
- Contribution to strengthening and institutional repositioning of the Department of Agricultural Defense. The office contributed in the following areas: (i) development of the National Agricultural Health Education Program – PNESA SDA/MAPA; (ii) workshops for preparing the Master Plan for General Coordination of Laboratory Support – CGAL/SDA/MAPA; (iii) training for technical staff of MAPA and other institutions in application and use of the Performance, Vision and Strategy (DVE) instrument of OIE-IICA and the ONPF; (iv) promotion of mechanisms for transmitting experience in sanitary and phytosanitary measures; (v) development of capacities for the National Agricultural Reference Laboratories; (vi) technical assistance in preparing projects for developing the National Agricultural Reference Laboratories; (vii) promotion of the animal well-being issue at the 24th Annual Ethology Meeting.
- Active participation in the implementation of international events linked to the objectives of the Area of Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS), with emphasis on the strengthening of ties with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The latter trains personnel from national agricultural laboratories in the use of the PCR-RT (reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction) technique for diagnosing foot-and-mouth disease and avian influenza.
- IICA also worked intensely on developing and adapting radio and video materials for broadcast, as well as a radio series called “*Mais vale prevenir... Uma decisão inteligente*” (roughly “An ounce of prevention... the intelligent choice”) and a video entitled “Avian Flu - it can be prevented”, targeted at small-scale poultry operators. These materials have demonstrated their importance in prevention and early detection of avian flu if it should appear in Brazil.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

- Study of nine productive chains in Brazilian agribusiness, assessing proposals and supporting the formulation of diagnoses and prognoses with competitiveness scenarios and databases on the major production chains.
- Participation in the survey on the “State of the Art of Sectoral and Thematic Chambers in Brazil”, through a joint

diagnosis with the MAPA Coordination Office in Support of Sectoral Chambers. Advice and assistance in preparing and finalizing the Strategic Plan for Coordination of Support to the Sectoral Chambers (CGAC) and cooperation in formulating and monitoring the work program of the sectoral and thematic Chambers of the National Agribusiness Council (CONSAGRO).

- Workshop on productive chains, to publicize the studies of the nine productive chains sponsored by the European Union (EUMercopol). At this event, the sponsors of the research analyzed and compared the results of the studies in real time.
- Production of a methodology for examining market relations in agroindustry systems and methodology for assessing the impact of technical cooperation projects and significant technical documents on risk management and farm insurance.
- Technical cooperation to build capacities and produce a development plan in the Município of Formosa, GO, with a training course on development projects and financing, which resulted in preparation of capital projects.
- Coordination of the seminar on the state of the art in farm insurance in Brazil, sponsored by the MAPA Risk-Management Coordination Office and representatives of the Economic Research Department of UNICAMP. The main objective was to select the key points to be prioritized, publicized and discussed at the Seminar on Risk Management and Farm Insurance.
- Support to MAPA in defining and implementing the computerized management system, including operational, supervisory and payment aspects, as part of the federal

subsidy program for farm insurance in Brazil, pursuant to Law 10,823 of December 19, 2003 and its regulatory decree.

- Preparation and dissemination of the twice-yearly publication *Informe Agronegócio*, the quarterly *Caderno de Estatísticas do Agronegócio Brasileiro* (Brazilian agribusiness statistics), the monthly newsletter *Biocombustíveis em FOCO* (“Biofuels in Focus”), and the weekly *Alertas de Agronegócio* (“Agribusiness Alerts”) bulletins.
- Agribusiness Reference Center (CERAGRO), a virtual portal the main components of which are:
 - Technical documents: a document collection that compiles, organizes and makes available technical publication on various agribusiness topics.
 - Agroindustrial Systems Observatory: an environment that tracks and provides access to specific information on actions and initiatives of the public and private sectors relating to agribusiness industrial chains.
 - IICA data: a section devoted to key agribusiness statistics, including a complete and detailed database with reliable and well structured tables, graphs and figures.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

- Technical cooperation with the Brazilian government in implementing the national policy for sustainable development and combating rural poverty from a territorial perspective, encouraging the endogenous development of rural areas and expanding capacities for mobilization, organization, diagnosis, planning and self-management in local communities in 118 rural territories.



- Technical cooperation for the rural poverty programs (PCPR) with World Bank financing in the states of Ceará, Bahia, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte, Sergipe, Piauí, Maranhão and Rio Grande do Sul.
- Together with the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MDA), and working through the Farm Credit Project, adoption of an alternative approach to agrarian reform involving financing of land by farmers.
- Technical cooperation to the Family Farming Department (SAF/MDA) for Development of the National Family Farming Reinforcement Program (PRONAF).
- Establishment of the Permanent Forum for Sustainable Rural Development, consisting of a network of institutions in several countries, primarily in Latin America, with the purpose of promoting the exchange, articulation and dissemination of knowledge and experience in sustainable rural development.
- Organization of the Second International Forum on Technical Development, the International Conference on Good Territorial Practices in Brazil and in the European Union, the Second International Forum on Territorial Development, the Seminar on Agroenergy and Development of Isolated Rural Communities, and several seminars to discuss the challenges of territorial management and rural areas.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

- Together with the Department of Science and Technology for Social Inclusion, of the Ministry of Science and

Technology (SECIS/MCT), technical cooperation activities to popularize and disseminate science and technology in rural Brazil and the use of scientific and technological knowledge to promote social inclusion.

- Development of two important courses: training in regional analysis with use of thematic cartography, jointly with the Ministry of National Integration, and Training in Geo-Referenced Technologies, jointly with the National Department of Works against Drought, PCT IICA/DNOCS.
- Partnership with EMBRAPA to implement the Program of Technological Innovation and New Forms of Agricultural Research Management - Agrofuturo, which stresses management and use of agricultural research to enhance the competitiveness and quality of productive chains.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

- Development of partnerships reflecting regional and local reality, together with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of National Integration, in technical cooperation activities to promote environmentally healthy technologies and rational use of water resources, in the context of the work of the watershed committees.
- Action under the Program to Combat Desertification and Mitigate the Effects of Drought in South America, with a view to improving social and economic conditions for rural communities suffering the effects of desertification, by changing behavior, introducing appropriate technologies, and providing training in sustainable development in the six participating countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Peru.



- Interagency agreement to strengthen cooperation between international organizations and the National Focal Point for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and to work with other stakeholders in implementing the Brazilian national action plan. Agreement signed between the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment, the German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations development program (UNDP), the German Development Service (DED) and the Embassy of the Netherlands.
- Technical cooperation in awarding subsidies for the preparation of ecological-economic zoning of the “Gilbués Original Nucleus of Desertification” covering the municipalities of Gilbués and Monte Alegre, in the State of Piauí.
- Action to combat desertification and encourage conservation, preservation and restoration of natural resources in the semi arid region of Brazil, together with the Water Infrastructure Department of the Ministry of National Integration (SIH/MI).
- As part of the geo-processing and survey of properties in western Bahia, a diagnosis of the environmental situation was prepared with a focus on mapping land use, with high-resolution satellite images, so as to provide a compatible scale for work in three river basins - Rio Grande, Rio Corrente and the left bank of the Rio Carinhanha, in the State of Bahia - over an area of approximately 6.4 million hectares.
- Strengthening the agro-meteorological work of the National Meteorology Institute (INMET) in support of

Brazilian agribusiness, work on agro-meteorological issues associated with modernizing the basic national network, and modern techniques for weather forecasting using satellite observation.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

IICA in Brazil has conducted a survey of all the institutions with which it maintains relations. To this end it developed and structured the “relationships map”, which identifies the parties involved in its domestic and external relations, demonstrating the importance of the Institute’s contribution to their field of activity.

The “relationships map” defines the parties involved, gives an overview of the areas of IICA’s work in Brazil, and demonstrates in detail the relationships that the Office maintains and the ways they contribute to achieving its institutional mission and guiding its strategies (see table 22).

5. Modernization of the Office

The process of upgrading IICA Office in Brazil involved an initial diagnosis and analysis of the profile of its key personnel, followed by changes to its structure. As a result, resources from the administrative area have been freed up for strengthening technical cooperation



Table 22. Principal Partners of the IICA Office in Brazil.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS
AGÊNCIA BRASILEIRA DE COOPERAÇÃO – ABC
CENTRAIS ELÉTRICAS BRASILEIRAS S.A – ELETROBRÁS
CENTRO INTERNACIONAL PARA A PESQUISA FLORESTAL – CIFOR
EMPRESA BRASILEIRA DE PESQUISA AGROPECUÁRIA – EMBRAPA
FUNDAÇÃO BANCO DO BRASIL – FBB
INSTITUTO DE DEFESA DO MEIO AMBIENTE - IDEMA RN
INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE METEOROLOGIA – INMET
INSTITUTO DE GESTÃO DAS ÁGUAS E CLIMA – GOVERNMENT OF BAHIA
INSTITUTO SOUZA CRUZ – ISC
MINISTÉRIO DA AGRICULTURA, PECUÁRIA E ABASTECIMENTO - MAPA
MINISTÉRIO DA CIÊNCIA E TECNOLOGIA – MCT
MINISTÉRIO DA INTEGRAÇÃO NACIONAL - MI
MINISTÉRIO DAS MINAS E ENERGIA – MME
MINISTÉRIO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO AGRÁRIO – MDA
MINISTÉRIO DO MEIO AMBIENTE – MMA
SECRETARIA DE AGRICULTURA, PECUÁRIA E DESENVOLVIMENTO – GOVERNMENT OF MARANHÃO
SECRETARIA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO LOCAL E REGIONAL – GOVERNMENT OF CEARÁ
SECRETARIA DE PLANEJAMENTO – GOVERNMENT OF PIAUÍ
COOPERATION AGREEMENTS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN - ECLAC
EMPRESA DE PESQUISA AGROPECUÁRIA E EXTENSÃO RURAL DE SANTA CATARINA – EPAGRI
INSTITUTO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DO TURISMO RURAL - IDESTUR
INSTITUTO INTERNACIONAL DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA CIDADANIA - IIDAC
UNIVERSIT OF GUELPH – CANADÁ
USINA HIDRELÉTRICA DE ITAIPU BINACIONAL

Source: IICA

With a new organizational structure in place, IICA in Brazil is now reviewing its modus operandi and assessing the capacities needed to achieve its mission. A “process culture” is being developed, by diagramming and optimizing processes, and a qualitative leap has been taken by moving the office to more modern premises that facilitate integration, teamwork, and overview of processes. The changes resulting from this initiative culminated with award of the Director General’s Prize for Excellence.

To implement its repositioning strategy and achieve its technical cooperation objectives, IICA in Brazil has a multidisciplinary technical and administrative team comprising the Representative, the Strategic Priority Specialists, the Project Management Unit and the Administrative and Technical Cooperation support team, which work together closely both internally and with the Brazilian counterparts.

The Information Technologies area is striving to meet operational needs through the installation, maintenance, evolution and removal of systems. Highlights of its activities: installation of the consultants database; establishment of the Agribusiness Reference Center (CERAGRO) and IICA Data; establishment of the *Boletim Agroalimentar do Cone Sul* (Southern Cone Agrifood

Bulletin), new version with content management; launch of the Technical Cooperation Projects Portal; launch of the Intranet; launch of the new-format IICA page on the Internet; and launch of the Human Resources System, Windows and Web Platform.

In terms of facilities, the IICA Office in Brazil has equipment, services and software capable of keeping activities running smoothly and efficiently.

IICA-Brazil has initiated discussion and recognition of the importance of knowledge management (KM). A working group was created to analyze information, communication and knowledge management processes in ascending order of complexity.

KM flows have been developed with respect to the operational environment. Content fields and ontological-taxonomic classification have been developed for information in the different thematic and knowledge areas of IICA in the Knowledge Management System of the IICA Office in Brazil.

The KM system exists over an infrastructure and under a superstructure that make up the socio-technical system of the Office.

The KM model has two areas, one for coordination and the other for KM operations. The coordination area has its own cycle and is concerned with situation analysis, strategic definitions, measuring, assessing and refining KM processes. The operations area handles procurement, adjustment and channeling of knowledge.



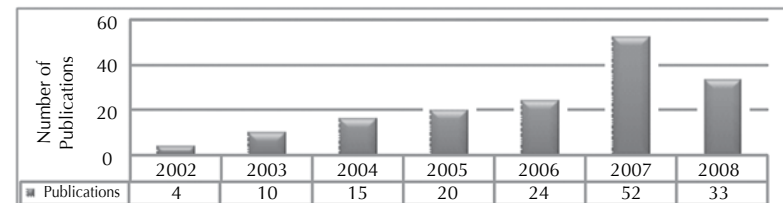
The IICA Office in Brazil has invested in the communication and journalism field in order to produce and publish information on the technical cooperation it offers the country.

It has acquired equipment for audiovisual productions and has begun a multimedia information collection process – audio, video, photographic and text – for producing short video documentaries, interviews, and a photographic and news story collection.

The office has completed the editorial and graphic structuring of the Monthly Report, an electronic publication on IICA events and activities – seminars, workshops, meetings, projects etc.

The Knowledge and Communication Management Model was used to publish 1041 news items on the Internet dealing with IICA technical cooperation in Brazil. The Office was thus responsible for 60% of IICA's journalistic output for the hemisphere in 2008.

Figure 14. Editorial Output of the IICA Office in Brazil, 2002-2008



Source: Knowledge Management Area of the IICA Office in Brazil.

Strategic planning for the IICA Office in Brazil:

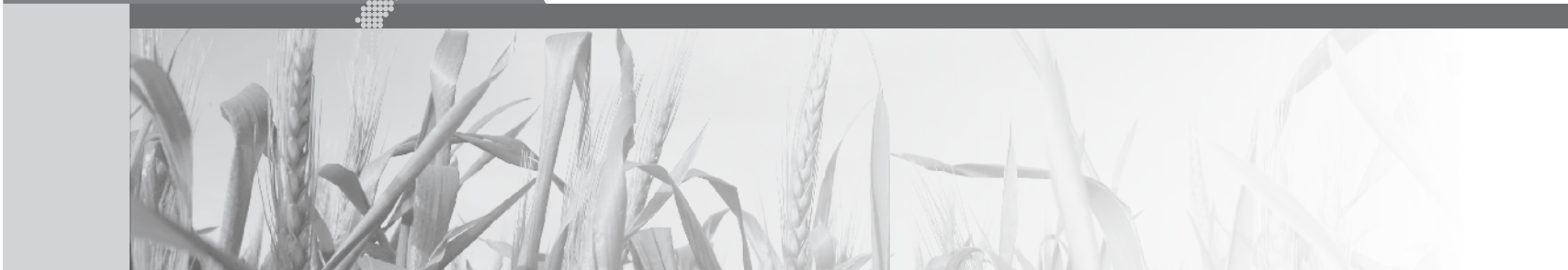
- Meetings using the methodological patterns of the “Balanced Scorecard” (BSC), in order to revise and adapt strategic thinking, moving from a reactive and retrospective stance to a proactive and forward-looking one.
- Construction of Strategic Maps for the Thematic Areas of the IICA Office in Brazil.
- Construction of the Strategic Map for the IICA Office in Brazil based on the Thematic Areas Maps in Light of the BSC.
- Construction of the spreadsheet on “details of strategic initiatives” for monitoring the initiatives described in the Strategic Map.

Table 23: National and International Events.

Thematic Areas	Courses	National events	International events	Total
Repositioning of agriculture and rural life and renewal of its institutions	9	2	2	13
Promotion of agribusiness trade and competitiveness	2	2	5	9
Promotion of rural community development from a territorial focus	1	18	10	29
Promotion of animal and plant health and food safety	7	3	7	17
Promotion of sustainable management of natural resources and the environment	6	11	6	23
Incorporation of technology and innovation for modernizing agriculture and rural development	2	1	-	3
Total Event 2002 - 2008	27	37	30	94

Source: Relationships Map of the IICA Office in Brazil.

