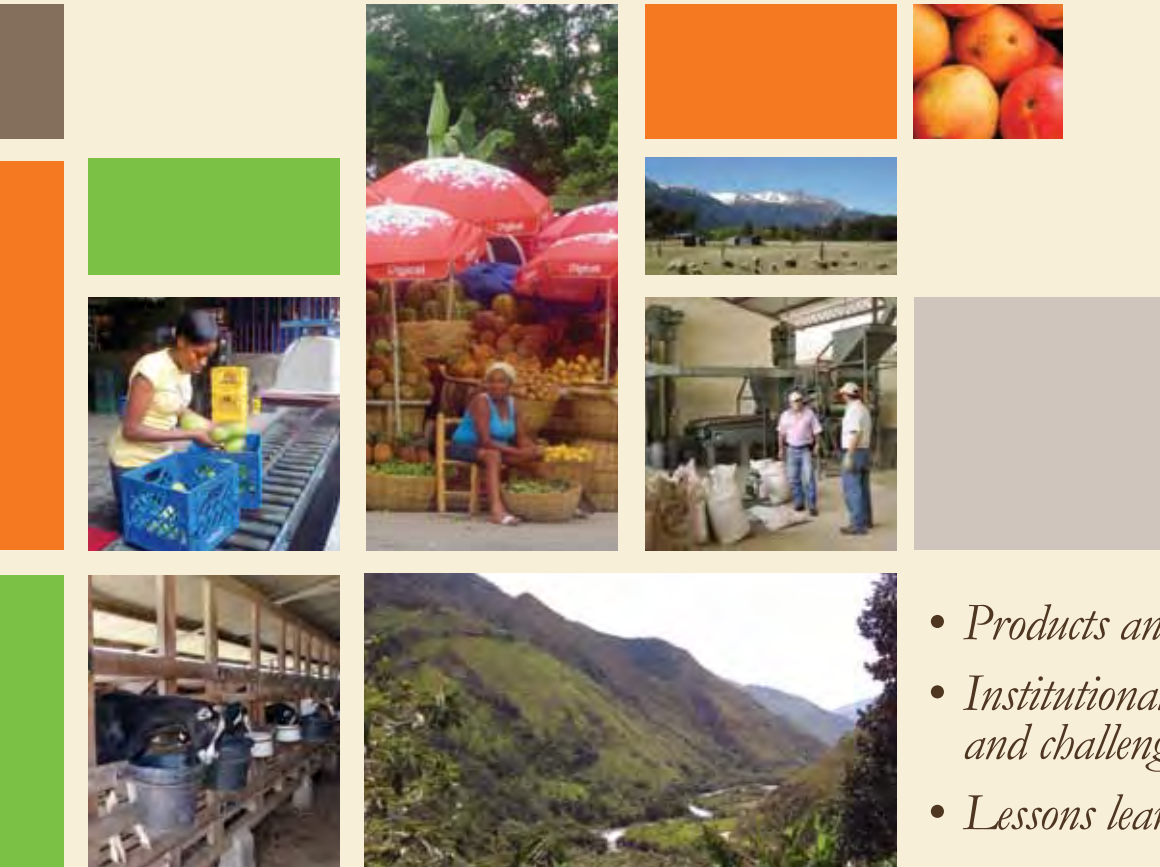


IICA Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation: two years after its inception



- *Products and results*
- *Institutional benefits and challenges*
- *Lessons learnt*



IICA Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation: two years after its inception



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).
2013



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Translator: Ingrid Mc Laren
Layout: Gabriela Wattson
Cover design: Gabriela Wattson
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GEF	Global Environment Facility
IABA	Inter-American Board of Agriculture
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
INIAF	National Agricultural and Forest Innovation Institute (Bolivia)
IPCP	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness Program (IICA)
IPTA	Paraguayan Institute of Agricultural Technology
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MAC	The Mining Association of Canada
MDA	Ministry of Agrarian Development (Brazil)
MERCOSUR	Southern Common Market
MGAP	Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (Uruguay)
MTP	Medium-term Plan (IICA)
PDAC	Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada
PROCISUR	Cooperative Program for Agrifood and Agro-industrial Technology Development in the Southern Cone
PROCITROPICOS	Cooperative Program for Agricultural Research, Development and Innovation in the South American Tropics
SC	Steering Committee (FonTC)
LAFS	Localized Agrifood System
SRD Forum	Permanent Forum on Sustainable Rural Development
TS	Technical Secretariat (FonTC)
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture



Foreword

Financial mechanisms have been diversifying since the nineties in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of investment in agriculture in the Americas. Several countries such as Chile, Colombia and Peru have developed competitive funds to finance agricultural projects. Competitive funds were later developed to fund multinational projects in agricultural technology and to create regional public goods.

Competitive funds are organizational arrangements with the resources to finance projects for which interested parties must compete within the guidelines laid out. Usually, interested parties from the public or private sector are asked to prepare proposals in order to compete for funds to wholly or partially finance projects selected from the best proposals.

We took the decision to establish and finance the IICA Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC). The aim of the FonTC is to empower those within the agricultural sector and those living in the rural areas of the Americas to adopt innovative approaches to problem-solving and to take advantage of opportunities. At the same time, this initiative will partially fund the technical cooperation provided by the Institute which focuses on specific multinational activities.

Each year, the Fund invites teams of professionals from the Institute to submit proposals for multinational projects related to IICA's technical programs, which

are in keeping with its Medium Term Plan, and which could also lead to alliances with other public or private institutions.

This document describes the experience of implementing the Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation, two-and-a-half years after its inception. More specifically, it describes the achievements of the projects it has funded, the institutional benefits and challenges, and the lessons learnt which need to be taken into account in improving future performance.

We hope that this document will provide useful information to individuals and organizations who intend to submit project proposals to competitive funds, including IICA professionals, as well as to those institutions that are attempting to establish such funds or to invest in competitive-funded projects.

Dr. Víctor Manuel Villalobos Arámbula
Director General of IICA



Introduction

This document describes the progress with respect to the implementation and development of the IICA Competitive Fund for Technical Cooperation (FonTC), two-and-a-half years after its inception. It also proposes the way forward under the Medium Term Plan (MTP) of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), its 2010-2020 Strategic Plan, and the mandates of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA).

