



The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has been emphatic in calling attention to the need for a new model for development, one that is based on the rural economy and multidimensional agriculture and will ensure the availability of sufficient food and income, provide dignified work, preserve natural resources, etc., as a means of keeping our societies free from social unrest.

To resolve the problems and tap the opportunities emerging in the global agrifood sector it will be necessary to propose new ways of thinking and acting in the political-institutional, production-trade, ecological-environmental and

sociocultural-human dimensions of the sector. All these challenges have been reflected in the hemispheric agenda by applying the Agro-Matrix, used to define strategic actions and renew the guiding framework of the AGRO 2003-2015 Plan, which was discussed at the Fifth Ministerial Meeting "Agriculture and Rural Life in the Americas," held in Jamaica from October 26-29, 2009.

In this context, and in the interest of contributing to the improvement of agriculture and rural life in the Americas, the present edition of the magazine *COMUNICA* offers a series of reflections on the need to develop joint public-private mechanisms for carrying out actions in the territories.



The different thematic areas of the Institute offer perspectives, experiences and points of view that contribute to developing this new model for development, via: social and technological innovation, within the framework of the solidarity and participation of local actors; the strengthening of agrifood chains and the need to develop a new institutional framework and types of technical cooperation; rural tourism, its legal frameworks and mechanisms to motivate citizens to acquire training in and promote this type of tourism; and the coordinated work among assistance organizations and international cooperation organizations that, in the face of natural disasters, become the source of new solutions and bring hope

to those who on many occasions have nothing left.

Also included are other topics of great importance for equitable and comprehensive dialogue among countries, such as legislation governing international agricultural trade and its impact on political decisions between countries, as well as the need to develop highly effective controlled agricultural terminology systems which reflect cultural differences and strengthen the management of information.

The Editorial Board welcomes contributions on these and other topics of interest in developing new ways of working in agriculture. *COMUN/CA* is also available in electronic format at www.iica.int.