IICA Office in **Chile**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Chile

Gonzalo E. Gonzalez¹

1. Introduction

This report describes the results achieved by IICA during the period 2002-2008, based on the National Technical Cooperation Agenda drawn up for Chile. It explains how the Institute contributed to the strengthening of Chilean agriculture and the development of rural communities, in line with institutional mandates and in response to requests for technical support from national public and private entities.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Chile

During the period 2002-2008, IICA continued to promote the repositioning of agriculture and rural life in Chile. It contributed in a number of priority areas that fall within its sphere of competence and on issues of interest to the country. The latter included the promotion of trade, the competitiveness and development of agribusinesses, the reinforcement of

agricultural health and food safety systems, the strengthening of communities using a territorial approach, the development of human capital, the promotion of the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment, and institutional modernization. All this contributed to the development of Chilean agriculture and, therefore, to improving living standards in the rural milieu.

In the area of the promotion of trade and the competitiveness of agribusinesses, IICA helped promote foreign trade and afford Chilean exports access to international markets, mainly those of the subsectors of small-scale agriculture and small-scale family farming (referred to as AFC in Chile). Chilean producers also received support to enable them to visit other countries to observe new production, industry and trade initiatives first hand. They then drew on these experiences to improve their productive processes and commercial prospects. The Institute also contributed to the establishment of the Agricultural Exchange.

In agricultural health and food safety, IICA contributed in areas such as the fruit fly, avian influenza, quality, traceability and food safety. It was also involved in the evaluation of the National Fruit Fly Program and in the facilitation of

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agreements to eradicate the pest from neighboring countries. This made it possible to keep the fruit fly under control in Chile. The Institute contributed to the prevention of avian influenza in Chile. Furthermore, it promoted quality and traceability in the agrifood sector. Another important area in which IICA made a mark was food safety. A number of events were organized and carried out and a proposal was prepared for the creation of a new National Food Safety Agency.

The efforts to strengthen rural communities using the territorial approach focused on the development of the business management competencies and skills of small producers and the formulation and financing of productive micro-projects for rural women producers, entrepreneurs and microentrepreneurs.

In 2006, IICA signed a cooperation agreement with the Municipality of Corral, in the province of Valdivia, that contributed to the development of rural communities and helped enhance the expertise of professionals of institutions working in the territory, including the municipality. Moreover, workshops were held for professionals and representatives of local small farmer organizations, to discuss and assess the situation of the population and production, and to disseminate information about projects aimed at improving the infrastructure and public and private services. The Institute also encouraged the residents of the communities to take advantage of the training activities and workshops held to assist medium and small-scale producers with their undertakings.

With regard to the development of human capital, IICA supported training for members of different services of the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) dealing with various topics, including traceability systems and sustainable rural development. It also contributed to the preparation of a project to improve the quality of the education available and to promote a process of modernization and the overhaul of agronomy, veterinary medicine, agricultural civil engineering and forestry courses. Furthermore, under the “Chile Qualifies” program the Institute helped formulate profiles for graduates of middle school, vocational and professional courses and higher education. Finally, the Office supported the design of a training course for small farmers’ leaders.

With regard to the promotion of the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment, the Institute helped support the dissemination of techniques and methodologies for environmental management and protection. It also promoted the inclusion of environmental issues in the country’s development policies and prepared proposals for the evaluation of agro-environmental policies from a territorial perspective.

Institutional modernization was also an important issue for IICA. The Office contributed to the creation of a new Ministry of Agriculture and Food, coordinating the organization and implementation of an international seminar on institutional modernization and preparing a document containing a summarized, edited version of the proposals of the different working groups. Finally, it cooperated in the preparation of the final document on the National Food Safety Policy.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Since 2002, IICA has engaged in efforts to promote agricultural health and food safety. Some of the most important achievements to which the Institute contributed were the establishment of the Chilean Food Safety Agency and the consolidation of the Livestock Plan, which resulted in the United States approving imports of Chilean meat.

The Institute also provided technical support to the Chile-Peru Binational Agreement to Eradicate the Fruit Fly. IICA worked with the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) and the Association of Chilean Exporters (ASOEX) to reduce the risk of the pest entering the country and spreading throughout the national territory. The Office assumed responsibility for the Technical Secretariat of the Executive Committee to Evaluate the SAG's National Fruit Fly Program and Biosafety Issues in Border Controls and collaborated in a study on the status of the fruit fly in South America that made it possible to establish the critical control points for containing the spread of the pest.

In 2005, working with the SAG and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), IICA held the First Hemispheric Meeting on International Border Controls for Animal and Plant Health. Experts from most countries in the hemisphere and representatives of the European Union, China, Japan, New Zealand and Australia took part. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange opinions and learn about the status of the strategies and controls that sanitary and phytosanitary agencies use at authorized border

crossings, and to identify new strategies and critical points to make border control measures more effective.

During the period 2002-2008, IICA supported MINAGRI and the SAG in preparing the Livestock Information System for the Traceability of Animal and Meat Products. It also applied the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) tool to the SAG's Livestock Protection Division and supported the participation of specialized Chilean institutions in the activities of the Codex Alimentarius Committee and the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In the field of horizontal cooperation, IICA promoted the institutional development of the National Service for Plant and Seed Quality and Health (SENAVE) and the National Service for Animal Quality and Health (SENACSA) of Paraguay. A number of advisory and training activities were carried out to strengthen technical capabilities, human capital, interaction with the private sector and market access. The advisory and training activities for SENAVE focused on phytosanitary surveillance, seed certification and plant quarantine and other topics. The advisory services and training activities for SENACSA involved, among other things, risk assessment, livestock protection systems, information systems for sampling and monitoring (epidemiological surveillance) and diagnostic techniques in animal health.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

During the period 2002-2008, IICA supported the Deputy Ministry of Agriculture in establishing and implementing the Agricultural Exchange and providing follow-up to, and disseminating information about, the country's agricultural



negotiations and trade agreements. The Institute also assisted the Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP) with a technical study of the participation of small farmers in the Exchange. Furthermore, the Office coordinated the work of the Southern Group of Agricultural Negotiators (GINA-Sur), aimed at reaching agreement on positions related to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the WTO (2003). The Institute disseminated information about Chile's experiences in negotiating free trade agreements among counterpart institutions in Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Uruguay; and provided technical support for the efforts to obtain authorization for Chilean meats to enter the U.S. (2005).

In 2002, IICA promoted the improvement of management capabilities, information and technological innovation for producers through organizational strengthening and the development of human capabilities. Technical meetings were held with small, medium-sized and large-scale producers and with representatives of associations of exporters and university and NARI research programs, with the support of Uruguayan experts in meat and dairy production. In 2004, the Institute collaborated in the training of SAG technical personnel for the implementation and management of a traceability system for cattle.

Working with the *Movimiento Unitario de Campesinos y Etnias de Chile* (MUCECH), the National Confederation of Small Farmer Cooperatives of Chile (CAMPOCOOP) and the *La Voz del Campo* confederation, in 2007 IICA collaborated in the design of a process aimed at placing farmers' operations on a professional footing. The Office also provided support for the promotion of the "Chile Qualifies" program and the development of a program to improve the quality of the supply of agricultural training, through actions carried out with the Red Agroforma in Chile's VIII Region.

With regard to national integration, until 2008 IICA served as the Technical Secretariat of the National Council of Agronomy Schools of Chile. At the hemispheric level, from 2004 to 2008 the Institute supported the organization and development of the regional forums of the agronomy faculties of the Expanded Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR). During the same period, IICA, FAO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) held video conferences for all of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) that dealt with management and competency issues in the agricultural sector. The Office also cooperated with MINAGRI in 2006 to prepare the profile of the National Project to Prevent Avian Influenza.

Between 2002 and 2008, IICA supported business development in the AFC subsector, especially with regard to cattle and sheep farming, for which workshops, projects and technical tours were implemented. The Institute fostered the establishment of the Chilean Food Safety Agency and the consolidation of the Livestock Program (2005). In 2006, a manual for small farmers was produced, to enable them to take part in the SAG's Animals Under Control Program (PABCO).

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

In Chile, IICA is regarded as a source of expertise with regard to the transfer of models and work strategies in rural communities. During the period 2002-2008, the Institute supported initiatives designed to promote sustainable rural development with a territorial approach in the country's rural communities. The Office's actions focused on strengthening the management capabilities of local organizations and improving the systems used to train farmers.

With regard to small-scale family agriculture, the Office of Studies and Agrarian Policies (ODEPA), INDAP, the *Movimiento Unitario de Campesinos y Etnias de Chile* (MUCECH) and IICA carried out an assessment of the productive, commercial and social conditions surrounding small-scale family agriculture, which was published in 2006 as *Pequeña agricultura en Chile: rasgos socio-productivos, clasificación territorial para la innovación*. IICA helped the MUCECH organize and lead workshops to design a system for placing farmers on a professional footing. A videoconference on the subject took place in 2007, with the participation of national representatives of organizations of small farmers in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil and Chile.

With respect to the implementation of actions aimed at implementing the territorial approach to rural development, in 2006 IICA, MINAGRI, the Municipality of Corral (*Region de los Rios*) and representatives of local small farmer organizations held a workshop to discuss and assess the situation of the population and production. The Institute continued providing support in 2007, when a workshop took place on ways of solving the problems of small and medium-sized agricultural producers. Five computers were also donated for the use of farmers' organizations in the area.

As part of the efforts to strengthen rural communities, the International Congress on Agricultural Trade of the Confederation of Family Farmers of MERCOSUR (COPROFAM) took place in 2006. This activity was carried out with IFAD, MERCOSUR, INDAP and MUCECH. A second important event was the First Chilean Congress on Rural Development, organized and held in 2008 by IICA and the Metropolitan Regional Government, with 500 participants from all over Chile. One of the congress' main results was the emergence of the Chilean Rural Development Network, which IICA is supporting.



d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

During 2002, IICA supported the implementation of the National Workshop on Intellectual Property (IP). It also published a document on this subject and new biotechnologies for agriculture in LAC. Furthermore, in 2005 the Office assisted the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA) with the implementation an assessment of the economic contribution made by technology research and transfer to Chile's production of citrus fruits and tomatoes. In 2006, a similar study was conducted in relation to meat and milk.

In 2006, the book "Nodes of cooperation for the Latin American and Caribbean countries" was published in two languages (Spanish and English). The publication includes a description of certain policies devised and implemented in Chile to promote the close coordination of the public and private agricultural sectors. Copies were distributed among all IICA Offices as a horizontal cooperation model. Furthermore, the Institute, Chile's International Cooperation Agency (AGCI) and ODEPA held the regional seminar "Development of Nodes of Excellence to Strengthen Capabilities Aimed at South-South Cooperation." Another important event held the same year was the Workshop on Precision Agriculture, where IICA presented a publication on this subject (focusing on the integration of knowledge for modern, sustainable agriculture). This document was produced in collaboration with the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agrifood and Agroindustry Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR).

IICA has an agreement in place with the Foundation for Agrarian Innovation (FIA), the purpose of which is to support the development of human capital for technical leadership in

agricultural innovation. Under this agreement, in 2008 the Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA) prepared the Strategic Business Plan to Establish a Program in Support of IP Management for the Public Agricultural Sector in Chile. The plan contains a detailed description of the support that public agricultural research institutions require in the field of IP, identifying the strengths of existing IP management systems, the opportunities they offer and the challenges they pose.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

In 2004 and 2005, IICA supplied INDAP with techniques and methodologies for environmental management and preservation. The Institute also sponsored the International Seminar on Environmental Services, organized by the University of Talca.

Furthermore, the Office prepared a proposal on the evaluation of agro-environmental policies from a territorial perspective that was presented to the incoming government. IICA also collaborated with MINAGRI on a number of priority issues, including environmental services and territorial development. Finally, the Institute was a member of the organizing committee of the Seminar on Climate Change and its Effect on Agriculture, which the FIA held in October 2007.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During the period 2002-2008, IICA strengthened the ties with its main strategic partners, which enabled to provide a timely response to requests for cooperation and technical support. The following is a summary of the most important actions carried out with the Office's strategic partners:

■ MINAGRI

- 2005. IICA prepared a document on the challenges facing, and outlook for, the agrifood sector and the training of human resources, working with the Council of Deans of Agronomy Schools, the National Agriculture Society, FAO and the Agronomist Association.
- 2006. The Office organized the First International Seminar on the Institutional Modernization of the Ministry of Agriculture, in collaboration with the country's Senate and the Universidad Austral de Chile.
- 2007. IICA contributed to the design of the project "New Ministry of Agriculture and Food" and led workshops held to study the proposals in the different areas in which the Institute specializes. The Office also prepared a document on the national agrifood policy and its institutional framework, working with the Food Safety Agency.
- 2008. IICA prepared a series of studies as part of the process of institutional modernization, with a view to transforming MINAGRI into the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The studies focused on the proposed institutional framework for food quality; the proposed implementation of a consumer unit within the ministry; technical underpinnings for the institutional design of the National System for Research and the Promotion of Innovations of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries; and the proposed incorporation of the National



Food Safety Policy into the institutional modernization of MINAGRI.

■ **Deputy Ministry of Agriculture**

- 2002. IICA contributed to the establishment of the Agricultural Exchange and supported the formation of the Association of Bonded Warehouses.
- 2004. The Institute and FAO organized the seminar "Risk Management in Agriculture."

■ **ODEPA**

- 2005. Together with INDAP and MUCECH, the Office prepared an assessment of the productive, commercial and social conditions surrounding AFC.
- 2006. The Institute published a book on the social and productive characteristics of small-scale agriculture in Chile and the territorial classification for innovation. IICA and the AGCI also held the Regional Seminar on the Development of Nodes of Excellence to Strengthen Capabilities Aimed at South-South Cooperation.

■ **INIA**

- 2004-2006. The Office supported the implementation of the project Evaluation of the Economic Contribution of Technology Research and Transfer to Chile's Economy, an activity carried out jointly with PROCISUR.
- 2006. IICA and the Chile Foundation supported the International Technical Visit to France, which allowed Chilean officials to acquaint themselves with new technologies used in the sheep-farming subsector. The Institute and PROCISUR also held a workshop entitled "Precision Agriculture: Integrating Knowledge for Modern, Sustainable Agriculture."

■ **INDAP**

- 2004. IICA supported the implementation of a study on the participation of AFC in the Agricultural Exchange. In the coastal dryland area of the VII Region, it also supported the execution of training activities in techniques and methodologies for environmental management and protection.
- 2005. The Office supported the implementation of projects designed to promote the integration of small farmers into export agriculture and familiarize them with the quality requirements for international markets.
- 2008. The Institute supported the implementation of courses and workshops to develop the competencies of small-scale producers based on national and international agricultural experiences. IICA also cooperated in the organization of workshops, seminars, technical tours, visits by specialists and the publication of manuals to develop capabilities and thereby ensure the quality of cattle and sheep products.

■ **Foundation for Agricultural Communications, Training and Culture (FUCOA)**

- 2005. The Office supported the publication of a document on the new conditions in the agricultural sector imposed by Chile's policy and the free trade agreements. Workshops were also held on the subject.

■ **SAG**

- 2002-2008. IICA supported and provided follow-up to the Chile/Peru Binational Program to Control the Fruit Fly in the Border Areas of Tacna and Moquegua, in Southern Peru, and in the province of Arica, in northern Chile.

- 2004. The Institute developed the Livestock Information System for the Traceability of Animal and Meat Products. It also trained public officials, producers and university researchers in aspects of milk quality and processing.
- 2005. IICA organized the First Hemispheric Meeting on International Border Controls for Animal and Plant Health, with support from FAO. It also collaborated in the development of the Livestock Information System for the Traceability of Animal and Meat Products.
- 2006. Working with the Poultry Producers Association (APA), the Office prepared the profile for the National Project to Prevent Avian Influenza.
- 2007. IICA supported the preparation of the Training Program for Veterinary Professionals in Emerging Agricultural Health and Food Safety Issues. The aim now is to turn it into a diploma course. SAG technical staff also received training to enable them to set up and manage a traceability system for cattle.