The FonTC was established in February 2011 in order to provide innovative solutions to the problems facing farmers and other rural inhabitants. It is a self-funded, IICA initiative with focus on developing multinational projects that are aligned with the MTP, and which are selected by a committee of peers based on merit, innovation, and relevance.

Additionally, the initiative seeks to promote the creation of international public goods, and also to complement IICA's technical cooperation strategies, both within the hemisphere and within the countries. It is also a means of attracting external resources to complement and expand the technical cooperation that the Institute provides for its member countries.

The establishment of the Fund has been viewed as very positive, due as much to its governing bodies as to IICA's strategic partners. The Director General has received consistent support and additional external resources to continue this initiative.

The Fund's implementation, as with any other institutional innovation, is generating a wealth of knowledge that is useful for improving both its future performance as well as its importance to IICA's internal units as well as its stakeholders and external partners.

In the first two calls of the Fund (2011 and 2012), 33 projects were approved and funded for a total of USD 2,696,983.

One of the primary institutional benefits of the FonTC is its contribution to fostering collaborative work between IICA's Offices in the member countries and its technical programs under common goals "as One IICA".

One of the major challenges facing the Fund is retaining its competitive nature while it becomes institutionalized.

This document is divided into six sections. The first presents the design and organization of the FonTC. The second summarizes the evolution of the Fund. The third demonstrates the major results of a random selection of projects selected from the first Call, which come to an end this year. The fourth section shows the benefits and challenges facing this initiative. The fifth section describes the main lessons learnt. And, finally, the sixth section presents the final remarks.

We hope that our readers will come to appreciate how a competitive fund with few financial resources of its own, but with good ideas and the firm commitment of IICA specialists, can generate a synergy that meets the needs of its member countries, guided by a sound competitive approach.



Organization and management





As a first step towards establishing the Fund, its objectives, the types of projects that would be admissible to the competition, the units and staff that could participate and the funds available were determined. On that basis, and within the regulations of the Institute, the modalities for organizing and managing the Fund were also decided. This entire process is described below, along with the procedures for selecting the projects for funding and monitoring during their execution.

Objectives

- a) Contribute to the achievement of the objectives outlined in the IICA 2010-2014 MTP.
- b) Promote technical cooperation of excellence between the technical personnel of IICA, through financing of multinational projects with a focus on innovation.
- c) Strengthen interaction between the technical personnel of IICA in all its member countries.
- d) Offer a form of financing that is novel and transparent, and attract external economic resources for complementing the funding of specific projects within the Fund.
- e) Develop and consolidate a network of strategic alliances with international, regional and national organizations that possess the same mission and purpose as IICA.

- f) Promote a more productive, competitive and sustainable agriculture, in response to the priorities and demands of the member countries.
- g) Promote technological innovation for the benefit of agriculture within the member countries of the Institute.

Requirements to be met by the projects

The projects to be financed by the FonTC must be executed in at least two member countries of the Institute, located in the five regions of the Americas: Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern.

Additionally, they must be linked to at least one line of action under the following technical programs outlined in the IICA MTP:

- Innovation for productivity and competitiveness,
- Agricultural health and food safety,
- Agribusiness and commercialization,
- Agriculture, territories and rural well-being,
- Agriculture and food security, and
- Agriculture, natural resources management and climate change.

In practice, most of the projects financed by the FonTC are executed in more than two countries, cover two or more lines of action, and fall under two or more programs. Additionally, funding ranges between USD 20, 000 and USD 100,000.

Profile of the competitors

Proposals may be presented by teams of professionals from within the Institute, made up of members of staff from at least two IICA offices in its member countries and from at least one of the Institute's technical programs. These teams may be complemented by members of staff from other national or international organizations.

Management and financing

The Steering Committee (SC) of the Fund is its governing body. It is made up of six members of staff representing the different units of the Institute and is chaired by the Director General. The SC establishes the terms of reference of each Call, the procedures manual of the FonTC, the qualification and selection process for the projects presented. It also establishes the guidelines for reporting and follow up on the projects approved, as well as for preparation of the annual report.

The Technical Secretariat (TS) of the FonTC is its executive body. This small group of staff manages the operation of the Fund, proposes actions for its functioning and implements the decisions taken by the SC. The TS also assists with coordination of the projects and serves as the link between the SC and the technical staff that participates in these projects.

Source of funding for projects: The FonTC is self-financed, thanks to savings realized within the Institute, and which are supplemented with donations made by organizations within the member countries as well as international organizations.

Project selection

The proposals vying for funding are presented in accordance with the rules and guidelines of the respective annual Call, which sets out the minimum requirements and the format that each proposal must adhere to in order to be eligible. The Call also indicates the priorities set for that year and the methodology for evaluation of the proposals.

In order to guarantee impartiality and transparency of the evaluation process, the proposals that are prepared in keeping with the rules of participation are assessed by two experts outside of the Institute¹, based on the guidelines established. Following this, the SC selects the proposals that have obtained the highest scores

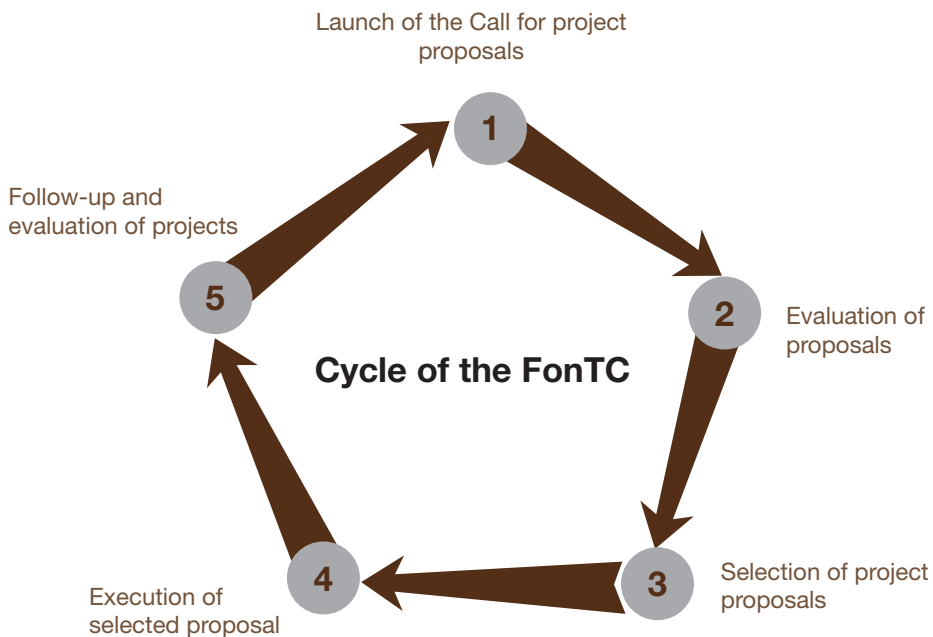
1. During the first Call, the proposals were assessed by professionals both within and external to the Institute, who were all specialists in the areas of the proposed projects. In an effort to improve the neutrality of the selection process, at the second Call, the proposals were assessed exclusively by professionals external to IICA.

and which satisfy the requirements established by the respective call. Finally, the projects selected are submitted for approval by the Director General.