■ **FIA**

- 2005. Some of the most important joint activities were:
 - a) support for the Rural Education Workshops Program, designed to promote the development of the new capabilities demanded by the economic and productive changes;
 - b) training of leaders of AFC organizations;
 - c) support for the evaluation of the 2001-2006 Training Program for Agricultural Innovation, Pilot Project to Train Agricultural Technicians in New Zealand, and Support for the Commission for the Development of Human Capital for the Agricultural Sector, of the Chile: Food and Forest Powerhouse Council; and,
 - d) collaboration in the development of human capital to exercise technical leadership for agricultural innovation, supporting a study on the Strategic Business Plan to Establish a Program of Support for Intellectual Property Management for the Public Agricultural Sector in Chile, prepared by PIPRA.

■ **Universidad de Talca**

- 2005. The Institute sponsored the International Seminar on Environmental Services.

■ **Universidad de Chile, Universidad de Concepcion, Universidad Catolica de Temuco**

- 2004. IICA supported the design of graduate profiles and the definition of new study programs to modernize courses (agronomy, veterinary medicine, agricultural civil engineering and forest engineering).

■ **Universidad Austral de Chile, Region de los Rios**

- 2008. To decentralize international technical cooperation, and taking advantage of the cooperation agreement in place between the Universidad Austral de Chile (UACH) and IICA, the Institute decided to establish a sub-office on the UACH's premises in the city of Valdivia, Region de los Rios. This office is making it possible to strengthen the rural development project with a territorial approach under way in the district of Corral, territorialize the Institute's agroforestry activities, and identify and provide follow-up to new cooperation opportunities.

■ **Agricultural Insurance Committee (COMSA)**

- 2004. IICA supported the organization of an international seminar on the assessment of agro-climatic risk.
- 2008. The Office cooperated with the Agricultural Insurance Program, conducting a study to verify the history of operations related to the subsidy for agricultural insurance premiums. It also prepared a proposed communication tool for Agricultural Insurance against Climatic Phenomena and analyzed the technical and economic conditions for insuring avocado trees (*Persea americana*) against climatic phenomena.



■ **Municipality of Corral**

- 2007. A workshop on rural development with a territorial approach was held in Corral.
- 2008. Further work was carried out under the rural development with a territorial approach project in the district of Corral, which began in 2005. The Office undertook a characterization of the social conditions and production.

■ **National Council of Deans of Agronomy Schools of Chile**

- 2002-2008. IICA supported the organization and implementation of the meetings of the MERCOSUR Forum of Agronomy Schools.
- 2005. The Institute cooperated in the preparation of a project to promote the improvement of the quality of the courses offered by agricultural higher education institutions.

■ **AGCI**

- 2004. IICA supported the organization of the Subregional Seminar on Animal and Plant Health Controls and Agroforestry Export Standards, the implementation of the International Workshop on International Agricultural Policy and Trade, and the ALADI Course, involving representatives of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay, MINAGRI, ODEPA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

■ **FAO**

- 2007. Working with MINAGRI, IICA supported the organization of the international seminar "Food Quality Linked to Origin and Traditions in Latin America."

5. Modernization of the Office

During the period 2002-2008, the management of the IICA Office in Chile was adapted to modern requirements. Furthermore, people came to regard the Office as a source of expertise with regard to models and action strategies for solving problems, innovation and preparation for change. The use of administrative and technical management tools gradually improved and better communication was established with counterparts, which improved the Institute's image considerably.

The Office decided that its main objective should be to position the Institute and build external customer loyalty. To achieve this, it:

- Contacted counterparts and compiled all existing information about matters that still had to be resolved.
- Made optimum use of space, which facilitated the staff's work and the holding of meetings with strategic partners.
- Worked on a cause-and-effect matrix developed to address the issues of learning, finances, internal processes and customers.

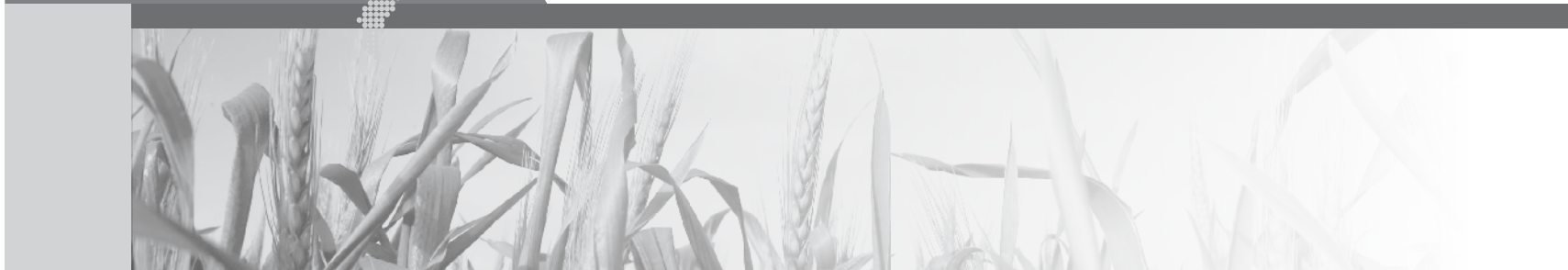
Some of the most significant results were as follows:

- Maintenance of a balanced budget.
- Maximum utilization of technologies and information systems.
- A strong, motivated team, with enhanced skills and competencies, ready to tackle the challenges of the third millennium.



- Greater confidence in the institution and its transparent use of resources, a higher profile and stronger ties with national institutions.
- Use of premises under a commodatum agreement for the period 2004-2010, which produced important savings.

IICA Office in **Paraguay**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Paraguay

Alex Barril¹

1. Introduction

This report is a summary of IICA achievements in Paraguay from 2002 to 2008 through implementation of the National Technical Cooperation Agenda, based on the new IICA model for technical cooperation, and guidelines given in the Medium Term Plan (MTP). During this period, the Institute was growing and consolidating; it redoubled efforts to undertake plans, programs, projects and actions for technical cooperation that would support the progress and development of agriculture and rural communities in the country.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Paraguay

The Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), with IICA technical cooperation and the active participation of representatives of production groups and the family farming sector, prepared a new state policy for the agricultural and rural sector. It also developed a strategic framework for agriculture in 2009-2018. With these position documents, the MAG clearly articulated the direction it was pursuing.

More complete information on the state of the rural sector became available, helping to strengthen stakeholders and institutions from the public and private sectors, especially in the area of decision-making. The IICA Observatory on the agricultural and forestry sector, updated twice a year, and a variety of publications (the Paraguay chapter of the Agri-food Electronic Newsletter of the Southern Cone; newsletters including Sinopsis, IICA Connection, Access and Agrosalud; working documents, books and reports) all went into this effort.

The libraries and documentation centers of the School of Agricultural Sciences of the Universidad Nacional de Asunción (UNA), the School of Veterinary Medicine of the UNA and the MAG Moisés Bertoni National Library of Agriculture expanded their services by joining international information networks through membership in the Agricultural Information and Documentation Service of the Americas (SIDALC).

The MAG, with technical assistance from IICA, prepared and implemented a program for reengineering and training human resources, incorporating policies and standards for human resources management geared toward achieving greater efficiency. This was a response to new challenges for promoting sustainable rural development.

The MAG National Department of Project Coordination and Administration (DINCAP), with support from IICA,

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conducted the Program for Development and Diversification of Small Cotton Farms (PRODESAL). It also received technical guidelines for participatory supervision and evaluation of results delivered by outsourced technical assistance companies under contract.

With technical assistance from IICA, the MAG Department of Agricultural Education (DEA) undertook a curriculum review, later used to develop profiles for the Agricultural Technician diploma program attuned to the current needs of the agricultural sector. Teachers from various public and private schools of agriculture were then trained to use the new curriculum for the Agricultural Technician diploma, in line with the provisions of the Education Reform program.

The “*Colonias Unidas*” Vocational Training Center received technical assistance from IICA to train farmers from Itapúa. Participating farmers acquired greater knowledge and skills in matters of production, integrated management of pests and diseases, and post-harvest management.

IICA and the Cooperative Program for Agrifood and Agroindustrial Technology Development in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR) cooperated with the Agricultural Research Department of the MAG to build knowledge of precision agriculture among 200 entrepreneurs, producers, professionals and students of the agricultural sector, in the International Seminar on Dissemination of Experiences with Precision Agriculture in the Southern Cone.

With technical cooperation from IICA, the UNA School of Veterinary Medicine held extension activities on livestock production, benefiting 170 professionals, producers and students from the area.

MAG also received assistance in building up its management and technical skills, especially through a project for human resources training in the public agrarian and rural sector. As a result, 550 technicians had the opportunity to learn more about management skills, agricultural production techniques and promotion of farmer organizations.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

The National Service for Animal Quality and Health (SENACSA) and the National Service for Plant and Seed Quality and Health (SENAVE) were strengthened with assistance from IICA. They now have trained personnel and are able to apply harmonized measures that produce direct and indirect benefits, such as assuring production and trade of products, byproducts and derivatives from the agricultural sector.

Thanks to IICA technical assistance and horizontal technical cooperation from the Chilean Agency of International Cooperation (AGCI) and the Chilean Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG), SENACSA developed and implemented a program to strengthen its technical and administrative capacities for hygiene and health control in slaughterhouses.

IICA also supported the National Technical Committee for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures improve its capacities for analyzing, approving and implementing proposals, agreements

and standards for sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures. One contributing factor was the publication of an electronic newsletter with information on the latest SPS developments in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The newsletter was distributed among committee members and other participants in the sector, in compliance with a request of the WTO SPS committee. In the interest of supporting more deeply into this subject, IICA helped organize a national workshop on interpreting WTO sanitary and phytosanitary measures. The event was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE), the MAG and IICA.

With Institute support, SENACSA made considerable progress in developing an investment project profile for institutional modernization. The purpose is to improve animal health and food safety, and in this way, meet the challenge of Paraguay's growing participation in world trade, while protecting public, animal and environmental health. IICA technical cooperation also led SENAIVE to develop a comprehensive in-house human resources training program.

The Institute supported SENACSA and other sectoral institutions in conducting studies and implementing procedures and in setting up Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) systems, all for the purpose of reentering the beef market in the European Union (EU).

With technical cooperation from IICA, SENAIVE undertook a performance evaluation by applying the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" instrument for national plant protection organizations. This laid the groundwork for the Service to undertake a process of full institutional restructuring. SENACSA, with cooperation from the Institute and by applying the "Performance, Vision and Strategy" (PVS) instrument for national veterinary services (IICA/OIE), completed an institutional assessment that culminated in the development

of a project for functional restructuring and implementation of a human resources training program that will equip it to provide better service.

The Institute also supported a process for equipping animal health and food safety entities to lend more efficient services and more effectively monitor compliance with legal, institutional and technical requirements. A critical component was IICA's cooperation in developing a proposal Traceability System for Cattle in Paraguay (SITRAP). This system then served as a basis for a voluntary pilot plan on traceability, and when results are available, it can be expanded to cover the entire country.

On 2005, under the terms of Executive Order no. 6.626, Paraguay established the National Technical Committee for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CTNMSF), made up of SENAIVE, SENACSA, the National Bureau of Technology and Standards (INTN), the MAG, the MRE, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSPyBS), the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MIC) and representatives of the private agricultural sector. This committee, with technical cooperation from IICA, defined the conditions for coordinating activities between the public and private sectors in order to carry out national agendas for sanitary and phytosanitary measures. As a result, Paraguay will be able to take an active part in meetings of the WTO SPS Committee and oversee nationwide compliance with measures adopted by that Committee.

The Institute also worked with the MAG to prepare proposal regulations for organic farming, consistent with the standards and provisions established in the WTO SPS Agreement, COSAVE and Codex Alimentarius.

Three departments of the MAG—the Department for Standards and Control of Foods of Animal Origin (DINOCOA), the



Department of Livestock Protection (DPP) and the Department of Plant Protection (DDV)—all improved their performance through training programs held with cooperation from IICA. Technical staff learned about management of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, quality systems and how to audit companies that manufacture veterinary medicines. These agencies can now work more effectively since they were provided with national standards and laws consistent with international SPS legislation, and with standards and procedures for the use of pesticides and agricultural inputs.

Finally, IICA provided technical cooperation to train technical staff from SENACSA and SENAVE in quarantine and biosafety systems for cattle and poultry. It lent technical support for the development of a proposal bill to establish SENAVE and a proposal bill to modernize SENACSA. Finally, it worked with SENAVE to develop computer-based systems for issuing phytosanitary certificates.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

With technical cooperation from IICA, the MIC Investment and Export Network (REDIEX) organized and carried out a training course to improve business skills for export activities. This was done in fulfillment of a stated objective of the Fruit and Vegetable Sectoral Board to expand its know-how on identifying market opportunities and making decisions to gain a better position in foreign markets.

The MAG General Directorate for Planning (DGP) organized a workshop on international trade negotiations and agriculture, with technical support from IICA. Participating national experts from the public and private sectors were able to learn more about international trade negotiations.

Through the university-level Program for Specialization in Agribusiness Management at the Universidad Católica Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, the Institute helped train skilled technical specialists. Similarly, in cooperation with IICA, the UNA School of Agricultural Sciences offered a course on international trade negotiations and agriculture to train technical specialists from the public and private sectors.

Because of Institute assistance, the MIC REDIEX network is now able to provide differentiated strategies (by level of development) to improve the business skills of organizations belonging to the Fruit and Vegetable Sectoral Board.

Working in conjunction with social and political participants in the meat chain, IICA contributed to the development of a proposal bill on beef production.

It also provided technical and logistical support to the MAG, the MIC, the Paraguayan Chamber of Cereal and Oilseed Exporters (CAPECO), the Asunción Commodity Exchange (BVPASA) and the National Commerce and Services Chamber of Paraguay (CNCSP), equipping them to develop a feasibility study on establishment a commodity exchange for agricultural products and inputs. With technical cooperation from the Institute, the MAG, SENACSA, the Paraguayan Rural Association (ARP) and the Paraguayan Beef Chamber (CPC) designed a program to improve livestock production, intended to make the subsector more competitive over the medium term.

CAPECO held three workshops on the futures and options market for agricultural futures, with technical and logistical cooperation from IICA. Businesses, industries, producers and professionals from the agricultural sector learned more about selling their products on the futures market.

Finally, with Institute technical cooperation, the national legislative Agriculture and Livestock Committee and the MAG prepared their sectoral strategy and extended opportunities for dialogue between the public and private sectors for developing subsectoral competitiveness agendas.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA, the Technical Planning Secretariat, the MAG Department of Agricultural Extension and the UNA School of Agricultural Sciences supported the municipality of Paraguarí in preparing a development plan for the District of Paraguarí, conceived on a participatory basis with key spokespersons from the community. In addition, with technical support from the Institute, personnel from the local office of the MAG Agricultural Extension Department of that municipality, along with representatives of civil society, improved their technical know-how by participating in a workshop on the fundamentals of sustainable development with a territorial approach and management of instruments for defining and implementing plans, programs and projects.

IICA also cooperated with the UNA School of Agricultural Sciences in designing an alumni relations program. In the interest of helping to design strategies and actions to improve the situation of rural communities, the Institute supported the production and publication of a book presenting a profile of family farming in the country, "Caracterización de la agricultura familiar campesina en el Paraguay." IICA also helped develop and implement a program to build technical skills among employees and teachers at the UNA School of Veterinary Medicine.



The Institute provided support for the MAG in many different ways: a) To help the Ministry acquire the conditions necessary for designing more efficient technical assistance services, IICA compiled information on experiences with outsourcing technical assistance; b) It contributed to the expansion and improvement of comprehensive technical assistance services by implementing a special program to support the cotton-growing sector for the 2004-2005 harvest, directly benefiting 80,000 small-scale farmers and their families living in extreme poverty; and, c) It helped the DGP department of the MAG develop greater expertise for writing sectoral policies and monitoring their implementation. In this process, it paid special attention to analyzing and fine-tuning the concept of "family farming," in the framework of the new institutional policy to support this subsector. For this purpose, it prepared a checklist to identify those producers and farms that should be included in the National Census of Family Farmers (RENAF).