Operational cycle

The operational cycle of the FonTC consists of five stages (figure 1). The first phase is the preparation and launch of the Call. In the second phase, the proposals received are assessed. In the third phase, the SC selects and approves the best proposals, from most to least qualified. At the fourth stage, the projects approved are executed. Finally, at the fifth stage, the projects are followed-up and evaluated.

Figure 1. Operational cycle of the FonTC



Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.



Development of the FonTC





After an initial planning period, the FonTC began operations with its first call in February 2011. The second one was held in December of that year and the third is scheduled for October 2013. Ninety proposals were received in the first two calls. These were submitted by teams of IICA professionals from 33 member states.

Evaluation of the proposals

Prior to each call, a document with guidelines is disseminated, which sets out the rules and displays the forms required to prepare and submit proposals to the respective competition. In the *first phase*, the Technical Secretariat (TS) reviews the proposals to ensure that they have followed the stated regulations, and in particular, to confirm that they fall within the specific lines of action of the Institute's technical programs and cover more than one member state.

Satisfactory proposals move on to the *second stage* where they are evaluated based on 15 criteria which gauge the project's contribution, viability, whether it is implemented in collaboration with external partners, whether it leverages external resources and, finally, its degree of innovation. This evaluation is quantifiable and is as familiar to those submitting proposals as it is to the evaluators. As previously indicated, each proposal is evaluated independently by two evaluators who give it a score, whose average defines its final rating.

In the first call, the Steering Committee entrusted the task of evaluating the proposals to a group of professionals from the Institute and external experts, who were specialists on the issues outlined in the proposals. However, in order to enhance the neutrality and transparency of the evaluation process, the Steering Committee,

for the 2012 call, invited only outside professionals. Altogether, 64 professionals from organizations in 15 countries across the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe evaluated 52 proposals.

Selection and approval of proposals

In the *third stage*, the Steering Committee holds a meeting to select, in four rounds, the proposals from each call. In the first round, each proposal is checked, along with its two evaluations and its respective scores; it is then ranked based on the average of its scores (highest to lowest). In the second round, the Steering Committee eliminates the proposals with the lowest rankings. In the third round, the Committee selects a subset of proposals with the highest scores. In the fourth round, the best proposals are selected from the remaining ones based on three criteria: 1) the Steering Committee's review of the proposal (and its implied assessment); 2) the average of the evaluators' scores; and 3) its adherence to the priorities established in the respective call.

Once the selection of proposals is complete, the Steering Committee places them in descending order so as to assign, in that order, the funds from the Institute that are available for the respective call.

Finally, the Steering Committee submits its recommendation to the Director General, who may or may not agree with the list of proposals to be financed by the Fund².

List of selected projects

Thirty-three projects were selected and funded, most of which are multidisciplinary, (they include more than one technical program of IICA) and are carried out in all the regions of the hemisphere: Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern. Several of these projects have been implemented in partnership with public and/or private institutions, financed jointly with external resources, and cover different modalities such as the generation of international public goods, horizontal cooperation among countries, focus on new conceptual issues and the implementation of the first phase of major projects. The primary beneficiaries are member state institutions, farmers' organizations and rural communities.

2. The Director General fully endorsed the list of projects recommended by the Steering Committee in the two previous calls.

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the list of projects selected and approved for funding in the 2011 and 2012 Calls, as well as the participating countries and institutional programs.

Table 1. Projects selected under the 2011 Call of the FonTC

Project	Participating countries	Programs
1. Instruments for the creation of synergies between agriculture and mining in rural territories of the countries of the Andean Region	Canada, Colombia and Peru	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA)
2. Social Management of Rural Territories: Horizontal Cooperation between the IICA Offices in Brazil and Uruguay, including support for the Offices in Ecuador and Paraguay, as part of the internationalization of the Standing Forum on Sustainable Rural Development – SRD Forum	Brazil and Uruguay Partially: Ecuador and Paraguay	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)
3. Territorial Development with the Localized Agrifood System (LASF) Approach	Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Mexico	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)
4. Extension Strategies: family agriculture and adaptation to climate change in selected territories in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay)	Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and PROCISUR	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
5. Institutional strengthening for the design and implementation of agricultural insurance and other risk management instruments	Brazil, United States and Uruguay	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC) Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
6. Improving the Competitiveness of the Small Ruminant Sub-sector through the Development of National Grading Standards and Enhanced Market Intelligence	Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC) Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
7. Enhancing the Value-Added Processing of Roots and Tubers in the Caribbean through the Transfer of Improved Technologies	Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)

Project	Participating countries	Programs
8. Institutional strengthening of the IPTA in Paraguay and the INIAF in Bolivia	Bolivia , Paraguay and PROCISUR	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)
9. Establishing the technical and institutional bases required to promote the development of a quality seed industry for small-scale producers, preparatory stage	Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Headquarters	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)
10. Development and validation of instruments to support initiatives aimed at preparing and helping farmers and agribusiness operators to meet the new requirements for entry to the U.S. market	El Salvador, Miami Office, Peru and Dominican Republic	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)
11. Estimation of the contribution of animal production to the incomes and food security of small-scale producers in countries of LAC	Haiti, Mexico, Miami Office, Dominican Republic and Uruguay	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC) Agriculture and Food Security (AFS) Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA)
12. Assessment of Climate Risks and Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture in the MERCOSUR	Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay	Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
13. Support for the Carambola Fruit Fly Control and Eradication Project	Brazil, Guyana, Suriname and PROCITROPICOS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
14. Public goods and the development of synergies between agriculture and the environment to contribute to institutional strengthening in the public and private sectors, as a contribution to implementing the national program to adapt agriculture to climate change	Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Headquarters and Uruguay	Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
15. Improving the capacities of the countries to make better use of trade agreements and make the agricultural sector more competitive	Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panamá	Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA) Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)
16. Development of a strategy to improve access to, use and impact of ICTs in the public institutional framework for agriculture in Paraguay, Peru and Brazil	Brazil , Paraguay, Peru and Headquarters	Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture (CAESPA)

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FONTC.

Table 2. Projects selected under the 2012 Call of the FonTC

Project	Participating countries	Programs
1. Revitalizing a cherished crop: mango chain development in Haiti	Haiti and the United States	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)
2. Development of local strategies for adapting to climate change for sustainable development of municipalities in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador	Guatemala, El Salvador y Honduras	Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)
3. Appropriate intensive small ruminant production systems for the Caribbean, based on local feed resources	Barbados, Jamaica, República Dominicana, Surinam y Trinidad y Tobago	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)
4. Economic, social and environmental management of small- and medium-sized rural properties in seven (7) countries of Latin America	Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru and Dominican Republic	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC) Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)
5. Agricultural innovation for the sustainability of the biodiesel and biokerosene value chain	Brazil, Colombia and Mexico	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)
6. Reducing the Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture : Enhancing Institutional Capacity to Promote and Support Climate Smart Agriculture in the Caribbean Region	Grenada, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC) Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)
7. Design of a strategy for the differentiation of products from the family agriculture sector based on their ties to the territory	Argentina, Brazil, Spain Uruguay and PROCISUR	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC)
8. Virtual school for phytosanitary inspectors	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay	Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
9. A systemic tool for evaluating the economic, social environmental and institutional impacts of agricultural research and innovation	Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)

Project	Participating countries	Programs
10. Validation of a framework instrument for the preparation of tourism development programs in rural territories of Latin America	Panama, Paraguay, Spain and Venezuela	Agribusiness and Commercialization (AC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)
11. Improvement of public tuberculosis and brucellosis programs in the Southern Cone	Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and PROCITROPICOS	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
12. Improvement of public tuberculosis and brucellosis programs in the Andean Region	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela	Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
13. System for issuance of sanitary early warnings in territories susceptible to climate change	Paraguay and Peru	Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
14. Identification and description of campesino and indigenous technologies used in Highland production systems susceptible to extreme climatic events in the Andean Region and Meso America	Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru	Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC)
15. Implementation of a group traceability system for beef in Bolivia	Bolivia, Costa Rica and Uruguay	Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)
16. Formulation of a methodology for using renewable sources of energy in agroindustrial and agricultural activities in rural territories as a means of increasing competitiveness and mitigating the impacts of climate change	Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela	Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness (IPC) Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW) Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change (ANRMCC)
17. Repositioning the concept of “rural” and its implications for public policies in Latin America	Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay	Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being (ATRW)

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

Table 3 indicates the topics covered by the projects selected. It shows that most of the projects belong to the areas of Innovation for productivity and competitiveness (17 out of 33) and the Agriculture, territories and rural well-being Program (11 out of 33).

Additionally, this table also shows that the projects focus on topics from the following programs: Innovation for productivity and competitiveness (9 out of 33), Agribusiness and commercialization (6 out of 33), Agricultural health and food safety (6 out of 33) and Agriculture, natural resource management and climate change (6 out of 33).

Table 3. Representation of IICA programs in the projects selected for the 2011 and 2012 calls of the FonTC

Technical programs	Number of projects within the framework of the Program	Number of projects that focus primarily on the topics under the Program
Innovation for Productivity and Competitiveness	17	9
Agribusiness and Commercialization	11	6
Agricultural Health and Food Safety	8	6
Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being	11	3
Agriculture and Food Security	2	0
Agriculture, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change	9	6
Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture	4	3

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

Table 4 shows the distribution of total resources assigned by the Fund to the projects approved in the two calls (USD 2,696,983), based on the geographical ambit in which they are executed.

Table 4. Distribution of the resources from the FonTC by region and projects selected in the 2011 and 2012 calls

IICA Regions and Headquarters	Number of projects coordinated	Amount managed	
		USD	Percentage
Andean	5	469 867	17
Caribbean	5	449 185	17
Central	1	60 000	2
Northern	5	366 181	14
Southern	11	949 626	35
Headquarters	6	402 124	15
Total	33	2 696 983	100

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

Support during the execution phase

The coordinators of the approved projects prepare a work plan, which includes a matrix for follow-up that contains the expected results of the project, the products required for achieving each result, the activities needed for achieving each product and the calendar for carrying out each activity. This matrix is supplemented by a schedule of expenditure broken down by type of activity (for example, workshops, travel, material for events, communications, consultants and insurance, among other expenditures). The work plan implicitly assumes that when the planned activities are carried out, the expected products are obtained and, when these are obtained, the expected results are achieved.

Every three months, the coordinators of the approved projects present a report on their progress, as well as a note containing the most relevant aspects of their execution in the corresponding three-month period. These reports are used to prepare a consolidated three-month report that is submitted to the SC for consideration. The document is used to track the progress of the projects, detect problems that they might be having or opportunities that may arise and take decisions for improving their performance and financial execution.



Main products and results of a random selection of projects





This section outlines the main products and results of several FonTC projects that have been selected on a random basis, some of which have already been finalized, and others that are still being executed as at May 31, 2013, and will be finalized this year. The name of the staff member who may be contacted for further information on the respective project is also provided.

Selection of finalized projects: products and results

- 1. Project:** Social Management of Rural Territories: Horizontal Cooperation between the IICA Offices in Brazil and Uruguay, including support for the Offices in Ecuador and Paraguay, as part of the internationalization of the Standing Forum on Sustainable Rural Development –SRD Forum
-

Contact Person: Breno Tiburcio, breno.tiburcio@iica.int, IICA Office in Brazil.

General objective

Strengthen the social management of rural territories as a result of the support provided to achieve conceptual progress with respect to focus on rural territories

and on human resource capacity building in order to implement public policies and perfect the existing institutional framework.

Participating countries: Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Main products and results

Training

- Teaching material was prepared and made available on the thematic content and methodologies for training human resources in social management of rural territories and conceptual upgrading with respect to public policies for sustainable area-based development.
- 124 persons from 12 institutions in Latin America were trained in:
 - a. Latest developments in the concept of area-based social development management (course in Uruguay with 53 participants).
 - b. Latest development in concept and sharing of experiences in public policy for area-based development (course in Brazil with 71 participants).
- This training was aimed at perfecting strategies, policies and instruments for area-based development and establishing a technical nucleus within the institutions that is equipped to conceptualize, plan and implement programs and policies for the rural areas.