Finally, IICA worked with the MAG and the Rural Welfare Bureau (IBR) to design a system for monitoring and evaluating the Bansocial Rural-Jopoí-Mbareterã pilot project serving 4000 farm families in the Department of San Pedro, and preparing a report on progress made, changes still needed, and user acceptance and expectations.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

Under a cooperation agreement between the MAG, the Center for Studies of Eco-development, Altervida and IICA, a national strategy was developed to promote organic and agro-ecological production, with broad-based participation by the public, private and academic sectors and by family farmers. The document was approved in August 2008 via a

ministerial ruling. Moreover, thanks to IICA cooperation, the MAG and Altervida now have a strategic plan of action for developing organic and agro-ecological farming in Paraguay. An institutional technical committee was set up to implement the plan, with representatives from the MAG, IICA and Altervida.

Experts and authorities from the public and private sectors gained greater knowledge of biotechnology and biosafety after participating in a national workshop on biotechnology and biosafety, conducted with cooperation from IICA. A channel for dialogue was opened so that these sectors could comment on adopting the latest developments in biotechnology and biosafety. In addition, IICA organized informational forums and working meetings, bringing together representatives of the public, private and academic sectors to educate them about the implications of the Cartagena Protocol for biosafety and its implementation by the MAG, the Secretariat of the Environment (SEAM) and SENAIVE.

With technical cooperation from IICA, a baseline study was completed on the current state of biotechnology and biosafety in Paraguay. As part of the study, surveys and interviews were conducted with people from the public, private and academic sectors involved with biotechnology and biosafety.

IICA and PROCISUR organized a regional workshop on institutional modernization of National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) and human resources policies. Public and private stakeholders associated with agricultural research were able to expand their knowledge and are now in a better position to carry out modernization of the national system for agricultural research and technology as a result of their participation in this workshop.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

Professionals from the SEAM, the MAG and universities had the opportunity to attend a workshop on planning for watershed management, organized by the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and IICA, where they deepened their knowledge of watershed management.

SEAM technical staff and people from other public institutions and the academic sector were also able to develop technical skills for applying environmental management assessment models in the third regional course on models for environmental management assessment in the rural sector of the Southern Cone, organized by IICA with cooperation from PROCISUR.

In partnership with the natural resources management project of the German cooperation agency (KfW), the MAG received technical and administrative assistance and was able to begin teaching small-scale producers and their families about sustainable agricultural production systems.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

During 2002-2008, IICA continually worked to strengthen its ties with strategic partners, both internationally and nationally:

- a) It furthered its working relationships with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) as a result of successful performance by projects conducted under IICA leadership; the Institute was thus able to expand its field of action;
- b) It entered

into a strategic partnership with the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), combining efforts to develop projects for tree planting and agro-ecological production under the program for healthy municipalities; and, c) It created a body for inter-institutional coordination to support livestock health; participating agencies include FAO, PAHO, the Pan American Foot-and-Mouth Disease Center (PANAFTOSA) and IICA.

IICA, FAO and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) combined efforts in support of the CPC and the ARP by holding an international seminar on improving veterinary public health in Paraguay. Participating technical experts and livestock producers had the opportunity to expand their knowledge of agricultural health.

IICA built sound working relations with private-sector institutions, including the Confederation of Producer Associations, the Agricultural Biotechnology Institute, the Federation of Production Cooperatives, the Universidad Nacional and the Universidad Católica.

These stronger relations with strategic partners, together with cooperation from the World Bank, culminated in a workshop on applying the PVS (Performance, Vision and Strategy) instrument, with participation by PAHO, FAO, the National Food and Nutrition Institute (INAN), the FoCoSeP project, and the European Union Technical Secretariat of Planning.

With technical cooperation from the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fishing of Uruguay, managed and facilitated by IICA, the MAG Department of Agricultural Census and Statistics upgraded its program for conducting the National Agricultural Census, having acquired forms and procedures consistent with local conditions and with criteria applied internationally.




An international seminar for developing and strengthening family farming was the direct result of joint, coordinated action by the International Development Federation of MERCOSUR (FIDA-MERCOSUR), IICA, the MAG, the National Agricultural Union and the MERCOSUR Coordinator of Family Farmer Organizations of MERCOSUR (COPROFAM). Participants, in conjunction with organizations representing small-scale agricultural producers, analyzed and defined the fundamentals of policies and strategies to make family farmers in Paraguay more competitive and profitable.

As a joint activity by IICA, the Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA) of the University of California at Davis, the Paraguayan Association of Plant Breeders (PARPOV) and the Association of Seed Producers of Paraguay (APROSEMP), a workshop was held on intellectual property rights and the legal challenges that face agribusinesses wishing to adopt technological innovations. The workshop provided an opportunity for technical staff from public and private institutions to acquire the latest information on the subject of intellectual property rights.

5. Modernization of the Office

The IICA office made every effort to modernize and perform more efficiently. In order to respond to priorities established in the National Technical Cooperation Agenda, the office set up a Documentation and information Center.

The following new positions were created: Coordinator of the Plan of Action for Technical Cooperation and Specialist in Education and Training; Specialist in Networks and



Telecommunications; Specialist in Agricultural Health and Food Safety, and Specialist in Technology and Innovation, and Biotechnology.

The office also purchased and installed the equipment needed for joining the IICA Virtual Private Network. Finally, a multipoint videoconferencing system was acquired, installed and configured, and the office meeting room was equipped with audio devices for conferences and other events.

IICA Office in **Uruguay**



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

IICA Office in Uruguay

Manuel Otero¹

1. Introduction

The following is a summary of IICA's contribution to the development of agriculture and rural communities in Uruguay. It presents, clearly and concisely, the results achieved during the period 2002-2008 in implementing the National Technical Cooperation Agenda drawn up with government agencies and public and private institutions involved in agriculture.

2. Repositioning of Agriculture and Rural Life in Uruguay

The IICA Office, the newspaper *El País* and consulting firm SERAGRO created a lecture series entitled "State policies: agriculture in the years ahead," to provide an opportunity for reflection and dialogue on strategic issues related to Uruguayan agriculture's links with the rest of the world. The activity made it possible to generate and disseminate important information for the sector; and to enhance the capacity for strategic thinking and analysis of the outlook for the nation's agricultural activities in the new international context. Five annual lecture series took place (comprising three lectures each) in which renowned international specialists and panels

of Uruguayan experts took part. An average of 2000 people attended each series, with the number rising once the Institute began to offer webcasts.

IICA also contributed to the establishment of a discussion forum on education as a key factor in repositioning agriculture and rural life. The initiative led to the creation of the Standing National Forum for the Development of Human Resources to Meet the Challenges of the New Rurality, made up of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP), the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), the Universidad de la Republica (UDELAR), the National Administration of Public Education-Central Board of Directors (ANEP-CODICEN) and agricultural associations. The Office has been in charge of the forum's Executive Secretariat since it was created and has promoted a systematic process of consensus building among all the stakeholders, analyzing and proposing the changes needed for the agriculture of the future. The Institute also held training events, workshops and videoconferences, such as the "Global dialogue on education for the rural population: organization of partnerships and public-private networks and their contribution to the development of policies in the sector." This activity was implemented jointly with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), with support from the World Bank

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(WB). Another important event was the continuing education workshop “Towards the new rurality. Potential and outlook for education,” held in support of the ANEP.

To make schoolchildren more aware of the strategic importance of the nation’s agricultural sector, IICA assisted the Department of Rural Education (DER) of the Primary Education Council and the MGAP in producing and disseminating the school video “Uruguay’s greatest treasure” and a guide for teachers entitled “The strategic importance of Uruguay’s agricultural sector.” These tools facilitate the preparation of classes and teachers’ classroom work; they are designed to give children a better understanding of the issue. Elementary teachers use them on a daily basis.

A Distance Learning Strategy was prepared for rural areas, as a tool for publicizing, in Uruguay and around the world, the main strengths of the sector in general and of agricultural production chains in particular. The Office helped develop and execute the distance-learning platform *Uruguay agroalimentario al mundo*, under a strategic partnership of ten public and private institutions involved in the country’s agricultural development. The platform has been used to offer ten international courses that focus on the strengths of Uruguay’s agriculture, benefiting over 300 students per year, mostly professionals and technicians in other Spanish-speaking countries.

IICA institutionalized an information and communication platform to help reposition agriculture and rural life on Uruguay’s development agendas. This made it possible to: a) create the National Network of Agricultural Libraries and link it to the Institute’s Hemispheric Network, through the Agricultural Information and Documentation System of the Americas (SIDALC); b) assist the National Rural Development Commission (CNFR) with a series of meetings for 100 rural

young people involved in family farming operations (dairy and livestock production and other activities); c) strengthen the sector of agricultural communicators and the Uruguayan Association of Agricultural Journalists (AUDEPA); d) working with the Rural Association of Uruguay (ARU), create a center for agricultural journalists, to provide agricultural communicators with the tools they need to do a better job during the El Prado annual rural fair; and, e) develop a strategy for repositioning IICA in Uruguay and disseminating information about its activities in the press and at agricultural events such as the International Livestock Exhibition and the Agroindustrial and Commercial Show of the Rural Association of Uruguay, which attracts 500,000 people each year.

3. Results of Technical Cooperation

a. Promoting Agricultural Health and Food Safety

To help improve the coordination of the government agencies and private-sector organizations that make up the National Animal Health System, the Institute supported: a) the preparation of a National Animal Health Research Plan (PLANISA), based on an initiative spearheaded by the School of Veterinary Medicine of the Universidad de la Republica and the MGAP’s General Directorate of Livestock Services. These institutions, working with the National Meat Institute (INAC), the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIA), the team of the Ministerial Cabinet for Innovation, the National Research and Innovation Agency (ANII), the Veterinary Medicine Society and the National Academy of Veterinary Medicine promoted and validated a process

of discussions on the animal health research needs of the main production chains during the period 2010-2015; b) the implementation of an accreditation program for private veterinarians, headed by the School of Veterinary Medicine of the Universidad de la Republica (UDELAR), which helped train nearly 900 professionals; c) a training activity entitled “Accreditation of private veterinarians for government health campaigns. The experience of Chile, the United States and Mexico;” d) the production of two videos entitled “The importance of animal health as a national asset” and “The role of agricultural establishments as a barrier to the spread of animal diseases,” financed by the Banco de la Republica Oriental del Uruguay (BROU) and involving agricultural associations; e) the implementation of four seminars that had a nationwide impact - “Animal welfare,” “Estimating economic losses in livestock,” “Simulations of exotic diseases” and “Economic impact of animal diseases;” f) the implementation of seven technical workshops entitled “Sanitary management as a productive tool;” and, g) a survey entitled “Institutional Performance of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System of Uruguay.”

IICA applied the Performance, Vision and Strategy (PVS) methodology to the MGAP’s General Directorate of Agricultural Services (DGSSAA). A series of workshops were held, with the active participation of government technical and administrative staff and representatives of the private sector, to promote priority setting and strategic planning.

The Institute supported the process of creating the Standing Veterinary Committee (CVP), a body that provides support to the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) in the area of animal health. Based at the IICA Office in Uruguay, the Committee was instrumental in increasing the national and regional capacity to prevent and control the impact of animal health risks and in securing implementation of the Project to control

and eradicate avian influenza and other transboundary diseases, financed by the WB.

The Institute promoted the participation of Uruguayan delegates in numerous meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which are held in Geneva; and collaborated in the preparation of national reports. This work was funded by the IICA-USDA Agreement.

b. Promoting Trade and the Competitiveness of Agribusinesses

As part of the regional integration process, the Institute supported the creation of the CAS and the technical bodies linked to this political forum. The CAS is a ministerial forum for consultations and the coordination of regional actions by the countries of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) plus Chile and Bolivia. Together, these countries account for one quarter of the world’s food production. The Institute is in charge of the Technical and Administrative Secretariat of this body, which is based at the IICA Office in Uruguay.

The Institute assisted the Administrative Commission of the Montevideo Model Market (CAMM) with: a) the relocation and development of the market (studies were carried out on the situation and outlook for the main markets in Latin America, and on the feasibility of developing an agrifood hub; b) the preparation of the project “Democratization of access to information in the model market;” and, c) the publication, with the Agricultural Plan Institute, of the document “Agricultural financing: challenge for Uruguay.”

IICA promoted capacity building to make Uruguayan agribusinesses more competitive and enable them to participate

successfully in agricultural negotiations. The actions promoted included implementation of the seminar “Technological, social and environmental challenges facing the meat chains of the countries of the Expanded MERCOSUR,” organized jointly with the Cooperative Program for the Development of Agrifood and Agroindustry Technology in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR). The Institute also prepared documents and technical studies on trade negotiations and market access, especially the “Uruguay 2020 Agricultural Project: Developing Competitiveness Beyond Short-term Situations.” The Office invited a group of qualified specialists and experts to discuss major issues, construct scenarios and formulate medium- and long-term proposals as input for the design and implementation of policies for Uruguay’s agricultural sector. This exercise led to the production of the publication, *El agronegocio uruguayo, pilar del país productivo*, which was disseminated nationwide.

The Institute supported the development of the entrepreneurial skills of rural young people and women and their participation in integration processes, to equip them with the tools they need to tap the opportunities offered by the international agricultural scenario. The most important actions promoted included: a) the Fifth Meeting of the Southern Cone Network of Young Rural Members of Cooperatives, where 100 young people from Uruguay and other parts of the region were trained; b) the seminar “Young people’s Uruguay: participation for innovation and development;” and, c) the design of the project “Support for the initiatives of young livestock entrepreneurs and their links to the rural movement,” in support of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF).

IICA worked with national institutions to facilitate the integration of small producers into productive processes. The most important achievements included the creation of a Forum for Small-scale Food Producers, working with the Technological Laboratory of Uruguay (LATU), the School of

Veterinary Medicine of the Universidad de la Republica and the Municipal Government of Montevideo. The Institute’s Office in Uruguay is in charge of the forum’s Executive Secretariat. Six regional workshops were held to assess and analyze the situation in the sector and a proposal prepared for the sector’s development. IICA also set up a Micro-projects Fund, to help improve the production, processing and marketing processes of small-scale cheese producers in Uruguay, in collaboration with the MGAP. Seven projects were co-financed, based on the results of which the partners entered into negotiations with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Finally, the Institute worked with the National Farm Board (JUNAGRA) and PROCISUR to systematize a group of Uruguayan agricultural partnering experiences, which were published in the document *Las organizaciones de productores y el desarrollo de la granja: oportunidades y desafíos*.

c. Promoting the Development of Rural Communities Based on a Territorial Approach

IICA supported departmental governments with land planning and management processes in the rural milieu and the formulation and evaluation of rural development policies and projects. This work involved the following actions: a) the creation of the Consortium for the Development of the Eastern Region of Uruguay, comprised of five departments (Cerro Largo, Lavalleja, Maldonado, Rocha and Treinta y Tres). Based on this experience, a publication was produced to disseminate the model and apply it in other regions of the country; b) support for the departmental governments of Paysandu and Rio Negro with land planning and management processes, through the creation and implementation of Departmental Development Agencies (ADD); c) at the request of the Directorate of Productive Development of the Municipal Government of



Canelones, IICA prepared a rural development plan with a territorial approach for the northeast of the department. In doing so, and based on the results of 19 workshops held with local people and institutions in the region, the Office discussed and prepared the document *Ideas, fuerza y modelo de gestión para un plan de desarrollo en el Noreste Canario* (NEC); d) the Institute collaborated with the Municipal Government of Tacuarembó (IMT) and local public and private institutions in implementing the workshop “ICT and Rural Development;” and, e) working with the NGO, Interdisciplinary Center for Development Studies-Uruguay (CIEDUR), IICA assisted the Municipal Government of Montevideo in identifying strategic lines of action for developing its rural areas.

The Institute devised the conceptual underpinnings of the framework for sustainable rural development with a territorial approach in Uruguay. The work involved the preparation of the documents: a) *Enfoques y estrategias para enfrentar la pobreza rural en Uruguay*, which presents the social panorama of the rural territories and applies the theoretical-conceptual framework of rural development with a territorial approach and; b) *Sistematización de experiencias en desarrollo rural con enfoque territorial en los Departamentos de Montevideo, Paysandú y Tacuarembó*, produced in collaboration with the Regional Program of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD-MERCOSUR) and UDELAR. The Office held training events and technical forums on rural development with a territorial approach. These included the national seminar “Sustainable rural development with a territorial approach: policies and strategies for Uruguay,” organized in partnership with IFAD, the MGAP and Universidad de la Empresa (UDE), to provide an opportunity to discuss the formulation of public policies and strategies incorporating the concept.

IICA helped establish a conceptual framework for family agriculture to support the design and implementation of

differentiated policies. It assisted the MGAP with the preparation of a document containing a definition and characterization of family agriculture in Uruguay. IICA’s Regional SRD Specialist contributed to this effort, aimed at tapping the experiences of the countries of the Expanded MERCOSUR for the benefit of Uruguay. As part of a wider initiative, the Office prepared a document that characterized family agriculture in Uruguay for inclusion in the regional document *Agricultura familiar en el Cono Sur.*”

The Institute contributed to the implementation of innovative institutional mechanisms and projects with a territorial approach, to improve the management of rural development. The actions included: a) the consolidation of the annual competition to highlight personal experiences, *Hablan los protagonistas del desarrollo rural*, which is carried out with support from UDELAR, the Latin American Center for Human Economics (CLAEH), the Rural Uruguay Program and the Ministry of Social Development (MIDES). The first four competitions generated entries documenting 120 experiences of groups of entrepreneurs, mostly from the country’s provinces; and, b) support for the consolidation of the Network of Departmental Development Offices (RODDE), a mechanism for sharing and coordinating experiences, information and local and regional development projects. The IICA Office in Uruguay is in charge of the network’s Executive Secretariat and the work includes producing a regular newsletter and implementing training events on strategic planning, information and communication technologies (ICT), microfinance and the design of projects with a territorial approach. Regular meetings took place, with an average of 12 departments participating on each occasion.

The Institute promoted knowledge management for rural development and the following results were achieved: a) with support from the Municipal Government of Tacuarembó and UDELAR, the IICA Office set up a knowledge network for rural

territories known as the Uruguayan Network for Sustainable Rural Development with a Territorial Approach (ReDes). Its role is to link public and private entities involved in rural development in Uruguay and enable them to communicate with one another. From the outset, the Office was assigned responsibility for the Technical Secretariat and for managing and uploading information to the network's virtual forum; b) the Institute supported the Planning and Budget Office (OPP), the MGAP, municipal governments, agricultural educational institutions and producers' organizations by systematizing and disseminating information and studies on good practices for the local management of rural development. A national meeting took place on the role of educational centers in local development strategies. Held under the auspices of the Standing National Forum for the Development of Human Resources to Meet the Challenges of the New Rurality, the 200 participants were drawn from government agencies, educational institutions and producers' organizations; c) IICA helped contextualize the role of rural schools in local development strategies and trained 320 rural primary school teachers in the use of digital and georeferenced information of the General Agricultural Census carried out by the MGAP; d) through work carried out with support from the ANEP and the Rural Uruguay Project (PUR), the Office supported the training of local development agents with an onsite/online course for 40 rural teachers. The participants learned how to use the Information System of the 2000 Agricultural Census and computer tools, in keeping with the objectives of the CEIBAL Plan (Educational Connectivity of Basic Informatics for Online Learning); e) The Institute supported the International Seminar on Training of Trainers for Rural Development, at the request of the Universidad de la Republica; f) IICA held a series of activities to discuss food production and sustainable development, the global crisis and challenges facing Uruguay, in support of the Social and Territorial Cohesion Program, *Uruguay Integra*, (EU/OPP). The discussions focused on the conflicts and synergies between the

current food production model and sustainable development in the current global context. The participants also considered the impact of changing production patterns and the implications for food security in Uruguay; and, g) the Office developed a map of food insecurity in Uruguay that includes proposals for addressing the problems of vulnerable groups, with the participation of the State and small producers.

d. Promoting the Introduction of Technology and Innovation in Agriculture

To help disseminate information about important technological issues, IICA held a series of seminars and carried out studies. These included: a) the presentation "State policies for biotechnology development: the Chilean experience;" b) the presentation "Status of agricultural biotechnology: opportunities and threats;" c) the study "Assessment of the economic, social and environmental impact of the INIA's research on rice and dairy farming;" d) the Fifth International Meeting of FORAGRO, implemented jointly by the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO), IICA and the INIA-Uruguay, with the collaboration of the Cooperative Research and Technology Transfer Programs (PROCI) and several Uruguayan organizations. The more than 100 international experts who took part focused on institutional innovations for agriculture with knowledge in the Americas of the 21st Century; and, e) the seminar-workshop in support of the National Seed Institute (INASE), entitled "Challenges of the seed industry in Uruguay: input based on the Chilean experience," in which 80 people took part.

IICA identified the biotechnology development needs of the MERCOSUR countries with an eye to creating a platform that would position the region to attract funding for strategic

projects related to the issue. The important activities implemented included: a) a series of 28 national workshops in the MERCOSUR countries to identify the biotechnology development needs of four production chains (meat, oilseeds, forestry and poultry farming) and three sectors (industry, health and agriculture); b) a series of seven regional seminars on the chains and sectors mentioned to identify priorities and analyze MERCOSUR's biotechnology development capabilities; and, c) the active participation of representatives of the biotechnology sector (governments, academia and the private sector) of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. These actions were carried out under the Program to Support Biotechnologies in MERCOSUR (BIOTECH), financed by the European Union, and co-organized with PROCISUR and the respective NARIs.

e. Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment

IICA developed guiding frameworks for making the management of the environment and natural resources integral components of agricultural and rural development policies. The Office prepared an inventory of agro-environmental policies in Uruguay, with financing from Canada's cooperation agency. The study identified the main initiatives of agro-environmental policy currently in place in Uruguay, analyzing them in the context of the most important problems and challenges facing the country in this area. The Institute also supported the first regional course on models for evaluating environmental management in the rural sector of the Southern Cone, promoted by PROCISUR. The participants, drawn from the countries of the region, received training in the use of three different methodologies for evaluating environmental management, which can be adapted to the specific situation in each country.



The Office identified and promoted activities aimed at mitigating the impact of global environmental changes. These included assistance for the MGAP's Responsible Production Project (PPR) with the creation of the System to assess the environmental impact of rural activities (EIAR). With support from PROCISUR, IICA developed the performance indicators for the new system, adapted the model of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) to the situation in Uruguay, produced the Procedures Manual (working with the EIAR System) and implemented the first training activity for national technical personnel in the management of the system. In partnership with PROCISUR, the Office held the international workshop "Dissemination of the results of the Climate Change and Rural Poverty project." Some 70 international specialists discussed the future impact of climate change on global and regional agriculture.

4. Strengthening Relations with Strategic Partners

As part its strategy for cooperation with national public and private institutions, IICA also has a policy for strategic partnerships with international organizations. The main results of these alliances are summarized below:

- *International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD):*
 - a) systematization of a group of initiatives involving rural development with a territorial approach in the departments of Paysandu, Tacuarembó and Montevideo; b) a national workshop entitled the "Impact of macroeconomic and sectoral policies on the implementation of rural development projects;" and, c) a national seminar entitled "Sustainable rural development with a territorial approach, policies and strategies for Uruguay."



- *Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)*: The Office secured financing for the following projects and studies: a) the project, “Validation of a technology transfer system for the agricultural sector using ICT, particularly distance education;” b) the project, “Democratization of access to information in the model market,” which earned first place in the Latin American competition “ICT for Business;” c) the project, “Creation of the Paysandu Development Agency;” and, d) the study, “Agricultural biotechnology capabilities in Latin America.”
- *World Bank (WB)*: IICA secured funding for the project “Strengthening health systems to prevent and control avian influenza and other transboundary diseases,” which IICA/Uruguay administers. A videoconference was held entitled “Education for the rural population: organization of public/private partnerships and networks and their contribution to the development of policies in the sector.”
- *United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)*: presentation, under the aegis of the RODDE, on the status of a TCP-Facility in support of oversight bodies and joint organization of a virtual course on the regulatory process of Codex Alimentarius.
- *Organization of American States (OAS)*: Under the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT) program, IICA carried out several seminars and workshops to train young trainers.
- *Latin American Integration Association (ALADI)*: IICA maintained the links first established in 1989, coordinating a series of training activities on topics related to the agricultural trade negotiations.
- *European Union (EU)*: The Office in Uruguay and PROCISUR won a restricted call for bids under the BIOTECH-

MERCOSUR/EU Project, to promote the development and use of biotechnologies in MERCOSUR.

- *Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)*: The Institute strengthened ties and gave priority to the application of the PVS methodology to the national institutions that make up the National Food Safety System.
- *United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)*: IICA and UNICEF agreed to train 320 rural teachers in the use of the Agricultural Census Information System (SICA) as a tool to support local development processes.

The Office organized a number of horizontal technical cooperation activities, including one carried out in coordination with IICA/Chile, in support of that country’s Agricultural Development Institute (INDAP). The Institute coordinated the visits of five delegations related to INDAP. A total of 55 producers, plus the technical personnel and leaders who accompanied them, received training in Uruguay’s production and marketing systems for meat, wool and milk. The Office also provided cooperation to enable the School of Veterinary Sciences (FCV) of the University of Asuncion (UNA) to present its courses for accreditation by MERCOSUR, preparing a strategic plan for that purpose.

5. Modernization of the Office

All the actions undertaken by IICA in Uruguay to achieve its strategic priorities benefited from the modernization of the Office and improvements to the quality of the Institute’s services, making its technical cooperation more effective.



The first modernization action, which took place in 2002, involved moving the Office to the premises of the MERCOSUR Secretariat, under an agreement signed with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay. As they are located in an emblematic building, the new offices have permitted IICA to strengthen links with the other international organizations operating out of the same premises (OAS, IFAD, UNESCO) and promote an “open-door policy.” It is the perfect location.

In 2004, the change of premises allowed the Office to undertake a major effort to raise awareness of the importance of the agricultural sector among pupils of state primary schools in Montevideo. Some 30 schools visited IICA’s offices, with approximately 1400 children involved in the activities. Under an agreement signed with the National School of Fine Arts, a competition was organized in which students were asked to create works addressing issues related to the agricultural sector. The entries received for this competition now adorn the walls of the Office. The new premises make it possible to collaborate with national counterparts, e.g., by facilitating meeting rooms and promoting virtual exchanges with recently acquired videoconferencing technology. All these “open door” actions have strengthened ties with counterparts and links with the cultural and academic environment.

With regard to quality, IICA’s work focuses on providing technical cooperation to its counterparts and to the community in general. The Office decided to set up a quality management system (QMS), based on UNIT-ISO 9001-2000 standards, that obtained national and international certification in 2006. Since

then, two additional audits have been carried out to provide follow-up to the certification exercise.

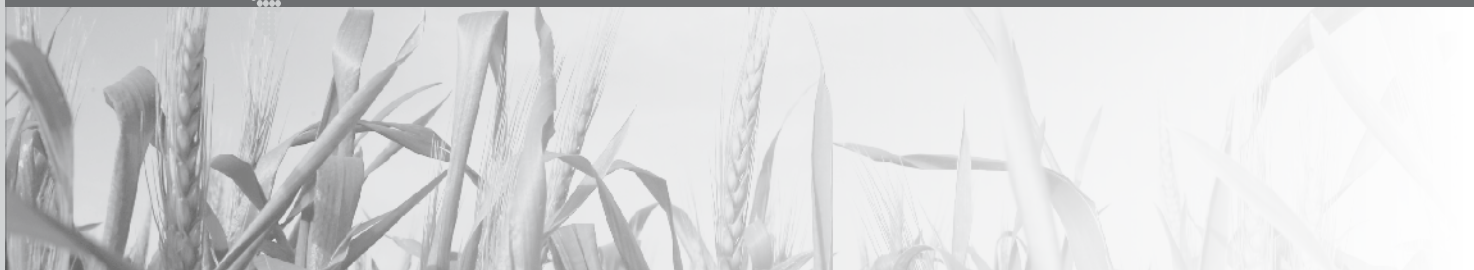
The Office conducts annual surveys to gauge the level of satisfaction of its counterparts. The input from these surveys is used to adjust actions and strengthen ties with the parties concerned. With three years of certified work using the QMS - and roughly two years of actions prior to that - IICA/Uruguay is an Office that believes in and applies the philosophy of continuous improvement, possesses indicators for follow-up, records what it does and is bent on strengthening the team. IICA’s counterparts have expressed more favorable opinions of the Institute each year, with the level of satisfaction reaching 93%.

In recent years, IICA has made ICT a focus of cooperation and also used them to modernize its management. The Distance Learning Platform is an example of both. The Office provides methodological support and also generates content that is included in the technological tools used. The Web page, recognized as one of the four good examples in Uruguay by FAO’s global portal, e-agriculture, has become a key instrument for managing cooperation. It includes tools such as online registration for events and online surveys. As tools for cooperation, sections such as *Uruguay Agroalimentario en Cifras* and *Coyuntura Agropecuaria* provide useful information. The intensive use of videoconferences is another clear example of the use of ICT for horizontal cooperation. Finally, IICA is beginning to design and implement projects linked to the use of these new technologies.



Annex

National Reports from Brazil and Haiti in their Official Language



*IICA's Contribution to the Sustainable Development of Agriculture,
Food Security and Rural Prosperity in the Americas*

Representação do IICA no **Brasil**



*A contribuição do IICA para o desenvolvimento sustentável da agricultura,
a segurança alimentar e a prosperidade rural nas Américas.*

Representação do IICA no Brasil

Ações de Cooperação Técnica

Carlos Américo Basco¹

1. Introdução

Este relatório apresenta, sucintamente, as principais ações de cooperação técnica da Representação do IICA no Brasil no período de 2002 a 2008, nas diferentes áreas de atuação definidas pelo Instituto como um todo.

2. Reposicionamento da agricultura e da vida rural no Brasil

A Representação do IICA no Brasil organizou diversos estudos e eventos. Dentre os mais importantes estudos cumpre destacar: “Metodologia de avaliação dos impactos dos Projetos de Cooperação Técnica” e “Informe Nacional da Situação e Perspectivas da Agricultura no Brasil” e, dentre os eventos, o “II Fórum Internacional de Políticas Públicas” e o “Seminário Emprego e Trabalho na Agricultura Brasileira”.

Com o Ministério da Integração Nacional, o IICA desenvolveu diferentes ações de cooperação técnica, tais como a elaboração da proposta de ação sobre programas estruturais dos Eixos Nacionais de Integração e Desenvolvimento e seus impactos no processo de desenvolvimento regional e nacional.

Elaborou uma “Cartilha” com o objetivo de contribuir para a exata compreensão da Lei do Bioterrorismo e suas implicações para as exportações do agronegócio brasileiro destinadas aos Estados Unidos.

Implementou o projeto de cooperação técnica ao Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento (MAPA) para aperfeiçoamento dos processos de Gestão Estratégica e Operacional e de Educação Corporativa, a partir da análise e reformulação dos processos de planejamento estratégico, gestão do conhecimento e capacitação, como contribuição para o desenvolvimento sustentável do agronegócio brasileiro.