Innovations generated

- An analytical study is available on the political, socio-economic and cultural factors that determine the construction and functioning of models for social management of border territories. The potential beneficiaries of this model include government and non-governmental representatives, small and medium-sized farmers from the *Territorio Colegiado* and *Foro Agricultura Familiar de la Zona Sur de Río Grande del Sur* and members of the National Agricultural Council and the Rural Development Office of the Cerro Largo Department in Uruguay.
- The results of the analytical study can guide the construction and functioning of models for social management in other border territories in Latin America.

Strategic alliances

- The tripartite Alliance between the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay (MGAP), the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MDA) of Brazil and IICA. This Alliance produced an agenda containing the initial horizontal cooperation between the two ministries for the development of activities in the border territories

Publication

- Miranda, Carlos; Tiburcio, Breno. eds. 2012. *Estrategias de inclusión socioproductiva: VI International Forum for Area-based Development*. Brasilia, BR, IICA. 224 p.

2. Project: Improving the capacities of the countries to make better use of trade agreements and make the agricultural sector more competitive

Contact person: Juana Galván, juana.galvan@iica.int, IICA Office in Panama.

General objective

Contribute to the enhancement of institutional capacities for better use of free trade agreements, through knowledge of the regulations and negotiating conditions for access to markets, thereby facilitating decision making on policies relating to incentives for export and investment for the agri-food sector.

Participating countries: Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

Main products and results

Training

- The manual Improving the technical capacities of the countries to make better use of trade agreements and boost competitiveness in the agricultural sector was prepared.

- Training was provided for 114 public and private sector workers in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua on the topic of *enhancing technical capacities to make better use of free trade agreements and contribute to the competitiveness of the agriculture sector*.
- The beneficiaries and counterparts who were involved in the implementation of the Project use the methodology that was developed in their everyday work, as well as the knowledge acquired through the training activities on trade regulations.

Methodologies and instruments generated

- *Methodology for the identification of export opportunities within free trade agreements*. This enables the countries to assess the degree of access opportunity and competitiveness of their exportable offer to markets in the countries with which they have existing free trade agreements. This is useful for increasing and diversifying trade, both in terms of markets and products. In all the countries, real opportunities were identified for at least ten products, which were presented to the corresponding trade promoters and producers.
- *Information System for Agricultural Products in Free Trade Agreements (SIPAALC)*. This is a public good in the form of an information platform that is easy to use and accessible, which provides information on access to the agricultural products included in the free trade agreements.
- *Online course on trade regulations and administration of free trade agreements*, which will be available on a permanent basis and will be reviewed and updated periodically.

Publications

- IICA (Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, CR). 2012. User Guide for the Methodological Tool: Identifying Opportunities Arising from Free Trade Agreements. San Jose, CR.
- IICA (Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, CR). 2012. Technical Capacity-Building for more effective use of trade agreements. San Jose, CR. Training manual.

3. Project: Public goods and the development of synergies between agriculture and the environment, to contribute to institutional strengthening in the public and private sectors, as a contribution to implementing the national program to adapt agriculture to climate change

Contact person: David Williams, david.williams@iica.int, IICA Headquarters.

General objective

Support the generation of public goods and the development of synergies between the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the Ministry of the Environment in certain member countries, in order to improve their contribution to the National Innovation System and to achieving the national goal of reducing the vulnerability of agriculture in the face of climate change, promoting its adaptation to this phenomenon and mitigation of its effects.

Participating countries: Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

Main products and results

Strategic alliances

- Spaces for dialogue and analysis were established between the national institutions in the participating countries. Additionally, links were strengthened and progress was achieved with respect to synergies between the Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment on topics associated with climate change. The foregoing enabled efforts to continue to be carried out jointly, challenges to be tackled and opportunities to be grasped in order to complement the national strategies and/or plans for adaptation to climate change, so that they promote the involvement and strengthening of civil society and institutional actors in a more organized manner, utilizing sustainability as a base and including a focus that takes into account the complexity and multidimensional nature of climate change.
- The project enabled the participating countries to learn from each other's experiences in order to improve the design of their strategies for adapting to climate change, with a view to optimizing actions and efforts within the agricultural, environmental and economic sectors to contribute to sustainable development.

- A diagnosis of the five participating countries is available with respect to the vulnerability of their agriculture to the effects of climate change and the country actions aimed at mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, with a view to including them in the work agendas of national innovation systems.

Selection of ongoing projects: products and results (as at 31 May, 2013)

Below are some of the results of projects in the 2011 Call that are still under way and which will be finalized in 2013.

1. **Project:** Instruments for the creation of synergies between agriculture and mining in rural territories of the countries of the Andean Region

Contact person: Joaquín Arias, joaquin.arias@iica.int, IICA Office in the United States of America (Washington).

General objective

Develop knowledge with respect to institutional arrangements and technological instruments that serve as the basis for formulating area-based development plans in which positive synergies are generated between agriculture and mining in rural areas of the Andean region where these two sectors co-exist.

Participating countries: Canada, Colombia and Peru.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Methodologies and instruments developed

- *Guide “Criterios de selección y evaluación de casos exitosos o de aprendizaje sobre sinergias entre minería y agricultura”* (Criteria for selection and evaluation of success

stories or learning experiences on synergies between mining and agriculture). This facilitates the preparation of technical notes that constitute the basis for selecting cases that can be used as learning experiences. It also establishes the guidelines for evaluation of the cases in order to extract lessons as well as technological and institutional innovations that promote synergies between agriculture and mining.

- *Guía para el diseño de proyectos que promuevan el desarrollo mediante la construcción de sinergias entre minería y agricultura* (Guidelines for the design of projects that promote development by building synergies between mining and agriculture). This promotes a participatory focus on the design of projects and seeks to achieve results and impacts.