3. Resultados cooperação técnica

Os principais resultados da ação de cooperação técnica do IICA no Brasil, alcançados ao longo do período deste relatório, são aqui resumidos, no contexto das seguintes áreas temáticas:

a. Promoção da sanidade agropecuária e da inocuidade

- Coordenação conjunta entre o IICA e o MAPA para execução de um projeto com vistas à implementação do plano de

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erradicação da praga *Bactrocera carambolae* na região de fronteira com os países vizinhos do norte da América do Sul, detectada no Estado do Amapá, por propagação a partir do Suriname, Guiana e Guiana Francesa, visando a impedir sua difusão para outros estados exportadores de frutas.

- Apoio à Execução do Programa de Âmbito Nacional para o Controle e a Melhoria da Qualidade do Leite e Produtos Lácteos Produzidos no País, que conta também com a participação da Confederação da Agricultura e Pecuária do Brasil (CNA) e do MAPA.
- Participação das reuniões de planejamento e gestão da Conferência Internacional de Rastreabilidade de Produtos Agroalimentares no MAPA, incluindo, entre outros temas, os sistemas de conformidade, a identificação de origem e rastreabilidade da cadeia agroalimentar.
- Organização e facilitação da Conferência Hemisférica de Vigilância e Prevenção da Influenza Aviária, realizada em Brasília, ressaltando seu caráter hemisférico e sua importância para a articulação de um plano de vigilância e prevenção dessa doença nas Américas.
- Elaboração do diagnóstico sobre pragas de sementes das principais hortaliças com risco potencial para o Brasil, no âmbito do trabalho de Análise de Risco de Pragas (ARP), tendo em vista a formulação da política pública fitossanitária.
- Atuação na caracterização dos serviços fitossanitários e veterinários nacionais, bem como nas propostas para sua modernização junto às Superintendências de Agricultura do MAPA e às Secretarias de Agricultura nos estados.
- Contribuição para o fortalecimento e reposicionamento institucional da Secretaria de Defesa Agropecuária. Nesse sentido, contribuiu para o seguinte: (i) desenvolvimento do Programa Nacional de Educação Sanitária “PNESA” SDA/MAPA; (ii) realização de oficinas para elaboração do Plano Diretor da Coordenação Geral de Apoio Laboratorial - CGAL/SDA/MAPA; (iii) capacitação de técnicos do MAPA e outras instituições sobre a aplicação e utilização do instrumento Desempenho, Visão e Estratégia (DVE) da OIE-IICA e da ONPF; (iv) promoção de mecanismos de transmissão das experiências em medidas sanitárias e fitossanitárias; (v) desenvolvimento de capacidades dos Laboratórios Nacionais de Referência Agropecuária (Lanagros); (vi) assistência técnica para elaboração dos projetos de desenvolvimento dos Laboratórios Nacionais de Referência Agropecuária; (vii) promoção da temática de Bem-Estar Animal no XXIV Encontro Anual de Etologia.
- Participação ativa na realização de eventos de nível internacional vinculados com os objetivos da área de Sanidade Agropecuária e Inocuidade de Alimentos (SAIA), ressaltando o fortalecimento das relações com a Agência Canadense de Inspeção de Alimentos (CFIA), que capacita pessoal dos Laboratórios Nacionais Agropecuários na utilização da técnica de PCR-RT (reação em cadeia da polimerase com transcrição reversa), para diagnóstico de febre aftosa e influenza aviária.
- O IICA tem trabalhado intensamente no desenvolvimento e adaptação de materiais de rádio e vídeo para difusão pelos meios de comunicação de massa, tais como a série de rádio “Mais vale prevenir... Uma decisão inteligente” e o vídeo “Gripe aviária, a prevenção é possível”, direcionados para o pequeno avicultor. Esses materiais têm demonstrado ser de vital importância para a prevenção e detecção

precoce da influenza aviária, caso ela venha a ocorrer no território nacional.

b. Promoção do comércio e da competitividade do agronegócio

- Estudo de nove cadeias produtivas do agronegócio brasileiro, avaliando as propostas e acompanhando o processo de formulação de diagnósticos e prognósticos com cenários de competitividade e bancos de dados sobre as principais cadeias produtivas.
- Participação no levantamento do Estado de Arte das Câmaras Setoriais e Temáticas no Brasil mediante a preparação de um diagnóstico conjunto com a Coordenação de Apoio às Câmaras Setoriais do Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento (MAPA). Assessoramento na elaboração e consolidação do Plano Estratégico da Coordenação de Apoio às Câmaras Setoriais (CGAC) e cooperação para a formulação e o acompanhamento da agenda de trabalho das câmaras setoriais e temáticas do Conselho Nacional do Agronegócio (CONSAGRO).
- Realização do “*Workshop* de Cadeias Produtivas” com o objetivo de divulgar os estudos das nove cadeias produtivas, patrocinado pela União Européia (EUMercopol). Na ocasião, os protagonistas da pesquisa analisaram e compararam, em tempo real, os resultados dos estudos.
- Produção da metodologia para o estudo das relações de mercado em sistemas agroindustriais e da metodologia para a avaliação dos impactos dos projetos de cooperação técnica e importantes documentos técnicos sobre Gestão de Risco e Seguro Rural.
- Cooperação técnica para a geração de capacidades e de um plano de desenvolvimento no Município de Formosa, GO, organizando um curso de capacitação em projetos de desenvolvimento e em financiamento, o que resultou na elaboração de três projetos de investimento.
- Coordenação de um seminário sobre o estado de arte do seguro agrícola e rural no Brasil, realizado entre a Coordenação de Gestão de Risco do MAPA e representantes do Departamento de Pesquisas Econômicas da UNICAMP. O principal objetivo foi selecionar os pontos relevantes priorizados, divulgados e discutidos no Seminário Riscos e Gestão do Seguro Rural.
- Apoio ao MAPA no delineamento e implementação do sistema informatizado de gerenciamento, incluindo aspectos de operacionalização, fiscalização e pagamento, no contexto do programa de subvenção federal, do prêmio do seguro rural no Brasil, para cumprimento da Lei 10.823, de 19.12.2003, e seu Decreto de Regulamentação.
- Elaboração e divulgação da Revista “Informe Agronegócio” (semestral); do “Caderno de Estatísticas do Agronegócio Brasileiro” (trimestral), do boletim “Biocombustíveis em FOCO” (mensal); e do informativo “Alertas de Agronegócio” (semanal).
- Centro de Referência do Agronegócio (CERAGRO): portal virtual cujos principais componentes são:
 - Documentos técnicos: acervo documental que reúne, organiza e disponibiliza publicações técnicas de vários temas relacionados ao agronegócio.
 - Observatório de Sistemas Agroindustriais: ambiente que acompanha e disponibiliza informações específicas



sobre as ações e iniciativas dos setores público e privado acerca das cadeias industriais do agronegócio.

- IICA DATA: espaço reservado às principais estatísticas do agronegócio, abrigando um banco de dados pormenorizado e completo que oferece tabelas, gráficos e valores confiáveis e bem-estruturados.

c. Fortalecimento das comunidades rurais

- Cooperação técnica ao Governo brasileiro na implementação da política nacional de apoio ao desenvolvimento sustentável e ao combate à pobreza rural sob a perspectiva territorial, estimulando o desenvolvimento endógeno dos territórios rurais e ampliando a capacidade de mobilização, organização, diagnóstico, planejamento e autogestão das populações locais em 118 territórios rurais.
- Cooperação técnica aos Programas de Combate à Pobreza Rural (PCPR), com financiamento do Banco Mundial, nos estados do Ceará, Bahia, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte, Sergipe, Piauí, Maranhão e Rio Grande do Sul.
- Juntamente com o Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário (MDA) e por intermédio do Projeto de Crédito Fundiário, adoção de uma abordagem alternativa para a reforma agrária mediante o financiamento de terras pelos agricultores.
- Cooperação técnica à Secretaria de Agricultura Familiar (SAF/MDA) para desenvolvimento do Programa Nacional de Fortalecimento da Agricultura Familiar (PRONAF).
- Criação do Fórum Permanente de Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável, constituído por uma rede de instituições

de diversos países, especialmente da América Latina, cujo objetivo é atuar como instância de intercâmbio, articulação e difusão de conhecimentos e experiências em desenvolvimento rural sustentável.

- Organização do II Fórum Internacional de Desenvolvimento Territorial, do Colóquio Internacional de Boas Práticas Territoriais no Brasil e na União Européia, do II Fórum Internacional de Debate sobre Desenvolvimento Territorial, do Seminário Agroenergia e Desenvolvimento de Comunidades Rurais Isoladas e de diversas Jornadas Temáticas para debater os desafios da gestão territorial nas áreas rurais.

d. Promoção e incorporação da tecnologia e da inovação na agricultura

- Juntamente com a Secretaria de Ciência e Tecnologia para a Inclusão Social do Ministério das Ciências e Tecnologia (SECIS/MCT), desenvolvimento de atividades de cooperação técnica visando à popularização e difusão da ciência e tecnologia no espaço rural brasileiro e à utilização de conhecimentos científicos e tecnológicos que favoreçam a inclusão social.
- Desenvolvimento de dois importantes cursos: Capacitação em Análise Regional com Uso de Cartografia Temática, juntamente com o Ministério da Integração Nacional, e Capacitação em Tecnologias Georreferenciadas, junto com o PCT IICA/DNOCS (Departamento Nacional de Obras Contra a Seca).
- Parceria com a EMBRAPA na execução do Programa de Inovação Tecnológica e Novas Formas de Gestão na Pesquisa Agropecuária – Agrofuturo, que enfatiza especialmente a



geração e utilização da pesquisa agropecuária para melhorar a competitividade e a qualidade das cadeias produtivas.

e. Promoção da gestão sustentável dos recursos naturais e do meio ambiente

- Desenvolvimento de parcerias coerentes com a realidade regional e local, juntamente com o Ministério do Meio Ambiente e o Ministério da Integração Nacional, em ações de cooperação técnica destinadas à adoção de tecnologias ambientalmente saudáveis e à racionalidade no uso dos recursos hídricos, no contexto da gestão dos comitês de bacias hidrográficas.
- Atuação no Programa de Luta Contra a Desertificação e Mitigação dos Efeitos da Seca na América do Sul com vistas a melhorar as condições sociais e econômicas das comunidades rurais afetadas pelos problemas socioeconômicos e ambientais gerados pelo fenômeno da desertificação, a partir da mudança de comportamento, da introdução de tecnologias apropriadas, da capacitação e do treinamento com base no desenvolvimento sustentável nos seis países participantes: Argentina, Bolívia, Brasil, Chile, Equador e Peru.
- Acordo interinstitucional com o objetivo de fortalecer a cooperação entre organizações internacionais e o Ponto Focal Nacional da Convenção das Nações Unidas de Combate à Desertificação, assim como com outros atores pertinentes no Combate à Desertificação no âmbito da implementação do PAN-BRASIL. Acordo assinado entre o Ministério do Meio Ambiente do Brasil, a Agência de Cooperação Técnica Alemã (GTZ), o Fundo Internacional de Desenvolvimento Agrícola (FIDA), o Programa das Nações Unidas para o Desenvolvimento (PNUD), o Serviço Alemão de Cooperação Técnica e Social (DED) e a Embaixada do Reino dos Países Baixos.
- Cooperação técnica na formulação de subsídios para a elaboração do Zoneamento Ecológico-Econômico (ZEE) do Núcleo Original de Desertificação de Gilbués, abrangendo os municípios de Gilbués e Monte Alegre, no Estado do Piauí.
- Desenvolvimento de ações de combate à desertificação e estímulo à conservação, preservação e recuperação dos recursos naturais na Região Semiárida do Brasil, junto à Secretaria de Infraestrutura Hídrica do Ministério da Integração Nacional (SIH/MI).
- No geoprocessamento e cadastramento de propriedades do oeste baiano, foi apontado um diagnóstico da situação ambiental com foco no mapeamento do uso do solo usando imagens de satélite de alta resolução, de forma a proporcionar uma escala compatível com a execução dos trabalhos em três bacias hidrográficas - Rio Grande, Rio Corrente e margem esquerda do Rio Carinhanha, no Estado da Bahia – numa área de aproximadamente 6,4 milhões de hectares.
- No fortalecimento das ações agrometeorológicas do Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia (INMET), em apoio ao agronegócio brasileiro, desenvolvimento de trabalhos na temática da agrometeorologia associada à modernização da rede básica nacional e às modernas técnicas de previsão de tempo de observação via satélite.

4. Fortalecimento de relações com parceiros estratégicos

A Representação do IICA no Brasil realizou um levantamento de todas as instituições com as quais mantém relações. Para isso desenvolveu e estruturou o Mapa de Relacionamentos, que identifica as partes envolvidas em suas relações internas e externas, demonstrando a importância da contribuição do Instituto em seu meio de atuação.

O Mapa de Relacionamentos define as partes envolvidas, facilita a visualização das áreas de atuação do IICA no Brasil e demonstra minuciosamente as relações mantidas pela Representação que contribuem para o alcance da missão institucional e orientam suas estratégias.

Quadro 1: Principais parceiros da Representação do IICA no Brasil.

PROJETOS DE COOPERAÇÃO TÉCNICA
AGÊNCIA BRASILEIRA DE COOPERAÇÃO – ABC
CENTRAIS ELÉTRICAS BRASILEIRAS S.A – ELETROBRÁS
CENTRO INTERNACIONAL PARA A PESQUISA FLORESTAL – CIFOR
EMPRESA BRASILEIRA DE PESQUISA AGROPECUÁRIA – EMBRAPA
FUNDAÇÃO BANCO DO BRASIL – FBB
INSTITUTO DE DEFESA DO MEIO AMBIENTE - IDEMA RN
INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE METEOROLOGIA – INMET
INSTITUTO DE GESTÃO DAS ÁGUAS E CLIMA – GOVERNO DA BAHIA
INSTITUTO SOUZA CRUZ – ISC
MINISTÉRIO DA AGRICULTURA, PECUÁRIA E ABASTECIMENTO - MAPA
MINISTÉRIO DA CIÊNCIA E TECNOLOGIA – MCT
MINISTÉRIO DA INTEGRAÇÃO NACIONAL - MI
MINISTÉRIO DAS MINAS E ENERGIA – MME

5. Modernização da Representação

O processo de modernização da Representação do IICA no Brasil passou, numa primeira fase, por um diagnóstico e análise do perfil do seu pessoal em postos chave, implementando-se, a partir de então, modificações em sua estrutura, havendo sido liberados recursos da área administrativa para fortalecer as ações de cooperação técnica.

Com a nova estrutura organizacional definida, a Representação do IICA no Brasil entrou em uma fase de revisão de seu *modus operandi* e das capacidades necessárias para a consecução de sua missão. Foi iniciado o desenvolvimento de uma cultura de processos mediante a diagramação e otimização dos processos, havendo-se obtido um salto qualitativo ao trasladar-se a

MINISTÉRIO DO DESENVOLVIMENTO AGRÁRIO – MDA
MINISTÉRIO DO MEIO AMBIENTE – MMA
SECRETARIA DE AGRICULTURA, PECUÁRIA E DESENVOLVIMENTO – GOVERNO DO MARANHÃO
SECRETARIA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO LOCAL E REGIONAL – GOVERNO DO CEARÁ
SECRETARIA DE PLANEJAMENTO – GOVERNO DO PIAUÍ
ACORDOS DE COOPERAÇÃO
COMISSÃO ECONÔMICA PARA A AMÉRICA LATINA E O CARIBE - CEPAL
EMPRESA DE PESQUISA AGROPECUÁRIA E EXTENSÃO RURAL DE SANTA CATARINA – EPAGRI
INSTITUTO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DO TURISMO RURAL - IDESTUR
INSTITUTO INTERNACIONAL DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA CIDADANIA - IIDAC
UNIVERSIDADE DE GUELPH – CANADÁ
USINA HIDRELÉTRICA DE ITAIPU BINACIONAL

Fonte: IICA

Representação para instalações mais modernas, cujo projeto e disposição física favorecem a integração, o trabalho em equipe e a visão de processos. As modificações resultantes dessa iniciativa culminaram com o recebimento do Prêmio do Diretor-Geral à Excelência.

Para concretizar sua estratégia de reposicionamento e alcançar seus objetivos de cooperação técnica, a Representação do IICA no Brasil dispõe de uma equipe técnica e administrativa multidisciplinar composta pelo Representante, pelos Especialistas das Prioridades Estratégicas, pela Unidade de Gerenciamento de Projetos e pela Equipe Administrativa e de Apoio à Cooperação Técnica, que atuam em permanente articulação, tanto em nível interno como com as contrapartidas nacionais.

A área de Tecnologia da Informação vem trabalhando no sentido de atender aos requisitos das diferentes operações por meio da implantação, manutenção, evolução e remoção de sistemas. Entre suas atividades mais significativas destacam-se as seguintes: implantação do Banco de Consultores; implementação do Centro de Referência do Agronegócio (CERAGRO) e do IICADData; implementação e implantação do Boletim Agroalimentar do Cone Sul, nova versão com gestão de conteúdo; implementação e implantação do Portal de Projetos de Cooperação Técnica; implementação e implantação da Intranet; implementação e implantação do novo formato da página institucional na Internet; e implementação e implantação do Sistema de Recursos Humanos em plataforma *Windows* e *Web*.

No que tange à infraestrutura, a Representação do IICA no Brasil conta com equipamentos, serviços e *softwares* capazes de manter o eficiente funcionamento e a operacionalidade das atividades implementadas.



O IICA no Brasil iniciou um processo de discussão e internalização da importância da Gestão do Conhecimento (GC). Pela metodologia proposta foi criado um grupo de trabalho que analisou, em ordem crescente de complexidade, os processos de informação, comunicação e gestão do conhecimento.

Desenvolveram-se os fluxos de GC no que concerne ao âmbito operacional. Desenvolveram-se os domínios de conteúdo e classificação ontológico-taxonômica para a informação das diferentes áreas temáticas e do conhecimento do IICA no Sistema de Gestão do Conhecimento da Representação do IICA no Brasil.

O Sistema de Gestão do Conhecimento existe sobre uma infraestrutura e sob uma superestrutura que conformam o sistema sociotécnico da Representação.

O modelo de Gestão do Conhecimento constitui-se de dois âmbitos, um de Coordenação e outro de Operação de GC. O de Coordenação tem ciclo próprio e ocupa-se da análise de situação, definições estratégicas, mensuração, avaliação e refinamento dos processos de Gestão do Conhecimento. O âmbito de Operação compõe-se da aquisição, adequação e direcionamento do conhecimento.

A Representação do IICA no Brasil passou a investir no campo da comunicação e do jornalismo com o objetivo de produzir e divulgar informações produzidas no âmbito da cooperação técnica prestada pelo Instituto ao País.

Adquiriu equipamento para produções audiovisuais e iniciou um processo de coleta de informação por multimídia – áudio, vídeo, fotografia e texto – para a produção de pequenos documentários em vídeos, entrevistas, banco de imagens e notícias.

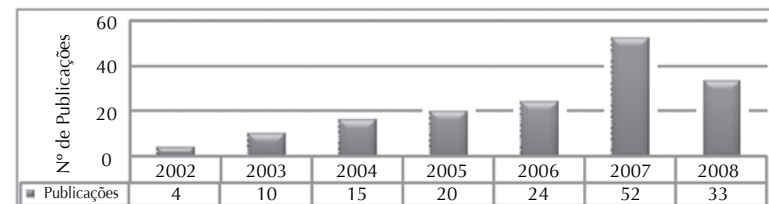
Estruturou editorial e graficamente o Informe Mensal, publicação eletrônica sobre seus eventos e ações – seminários, jornadas, reuniões, projetos, etc.

Como fruto da implantação do Modelo de Gestão do Conhecimento e Comunicação, foram publicadas na Internet 1041 notícias sobre a cooperação técnica do IICA no Brasil. Com isso, a Representação foi responsável por 60% da produção jornalística do Hemisfério em 2008.

Planejamento Estratégico da Representação do IICA no Brasil:

- Realização de reuniões utilizando os padrões metodológicos do *Balanced Scorecard* (BSC) com o objetivo de rever e ajustar seu pensamento estratégico, passando de uma postura reativa e retrospectiva para outra pró-ativa e prospectiva.
- Construção dos Mapas Estratégicos das Áreas Temáticas da Representação do IICA no Brasil.
- Construção do Mapa Estratégico da Representação do IICA no Brasil com base nos Mapas das Áreas Temáticas à Luz do BSC (*Balanced Scorecard*).
- Construção da planilha de “Detalhamento das Iniciativas Estratégicas” para acompanhamento das iniciativas descritas no Mapa Estratégico.

Figura 1: Produção Editorial da Representação do IICA no Brasil de 2002 a 2008.



Fonte: Gestão do Conhecimento da Representação do IICA no Brasil.

Quadro 2: Eventos Nacionais e Internacionais.

Áreas Temáticas	Cursos	Eventos Nacionais	Eventos Internacionais	Total
Reposicionamento da Agricultura e da Vida Rural Rural e Renovação de sua Institucionalidade	9	2	2	13
Promoção do Comércio e da Competitividade do Agronegócio	2	2	5	9
Promoção do Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais sob o Enfoque Territorial	1	18	10	29
Promoção da Sanidade Agropecuária e da Inocuidade dos Alimentos	7	3	7	17
Promoção da Gestão Sustentável dos Recursos Naturais e do Meio Ambiente	6	11	6	23
Promoção da Incorporação da Tecnologia e da Inovação para a Modernização da Agricultura e Desenvolvimento Rural	2	1	-	3
Total de Eventos no Período 2002 - 2008	27	37	30	94

Fonte: Mapa de Relacionamentos da Representação do IICA no Brasil.

Bureau de l'IICA en **Haïti**



*La contribution de l'IICA au développement durable de l'agriculture,
à la sécurité alimentaire et à la prospérité rurale dans les Amériques*

Bureau de l'IICA en Haïti

Alfredo Mena¹ et Frantz Pierre Nelson²

1. Introduction

Conformément aux instructions du Siège, ce rapport est présenté dans le souci de mettre en évidence les principaux résultats obtenus à travers la coopération technique offerte par l'IICA en Haïti au cours de la période 2002-2008, en soulignant notamment les bonnes pratiques institutionnelles ainsi que les réussites exemplaires. Ce rapport s'articule autour des quatre (4) sections suivantes : i) repositionnement de l'agriculture et de la vie rurale dans le pays, ii) résultats de la coopération technique regroupés selon les grandes priorités stratégiques définies par l'IICA, iii) renforcement des relations avec les partenaires stratégiques et iv) modernisation du Programme national de coopération.

2. Repositionnement de l'agriculture et de la vie rurale en Haïti

Parmi les résultats obtenus dans ce domaine, il y a lieu de mettre l'accent sur les principaux suivants :

Information régulière des acteurs du secteur agricole sur l'évolution et les perspectives de l'agriculture et de la vie rurale en Haïti. Conformément aux exigences institutionnelles, l'Institut a eu à préparer deux rapports biennaux sur l'état et les perspectives de l'agriculture et du monde rural en Haïti, l'un en 2004 et l'autre en 2006. Ces documents d'une trentaine de pages, qui présentent l'évolution récente du secteur agricole tout en mettant l'accent sur les principales difficultés affrontées par le pays eu égard aux priorités stratégiques définies par l'Institut, sont en général d'une très grande utilité pour la prise de décisions concernant le secteur agricole.

Processus d'élaboration d'une politique d'État pour l'agriculture et le développement rural. Depuis 2006, l'Institut participe au sein d'un groupe dénommé Groupe de Travail sur l'Agriculture (GTA) mis en place par le Ministère de l'Agriculture avec pour mission de doter le pays d'un document de politique pour le développement de l'agriculture et l'amélioration des conditions de vie en milieu rural. L'Institut a apporté une importante contribution à la réalisation de la première phase de ce travail consistant en l'élaboration d'un document d'orientation de la politique d'État à promouvoir. Ce document qui a été préparé avec l'appui financier du Bureau doit servir de base pour la formulation des

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documents spécifiques sur les stratégies à adopter pour la suite du processus.

Systématisation du cadre légal régissant le secteur agricole. L'Institut a entrepris de réaliser un inventaire exhaustif des lois relatives à l'agriculture et au monde rural en vigueur dans le pays. Ce travail, dont le rapport sera publié en 2009, sera d'une aide précieuse pour faciliter l'intégration d'Haïti dans la CARICOM. En effet, la comparaison des principales lois agricoles haïtiennes avec celles de l'organisation régionale permettra de mieux mettre en lumière les ajustements nécessaires au cadre légal national.

3. Résultats de la coopération technique

a. Promotion de la protection sanitaire agricole et de l'innocuité des aliments

Dans le cadre de cette priorité stratégique de l'Institut, les résultats suivants ont été obtenus entre 2002 et 2008 :

Réduction de l'incidence de la peste porcine classique et renforcement des structures nationales de quarantaine.

A travers un instrument de coopération signé en 2002 avec le Département américain de l'agriculture (USDA) pour une durée initiale de quatre (4) ans et un montant global de l'ordre de 4,9 millions de dollars des États Unis, l'Institut a fait une importante contribution à l'éradication de la peste porcine classique (PPC) et à la modernisation des structures de quarantaine du pays. Chaque année, 87 % à 88 % du cheptel porcin national sont régulièrement vaccinés contre la peste porcine classique (PPC) et cinq (5) nouveaux postes de

quarantaine ont été construits dans les îles adjacentes. Toutefois, le résultat le plus important de l'instrument de coopération susmentionné demeure la mise en place de la structure organisationnelle nécessaire à l'opérationnalisation d'un vaste réseau de vaccination et de surveillance épidémiologique. Ce réseau auquel participe toute une multitude d'acteurs œuvrant dans le domaine de la production et de la santé animale a permis au Ministère de l'Agriculture de contrôler et de suivre avec efficacité l'expansion non seulement de la PPC mais également d'autres pathogènes affectant le développement du cheptel national. Par exemple, des campagnes de vaccination contre la rage, la maladie de New Castle et le charbon ont été conduites en utilisant les facilités offertes par cet important réseau. Par ailleurs, l'Institut fournit chaque année une assistance logistique à un cadre de haut niveau du Ministère de l'Agriculture pour participer aux diverses réunions du Comité des mesures sanitaires et phytosanitaires de l'Organisation mondiale du commerce (OMC).

Établissement et diffusion d'une stratégie de lutte intégrée contre le scolyte du caféier.

Lorsque le scolyte du caféier (*Hypothenemus hampei*) s'est introduit en Haïti, causant des dégâts énormes dans le secteur du café, les producteurs caféiers ont été saisis d'une grande panique parce qu'ils n'avaient aucune idée sur la façon de lutter contre ce ravageur dévastateur. De concert avec le Ministère de l'Agriculture (MARNDR) et avec l'appui technique du Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD) et du *Consejo Dominicano del Café* (CODOCAFE), l'Institut est parvenu à mettre en place, avec l'appui financier de l'Union européenne (UE), une stratégie de lutte intégrée contre le scolyte du caféier. Cette stratégie novatrice a été largement diffusée au sein de plusieurs coopératives caféières et organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) œuvrant dans le secteur caféier. Actuellement, tous les bailleurs de fonds qui financent des activités dans le secteur



du café incluent des interventions de lutte intégrée contre le scolyte héritées de la stratégie mise en place par l'Institut, incluant l'utilisation des pièges à scolytes ainsi que l'installation de laboratoires de productions de parasitoïdes.

Contribution à la lutte contre la Sigatoka noire du bananier. De 2002 à 2006, l'Institut a été particulièrement actif dans le domaine de la lutte contre la maladie des raies noires, maladie cryptogamique encore appelée maladie de la Sigatoka noire causée par le champignon *Mycosphaerella fijiensis*. Avec l'appui technique du Réseau international pour l'amélioration de la banane et de la banane plantain (INIBAP) et le soutien financier du *Common Fund for Commodities* (CFC), l'Institut a mis en place un programme de lutte contre la maladie de la Sigatoka noire reposant sur deux (2) composantes fondamentales : l'évaluation et la diffusion de variétés résistantes. Sur un total de 18 variétés exotiques introduites en Haïti dans le cadre de ce programme, les producteurs bananiers ont manifesté leurs préférences pour un plantain (FHIA-23), trois (3) bananes desserts (FHIA-17, FHIA-18 et FHIA-23) et une banane à cuire farineuse (FHIA-25). L'extrait le plus important de ce programme demeure l'introduction d'une technique de multiplication de plants de bananier in vivo selon une technique mise au point par le Centre Africain de Recherche sur Bananiers et Plantains (CARBAP), dénommée technique des plants issus de fragments de tige (PIF). La technique PIF, qui permet de produire en masse et en un temps relativement court des plants sains de bananiers (indemnes de charançons et de nématodes), a été enseignée à des techniciens de plusieurs ONG. Actuellement, ces ONG ont pratiquement pris le relais. Il en résulte que la méthode PIF introduite en Haïti grâce

à une action spécifique du Bureau est en application dans plusieurs zones de production bananière du pays.

Appui à la lutte contre les mouches des fruits. Grâce à un don de l'USAID, l'Institut a apporté au cours du deuxième semestre de l'année 2008 un louable soutien au Programme National de Détection et de Contrôle des Mouches des Fruits (PNDCMF) du Ministère de l'Agriculture en aidant notamment à la production de matériels de sensibilisation pour un contrôle adéquat de ces ravageurs et au renforcement du laboratoire de la Direction de la Protection des Végétaux (DPV) du Ministère. Concernant le renforcement du laboratoire de la DPV, l'Institut a favorisé la mise en place de matériels et équipement nécessaires à l'identification et au diagnostic à distance de maladies et ravageurs affectant la flore et la faune. La faculté de disposer de ces matériels « de pointe », en permettant au laboratoire de la DPV de se connecter au réseau du *Caribbean Regional Diagnostic Network* (CRDN), a une incidence favorable sur le processus de modernisation de cette structure du Ministère de l'Agriculture.

Accroissement de la sensibilisation de la population à l'importance de l'influenza aviaire. En collaboration avec le Ministère de l'Agriculture, l'Institut a mis en œuvre avec succès un programme de surveillance de l'influenza aviaire grâce à un financement apporté par l'USAID. Au cours de l'année 2007, l'Institut a fourni une assistance technique et logistique au Ministère en vue de l'obtention auprès de la Banque Mondiale des fonds nécessaires au renforcement de la surveillance contre l'influenza aviaire sur l'ensemble du territoire national. Ces fonds de la Banque Mondiale seront disponibles à partir de l'année 2009.

b. Promotion du commerce et de la compétitivité des entreprises agricoles

En ce qui concerne cette priorité stratégique de l'Institut, les résultats les plus remarquables sont les suivants :

Participation plus régulière d'Haïti aux rencontres internationales tenues à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la région. Le travail du Bureau a facilité une plus grande participation d'Haïti dans les différentes rencontres internationales. Le pays, trop longtemps absent des réunions internationales tenues soit dans la région ou encore à l'extérieur de la Caraïbe, a participé plus régulièrement depuis 2003 aux rencontres de l'Alliance, du COTED et de l'OMC. Au cours de l'année 2006, l'Institut a facilité la participation d'une imposante délégation haïtienne à la VIème Semaine caribéenne de l'agriculture, tenue à Nassau, Bahamas. Depuis, toutes les rencontres qui ont lieu dans le cadre des semaines de l'agriculture dans la région de la Caraïbe comptent Haïti au nombre de leurs participants.

Promotion de l'agrotourisme comme moyen important d'augmenter les revenus dans le secteur agricole. Un élan spécial a été donné à la promotion de l'agrotourisme dans le pays. Grâce à l'intervention opportune du Bureau, le Ministère du Tourisme a pu bénéficier des services de conseil avisés du responsable du Programme caribéen de développement de l'agrotourisme. La concertation avec le Ministère du Tourisme a conduit à l'incorporation formelle de l'agrotourisme dans le plan directeur du tourisme établi par ce ministère pour Haïti.