Strategic alliances

- Links were established through visits and workshops, as well as sharing of experiences, among the following actors in civil society: the *Grupo de Diálogo Minería y Desarrollo Sostenible* (Peru), the *Fundación Avina para el Desarrollo Sostenible* (Colombia), the *Fundación Amigos de mi Chocó* (Colombia), CARE Peru, The Mining Association of Canada (MAC), The Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the Agrarian Federation of Ontario. Links were also established with mining companies that demonstrate the greatest interest in the project: Antamina, Yanacocha, Buenaventura and Xstrata.
- Contacts were made and working relationships were developed with several government bodies: the Ministry of Agriculture of Peru, the Secretariat of Agriculture and Mining of the Department of Huila (Colombia), the Regional Government of Arequipa (Peru), the Ministry of Mining and Energy of Colombia, the Vice-Ministry of Mining in Peru, Natural Resources Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Environment Canada and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.
- The greatest benefits generated by these institutional links were the sharing of experiences as well as horizontal cooperation between governments, private actors and representatives of civil society, to promote mining that takes the environment and the local population into consideration, and to generate synergies between the economic sectors for rural area-based development, which gives continuity to the project.

2. **Project:** Territorial development with the Localized Agrifood System (LAFS) Approach

Contact person: Francois Boucher, francois.boucher@iica.int, IICA Office in Mexico.

General objective

Design and validate a methodological tool in support of area based development by activating specific local resources.

Participating countries: Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador and México.

Main products and results (as at May 31, 2013)

Methodologies and instruments developed

Methodological guide for area based development with a focus on LAFS. This is a tool for promoting area based development, by boosting synergies between local actors in selected territories, with the aim of improving the competitiveness of rural agro-industries.

Changes in conditions or benefits —not previously anticipated— generated by the project

Once the project was implemented, synergies were created that produced the following unforeseen results:

- Tenancingo, Mexico: Establishment of an organization that brings together producers and artisans from the township.
- Sur Alto, Costa Rica: Promotion of products that are typical of the region, creation of a radio program that highlights the organizational experience of women and youth with respect to different products and services from the territory, and establishment of an agro-store, which familiarizes persons with local products, beginning with an initial exhibition in the IICA Office in Costa Rica.
- Valle de Intag, Ecuador: Preparation of two project profiles that were presented at the Small Projects Initiative of the Global Environment Fund (GEF).

3. Project: Extension strategies: family agriculture and adaptation to climate change in selected territories in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile and Uruguay)

Contact person: Alejandra Sarquis, alejandra.sarquis@iica.int, IICA Office in Chile.

General objective

Prepare strategies for the extension programs that support the sustainability of the family agriculture systems of the region and their adaptation within a scenario of high variability of precipitation and temperature as a result of climate change in the region.

Participating countries: Argentina, Chile and Uruguay.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Methodologies and products developed

- *Adaptation and application of an innovative methodology (IRI-Columbia University) for analysis of total climate variability in short, medium and long-term temporal components.* Recently, the scientific community has begun to explore in greater detail the effects of “short-term climate change” (10 to 30 years). This methodology provides useful information for planning and implementation of adaptation measures that facilitate dealing not only with climate change, but also with climate variability, and reducing their effects on agricultural production.
- *Synthesis and integrated analysis of the information from family agriculture systems and their characteristics in the face of climate change.* The results of this study will enable public and private organizations to design technological policies that make the adoption of technologies for adapting to climate change viable in a relatively short-term.

4. Project: Institutional strengthening for the design and implementation of agricultural insurance and other risk management instruments

Contact person: David Hatch, david.hatch@iica.int, IICA Office in the United States (Washington).

General objective

Contribute to the strengthening of public and private institutions for the development and implementation of agricultural insurance and other risk management instruments, as measures for improving competitiveness and sustainability of agribusinesses, through stabilization of the income of the farmers, with as minimal an impact as possible on the public finances.

Participating countries: Brazil, United States and Uruguay.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Strategic alliances

The Alliance was strengthened with the *Asociación Latinoamericana para el Desarrollo del Seguro Agropecuario* (Latin American Association for Agricultural Insurance Development-ALASA), which provided USD 10 000 for a publication based on the project.

Publications

- Hatch, David; Núñez, Marcelo; Vila, Fernando; Stephenson, Kervin. 2012. *Agricultural Insurance in the Americas: a Risk Management Tool*. San Jose, CR, IICA, ALASA. (in Spanish and English).
- Hatch, David; García, Miguel; Núñez, Marcelo. 2013. *Developing successful and sustainable agricultural insurance programs: fundamental concepts and initial steps*. San Jose, CR, IICA.

Significant events

- Three hemispheric forums were held (in the Andean, Central and Southern regions) to discuss IICA activities within the hemisphere and define key concepts for establishing an effective and sustainable agricultural insurance program.

- The information obtained was used to develop the proposed *Strategic Plan for IICA technical cooperation to support the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in developing policies and instruments for risk management in general and agricultural insurance in particular.*
- Fourth Symposium to facilitate the Development of Agricultural Insurance in the Americas, organized by IICA and held in Washington, D.C. on February 14, 2013. The event was attended by eminent international players from both the public and private sectors who are involved in agricultural insurance and risk management.

5. Project: Improving the Competitiveness of the Small Ruminant Sub-sector through the Development of National Grading Standards and Enhanced Market Intelligence

Contact person: Ainsworth Riley, ainsworth.riley@iica.int, IICA Office in Jamaica.

General objective

Develop national competencies for classifying, processing and identifying opportunities for trade in and production of small ruminants in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Participating countries: Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Training

- A manual was prepared to facilitate training in good hygiene practices for the slaughter of small ruminants.
- Seventy (70) persons from Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago were trained in meat cuts production and slaughter of small ruminants. The persons trained were farmers, personnel from the ministries of agriculture, veterinarians, meat handlers from supermarkets and slaughterers.

- The training contributed to boosting the production of high-quality cuts of sheep and goat meat in the Caribbean.

Methodologies and instruments developed

- *Instrument for carrying out national market studies*, validated via questionnaires administered to a sample group of 554 persons directly involved in the subject such as producers, agriculture ministry staff and supermarket personnel. This can be used in the future by the players in the sector to enact changes in the market. They can also extrapolate from the information contained in the original data (within the countries participating in the project).

6. Project: Enhancing the value added processing of roots and tubers in the Caribbean through the transfer of improved technologies

Contact person: Gregg Rawlins, gregg.rawlins@iica.int, IICA Office in Trinidad and Tobago.

General objective

Transfer improved technologies to producers and processors via horizontal technical cooperation (sharing of experiences, models and technologies) between the countries of the Caribbean (Barbados, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago), and Latin America (IPC, Peru; CIAT-CLAYUCA, Colombia and EMBRAPA, Brazil). The project also seeks to establish channels and facilitate an appropriate environment for processors to do business and access financing for their operations.