Renforcement des capacités d'exportation de certaines entreprises oeuvrant dans l'agribusiness. L'Institut s'est associé depuis novembre 2007 avec la Chambre de Commerce et

d'Industrie Haïtiano Canadienne (CCIHC) et le *Trade Facilitation Office of Canada* (TFO-Canada), dans le cadre d'un partenariat tripartite, pour renforcer les capacités d'exportation d'une vingtaine d'entreprises agricoles haïtiennes vers l'Amérique du Nord (particulièrement vers les États-Unis d'Amérique et le Canada). Suite à trois (3) sessions de formation organisées en Haïti, huit (8) de ces entreprises ont reçu un accompagnement pour participer au Salon international de l'agroalimentaire (SIAL) qui s'est déroulé à Montréal, Canada, du 22 au 29 avril 2008.

Admission d'Haïti en tant que membre au sein de l'Organisation de l'information sur les marchés des Amériques (OIMA). Après une participation en qualité d'observateur à la réunion tenue à Quito, Équateur, en 2007, Haïti a été invité une nouvelle fois à la dernière assemblée de l'organisation continentale tenue à Panama en 2008. Au cours de cette dernière réunion, Haïti a été finalement accepté comme membre à part entière de l'OIMA. Ce nouveau statut d'Haïti au sein de l'OIMA lui donne droit à une assistance technique dans des domaines tels la technologie, la méthodologie et les procédures adéquates pour la collecte, le traitement, l'analyse et la diffusion de l'information sur les marchés des produits agricoles.

c. Renforcement des collectivités rurales

Les résultats les plus pertinents obtenus dans ce domaine par l'Institut au cours de la période considérée sont les suivants :

Accompagnement des groupements de femmes de KREDIFANM dans leurs petites entreprises commerciales. L'une des réussites exemplaires du Bureau est la mise en place d'un réseau de 1 200 femmes bénéficiant de crédit grâce à une méthodologie novatrice mise au point



dans le cadre d'un projet de crédit aux femmes rurales intitulé KREDIFANM, financé à l'origine par le Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population (FNUAP) et la Fondation Kellogg. Au cours de la période considérée, 2002–2008, ces groupements de femmes ont vu leurs fonds de crédit augmentés substantiellement et leurs capacités tant techniques que de gestion renforcées à la suite de leur participation à des séminaires de formation organisés à leur intention. En 2007, cette méthodologie a été systématisée et publiée en 3 langues : anglais, français, espagnol.

Amélioration des conditions de vie des producteurs des zones d'intervention du PWOTOKOL. Depuis 2003, grâce à un financement maintes fois renouvelé de la Fondation Kellogg, l'Institut met en œuvre le projet intitulé Pwojè Teknoloji Oganizasyon Kombit Lakay (PWOTOKOL). Plusieurs activités génératrices de revenus sont à mettre à l'actif de ce projet d'appui à des initiatives productives en milieu rural. Les axes prioritaires d'intervention de ce projet de développement local sont la production animale, la production végétale, la transformation et la commercialisation de produits agricoles et l'organisation des producteurs.

Accroissement des revenus des agriculteurs de Desbarrières (Gonaïves) et de Zabriko (Ennery) par la réhabilitation et la mise en valeur de deux périmètres d'irrigation totalisant 550 hectares. A travers un instrument de coopération technique négocié avec l'USAID à la suite du passage de la tempête tropicale Jeanne en 2004, l'Institut a procédé à la réhabilitation de deux (2) périmètres d'irrigation situés dans les zones rurales des Gonaïves. Les deux systèmes complètement remis en bon état de fonctionnement, ont été par la suite valorisés par des campagnes agricoles de culture de rente (particulièrement haricot et cultures maraichères). Ces interventions ont contribué à améliorer les conditions de vie des 1071 exploitations agricoles bénéficiaires en créant

quelque 20 000 hommes-jours de travail dans les zones rurales de production agricole à un moment très critique.

Renforcement des capacités d'autoformation des coopératives et organisations de producteurs. Grâce à un financement obtenu du Programme de renforcement intégré du milieu des affaires (PRIMA) de l'Union européenne (UE), l'Institut a mis en œuvre un projet de formation continue des producteurs en milieu rural dans divers domaines tels la pathologie touchant plusieurs cultures, l'élevage de différentes espèces animales et l'agrotransformation. Un total de 18 fiches techniques a pu être élaboré sur support audio, disque compact et cassettes, en collaboration avec le réseau CACHE local. Cet important matériel, en plus de contribuer à l'autoformation des groupements de producteurs eux-mêmes, facilitera également le travail des institutions et organisations qui interviennent dans ce domaine en milieu rural.

Amélioration de la sécurité alimentaire des familles rurales défavorisées. De concert avec la Coopération argentine, l'Institut met en œuvre depuis 2005 un programme de sécurité alimentaire dénommé ProHuerta qui repose sur la promotion de petits jardins potagers biologiques pour l'autoconsommation afin d'améliorer le régime alimentaire des familles bénéficiaires et de leur assurer une meilleure santé. Initialement limité à la région des Gonaïves, ce programme novateur s'est rapidement étendu à d'autres zones du pays grâce à la participation de nouveaux partenaires comme le *National Democratic Institute* (NDI), l'Agence espagnole de coopération internationale pour le développement (AECID, dans le sud-est) et le Fonds international de développement agricole (FIDA). Actuellement, ProHuerta est l'objet d'une coopération trilatérale Canada–Argentine–Haïti pour une extension à cinq (5) départements géographiques du pays au cours des cinq (5) prochaines années. Les jardins potagers mis en place dans le cadre du projet ProHuerta ont jusqu'à ce jour

profité à plus de 4 000 familles rurales bénéficiaires et plus de 40 établissements scolaires ruraux et urbains.

d. Promotion de l'introduction de la technologie et de l'innovation pour la modernisation de l'agriculture et de la vie rurale

Les résultats les plus remarquables obtenus dans le cadre de cette priorité stratégique peuvent s'énoncer comme suit :

Consolidation de la place de l'agriculture biologique comme filière porteuse dans le secteur agricole. Suite à une première initiative organisée en 2001 en partenariat avec la Fondation Groupe 73, la date du 24 juin s'est imposée en Haïti comme la Journée de l'agriculture biologique. En effet, depuis 2001, chaque année à pareille date, plusieurs institutions, incluant la Chambre Haïtienne d'Agriculture Biologique (CHAAB), s'unissent pour organiser la Journée de l'agriculture biologique. L'organisation de ces journées, auxquelles l'Institut apporte chaque année une importante contribution, est toujours l'occasion de montrer le potentiel du pays pour tirer parti du marché mondial grandissant des produits biologiques, estimé en 2009 à plus de 30 milliards de dollars des États Unis. Comme ce marché très rémunérateur est soumis à des réglementations très strictes, l'Institut a fourni une assistance technique pour la mise en place en Haïti de l'Autorité compétente en matière d'agriculture biologique. Ces efforts nécessitent impérativement le soutien des instances suprêmes du Ministère de l'Agriculture pour leur concrétisation.

Contribution à la préparation d'un vaste programme de développement de la fruiticulture en Haïti. Au

cours de l'année 2007, l'Institut a participé à la mise en place d'un important projet de développement de plantations commerciales d'arbres fruitiers à l'instar de celui mis en œuvre au Salvador. Cette vision est partagée tant par le Ministère de l'Agriculture que par des associations du secteur privé comme l'Association Nationale des Exportateurs de Mangues (ANEM). La mission MARNDR-IICA-ANEM réalisée au Salvador fin 2008 pour approfondir l'expérience salvadorienne constitue une étape fondamentale dans la concrétisation de cet important processus qui doit se terminer par un vaste programme de développement de la fruiticulture en Haïti.

Amélioration de l'accès des étudiants et des professionnels de l'agriculture à l'information agricole. L'Institut a mis en place en 2007 un centre de documentation agricole informatisé devant desservir les étudiants, les chercheurs ou tout professionnel en quête d'information sur l'agriculture et le monde rural. Dans cette optique, plusieurs séminaires de formation sur la gestion de bases de données agricoles ont été organisés avec le précieux concours de la direction concernée du Siège et de la Bibliothèque commémorative Orton au Costa Rica. Plusieurs institutions œuvrant en Haïti dans le domaine de la gestion de l'information agricole ont participé à cette initiative, tels la FAO, le Ministère de l'Agriculture et les facultés d'agronomie des universités faisant partie du réseau national du CACHE. Il importe de souligner que dans le domaine du développement du capital humain, l'Institut sert de liaison avec des institutions d'enseignement agricole comme l'université EARTH où, chaque année, il assure la gestion des processus de sélection de candidatures valables pour des bourses d'études offertes par ces universités à de jeunes Haïtiens. Le Bureau apporte aussi un important appui au réseau UWC pour la sélection de boursiers pour des études au Venezuela en administration agricole.



e. Promotion de la gestion durable des ressources naturelles et de l'environnement

En ce qui concerne cette priorité stratégique de l'Institut, les principaux résultats obtenus entre 2002 et 2008 sont les suivants :

Renforcement institutionnel du secteur par la création de l'Institut National du Café Haïtien. En 2002, l'Institut a fourni un appui considérable à la conception et à l'instauration d'un institut national qui s'occuperait du secteur caféier, à l'instar des autres pays de l'Amérique Latine. A partir de ses contacts avec les autres Bureaux de l'IICA dans le Continent, l'Institut a mobilisé les ressources de PROMECAFE pour fournir aux instances gouvernementales une précieuse assistance technique qui a permis de définir les grandes lignes directrices de cette nouvelle institution ainsi que les fondements du décret loi devant porter création de l'Institut National du Café Haïtien (INCAH).

Diffusion de notions concrètes sur les « bonnes pratiques agricoles » à l'intention des agriculteurs et des étudiants haïtiens. Au cours de l'année 2005, l'Institut a facilité la participation d'un groupe d'agriculteurs à une formation en République dominicaine sur le thème « Bonnes pratiques agricoles (BPA) dans la culture de la banane ». Cette intervention s'est réalisée en partenariat avec la Fondation Groupe 73. L'année suivante, un atelier de travail a été organisé au profit des étudiants des facultés d'agronomie du réseau CACHE en Haïti. Cette session de formation a été animée par un spécialiste de l'IICA du Bureau de Miami. Dans le même ordre d'idées, deux (2) séminaires de formation ont été également réalisés en 2006 sur la gestion des risques et des catastrophes à l'intention des bénéficiaires du Projet d'Appui aux Victimes des Inondations dans les Zones Rurales des Gonaïves financé à partir d'un don de l'USAID.

4. Renforcement des relations avec les partenaires stratégiques

Il est indéniable qu'au cours de la période 2002-2008 considérée, les relations du Bureau avec des partenaires stratégiques se sont considérablement renforcées, que ce soit avec le secteur officiel, le secteur universitaire, le secteur privé, le secteur des organisations de base ou encore le secteur des partenaires internationaux tant d'assistance technique que de financement.

Relations avec les partenaires nationaux

La visibilité du Bureau s'est considérablement améliorée au cours de la période 2002-2008. Les résultats de la lutte contre certains ravageurs ont été fort appréciés tant par les institutions que par les organisations de producteurs. Le principal partenaire officiel, en l'occurrence le Ministère de l'Agriculture, s'est à maintes reprises référé au Bureau pour plusieurs difficultés techniques comme l'infestation de fourmis folles ou encore l'infestation par le pathogène (*Phytophthora colocasiae*) attaquant les plantations de Taro (encore appelé Mazonbèl en Haïti). L'Institut nourrit également d'excellentes relations avec d'autres partenaires du secteur gouvernemental comme le Ministère du Tourisme, le Ministère à la Condition Féminine et aux Droits de la Femme et le Ministère de la Planification, ou encore avec des instances déconcentrées du gouvernement comme la Coordination Nationale de la Sécurité Alimentaire (CNSA) ou l'INCAH.

Relations avec les partenaires internationaux

Les partenaires internationaux ont également bien apprécié les performances du Bureau. D'un côté, il participe activement au processus de planification des activités de certains organismes,

comme par exemple le *Country Strategic Opportunities Paper* (COSOP) du FIDA. De l'autre, il officialise la coopération avec d'autres organismes en signant des accords avec elles ; par exemple, avec la FAO, l'Institut a paraphé en 2005 un protocole d'accord qui vise la conjugaison des efforts des deux institutions en vue de la réalisation d'un ensemble d'actions conjointes au bénéfice du secteur agricole haïtien. Par ailleurs, il convient de mentionner qu'au cours de la période 2002-2008, l'Institut a bénéficié de la confiance de plusieurs organismes bilatéraux et multilatéraux de financement qui ont appuyé ses actions. Il convient également de souligner qu'une grande priorité a été accordée à la coopération horizontale, domaine dans lequel l'Institut a obtenu un bon positionnement de par le travail qu'il réalise avec la République dominicaine, l'Argentine et le Brésil. Le tableau suivant indique les fonds externes, avec les sources correspondantes, reçus par l'Institut au cours de la période considérée :

Tableau 1: Ressources externes gérées par l'Institut entre 2002 et 2008.

Sources	Nombre d'instruments légaux	Montant total (en dollars ÉU)
USAID		1 549 230
USDA/APHIS	1	6 915 628
Union Européenne	3	836 397
Fondation Kellogg	-	1 594 919
ACDI / COOP ARGENTINE	1	799 264
CFC/INIBAP	1	192 625
TOTAL		11 888 063

Source : Bureau de l'IICA en Haïti.

À noter que des accords de coopération ont été signés avec la Coopération brésilienne et la Banque Mondiale pour des montants globaux de l'ordre de 6,5 millions de dollars des États Unis et que ces fonds seront disponibles à partir de l'année 2009.

5. Modernisation du bureau

Relocalisation du Bureau et redéfinition de sa structure organisationnelle

En 2004, l'Institut a été transféré à Pétion-Ville, dans un quartier résidentiel beaucoup plus tranquille que l'endroit où il était situé pendant 32 ans à Port-au-Prince. Il en est résulté qu'en dépit des troubles qui ont secoué la capitale à maintes reprises, l'Institut a pu fonctionner sans interruption. La capacité d'accueil de ce nouveau local est telle qu'elle a permis à l'IICA d'héberger les secrétariats du Ministère de l'Agriculture pendant un an entre mars 2004 et mars 2005, après que les locaux du ministère furent saccagés à la faveur de troubles politiques. Au cours de l'année 2003, l'Institut a également procédé à la redéfinition de sa structure organisationnelle tout en améliorant substantiellement ses facilités logistiques (système Internet, téléphones IP, équipements informatiques plus modernes).

Amélioration de l'image institutionnelle

En plus de l'obligation opportune de rendre des comptes (à travers des rapports annuels) imposée par le style de coopération mis de l'avant par l'Administration actuelle, l'Institut a mis au point depuis septembre 2005 un bulletin d'informations qui



est distribué électroniquement à ses partenaires nationaux et internationaux. Ce bulletin, intitulé *IICA-HAITI Info*, a reçu jusqu'à présent un très bon accueil de la part des destinataires. Depuis la date de sa première parution, 10 éditions de *IICA-HAITI Info*, ont été publiées.

Par ailleurs, bien souvent le local de l'IICA s'est converti en un véritable forum pour discuter de certains problèmes d'actualité du secteur agricole à travers des rencontres techniques organisées sous le titre *Les vendredis techniques de l'IICA*. Plusieurs thèmes dont le financement rural, le problème énergétique et la production de biocarburants ont fait l'objet des premiers vendredis techniques de l'IICA.

Perfectionnement des cadres du Bureau

En 2005, deux (2) cadres de la section administrative ont suivi un cours de perfectionnement d'une semaine au Siège de l'Institut. Par ailleurs, au cours de la même année, deux (2) cadres techniques ont participé à des sessions de formation à l'étranger. Depuis 2006, l'Institut offre la possibilité de suivre des cours de langue (espagnol et anglais) à tous ses employés.

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