Participating countries: Barbados, Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Training

- Teaching material and a video were produced for training in the processing of roots and tubers in the Caribbean.

- Seventy-one (71) persons from the seven participating countries in the Caribbean were trained.
- This training seeks to contribute to: 1) implementation of good practices for product processing, 2) identification of high-yielding varieties of cassava and sweet potato, 3) sharing of new ideas for product development and taking advantage of trade opportunities, and 4) dissemination of knowledge of food safety standards.

Methodologies and instruments developed

- *Survey for evaluating processors of roots and tubers.* This instrument identified the major challenges that producers face in accessing technologies for processing, equipment and good practices. The instrument also facilitated identification of solutions and requests for training in the processing of roots and tubers, so that local and regional workshops can be planned. (Caribbean).

Publication

- Jacque Andrew (2013). Processing of roots and tubers in the Caribbean: status and guidelines (at press).

7. Project: Assessment of Climate Risks and adaptation to Climate change in Agriculture in the MERCOSUR

Contact person: Antonio Donizeti, antonio.donizeti@iica.int, IICA Office in Uruguay.

General objective

Improve the capacity of the countries of the *Mercado Común del Sur* (MERCOSUR) to identify and apply adaptation measures to variability and climate change for productive systems, based on the strength of their climate risk evaluation systems.

Participating countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Main products and results (as at 31 May 2013)

Training

- *Online courses:* 52 technical persons from institutions in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay were trained in the following topics:
 - Generating applied climate information for the agriculture sector,
 - Climate information for risk management in the agriculture sector,
 - Cultivation model: opportunities and limitations to quantifying climate risk in agriculture, and
 - Analysis of meteorological series: extreme events and their climatic variability.

Methodologies and instruments developed

- *Manual of good practices for generating agro-climatic information* related to agricultural production in MERCOSUR. This helps to identify good practices in this area in institutions and recommends viable improvements.
- *A dashboard for contributing to decision making by government authorities.* This dashboard represents a process of review of the main processes and operations for measuring the results of managing a business and having information that facilitates prevention and reduction of the risks inherent in the activity, whether they are climatic in nature or related to price or logistics, with a view to dealing, in an informed manner, with the constant changes that occur in the business environment.



Benefits of the FonTC and institutional challenges





Within IICA, the FonTC has given rise to the adoption of an innovative mechanism that has generated and strengthened a number of benefits for the institute and, at the same time, has presented several challenges. The most relevant are described below.

Benefits

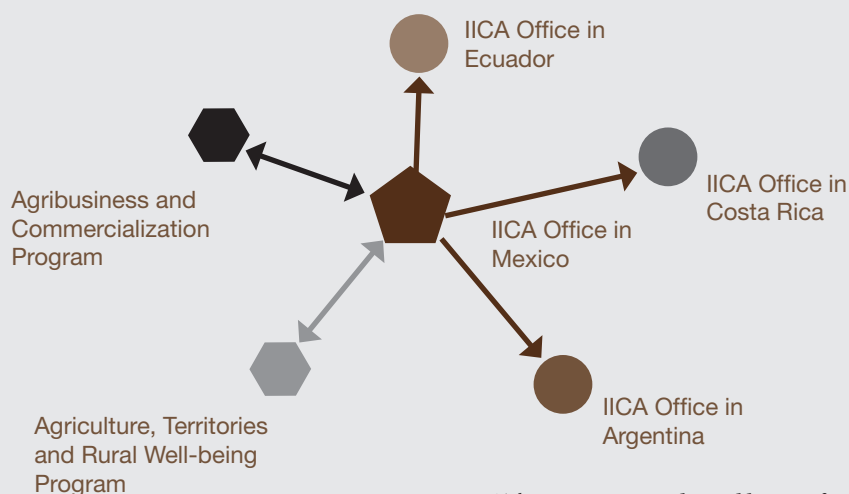
- 1) *Promotion of teamwork in multi-disciplinary areas by IICA staff located in various member countries.* Given the characteristics of the projects funded by the FonTC, professionals working in different member countries – and often in different *disciplines* – participate in their implementation. The teamwork also helps to identify high-performing technical personnel who contribute their skills and knowledge to the Institute.
- 2) *Contribution to the change in institutional culture and promotion of collaborative work between the IICA units in the countries and the technical programs.* Based on their characteristics, the projects of the fund promote interaction and collaborative work between the Offices in the member countries and the technical programs for achieving common objectives, as “a Single IICA” (Boxes 1 and 2, figures 2 and 3).
- 3) *Strengthening of the sharing of experiences and knowledge, through the collaborative work that the nature of multinational projects promotes.* This strengthening, in turn, contributes to improving and making the technical cooperation that the Institute provides more relevant.

- 4) *Increasing institutional capacity and experience on specific topics.* The projects of the Fund enable the Institute to become involved in new topics that are included in the MTP. For example, the FonTC finances six projects that are directly related to agriculture and climate change, and which are being carried out in the Andean, Caribbean, Central and Southern regions. This will allow IICA to demonstrate its expertise in these topics and participate as a partner in new initiatives in these areas. Additionally, the multinational projects of the FonTC are helping the small IICA Offices to position themselves on various topics and demonstrate more technical presence.

Box 1. Collaborative work

As an example of collaborative work being carried out between the programs and units of IICA by way of multinational projects financed by the FonTC, Figure 2 shows the relationship between the units participating in the FonTC in the project entitled “Territorial Development with the Local Agrifood System (LASF) Approach”, which is being coordinated by the IICA Office in Mexico, with the support of the Agribusiness and Commercialization and Agriculture, Territories and Rural Well-being programs, and with the participation of the IICA Offices in Argentina, Costa Rica and Ecuador.

Figura 2. Relationship between IICA Offices and the technical programs participating in the FonTC through the SIAL project*.



* This project is coordinated by a professional located in the IICA Office in Mexico.

Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

- 5) *Enhancing the image of the Institute and establishing alliances for technical cooperation.* The projects of the Fund can be supplemented with funds from other institutions, which enables IICA to establish or strengthen its alliance with other organizations and position itself as an attractive social partner which not only brings experience and knowledge to the table, but also financial resources to the projects dealing with topics falling under the technical programs of the Institute.
- 6) *Improving IICA's credibility in the international community and with the "stakeholders",* with respect to its capacity to provide technical cooperation in areas relating to the programs of the Institute with a new paradigm.
- 7) *Providing an instrument for attracting resources for the technical cooperation offered by the Institute.* For example, the Department of Agriculture of the United States (USDA) has provided USD 150,000 to co-finance four projects that were approved in the 2012 Call of the Fund. Additionally, some of the entities participating in the projects, such as the ALASA, are also providing additional resources for implementing them.
- 8) *Improving efficacy and efficiency in assigning resources for technical cooperation.* Implementation of the FonTC has contributed to preventing resources from being assigned on a discretionary basis, by establishing itself as a competitive mechanism built on merit, innovation and relevance of the proposals.
- 9) *Promotion of a culture of results-based project management.* As a result of the quarterly reporting on projects, a culture of accountability and product submission is being developed, which is helping to establish a results-based management that improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects.
- 10) *Contribution to the production of international public goods.* By their multinational nature, the projects financed by the Fund are contributing to IICA generating this type of goods in the form of new instruments, methodologies, systematized knowledge and publications.
- 11) *Increase in the capacity to formulate technical cooperation projects.* As a result of the instructions given and the forms prepared by the FonTC, which have been designed for preparation of technical cooperation projects, as well as through the very process of competency that has been established, this capacity has been improved with respect to the projects formulated before the Fund was established.

Box 2. Interaction between regions generated by the execution of FonTC projects

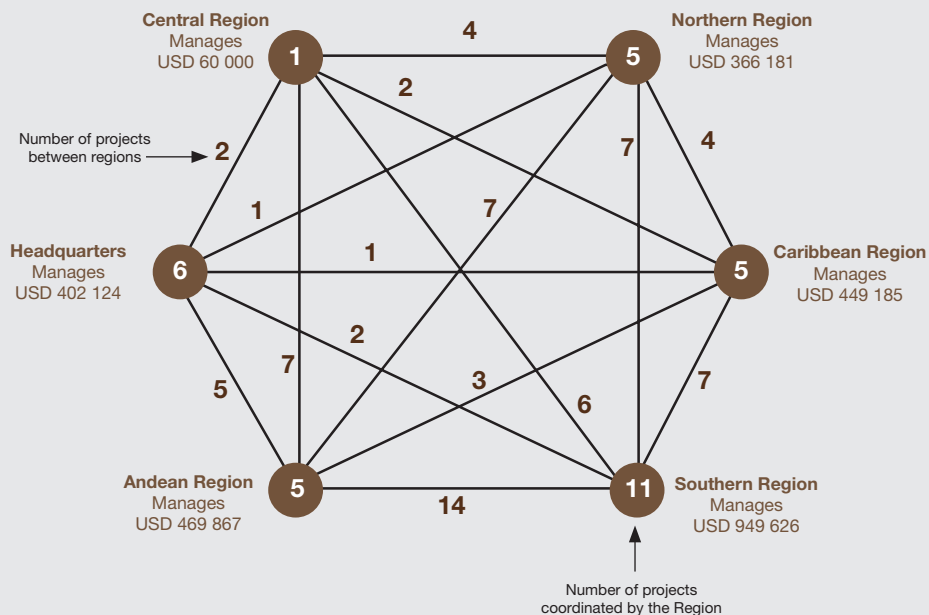
The nodes presented in figure 3 relate to the various regions of IICA (Andean, Caribbean, Central, Northern and Southern) as well as Headquarters. The number within each circle indicates the number of projects that are coordinated from the Offices in the corresponding region. For example, five projects are being coordinated from the offices in the Caribbean region (one from the Dominican Republic, one from Saint Lucia, one from Jamaica, one from Suriname and one from Trinidad and Tobago).

Two regions are linked if one Office in the first region is participating in the execution of a project in which an Office from the second region is involved; this is indicated by a line between the two regions. The number that appears on the line between two regions indicates the number of projects that fall into this category.

The USD figure that appears below each region indicates the total resources that the coordinators of the Fund in each region are managing. For example, in the Caribbean, the five project coordinators manage a total of USD 449 185 assigned from the FonTC.

Finally, the sum of the nodes is equal to the total number of winning projects (33) and the sum of the monetary amounts in each node assigned to the projects selected from the 2011 and 2012 calls, during the period of their execution, is USD 2 696 983.

**Figura 3. IICA Regional Network
Projects of the 2011 y 2012 Calls
(with resources per region)**



Source: Technical Secretariat of the FonTC.

Challenges

The sustainability of the initiative is beset by several challenges which are highlighted as follows:

- 1) *Becoming a tool that attracts external resources geared toward increasing the technical cooperation of the Institute.* Spurring multinational projects in specific areas, making use of the credibility and transparency that the FonTC has been earning within the international community and stakeholders.
- 2) *Clearly defining the priorities of each Call* so that approved projects may contribute to meaningful technical cooperation.
- 3) *Continuously improving and simplifying the evaluation process* so that the Fund may continue to be a transparent and impartial mechanism for allocating resources based on the merit of the proposals submitted to the competition.
- 4) Although the Fund has helped to improve the project preparation and the efficiency of project implementation, *it is desirable that the institutional capacity for preparing and managing these projects be further improved* to increase the Fund's effectiveness (relevance) and efficacy in these areas.
- 5) While the projects are allocated a total budget during the period of implementation (which on average is 18 months), IICA's regulation-based management of its own funds leads to the budget being assigned on a yearly basis, which does not allow for rescheduling during implementation, where transfers of the budget from one year to the next are involved. As a result, it is not always possible to make use of all the resources geared toward the project's execution. *One challenge is to create, within the institutional norms, alternate financial mechanisms which would facilitate and enhance the efficiency of project implementation.*
- 6) Professionals involved in the implementation of projects financed by the FonTC deal with several areas of responsibility simultaneously and as such, are challenged with *allocating a specific time slot to engage in these projects during their workday and to integrate this involvement into the institutional work plan.*
- 7) *Identifying a mechanism that is complementary to the Fund, which would give continuity to projects with innovative approaches to specific and relevant issues - related to the MTP- in order to increase the impact and scope of the technical cooperation provided by the Institute.*

- 8) *Increasing the publications generated by the projects and widely disseminating their output and results.*
- 9) *Ensuring that each project is implemented in the optimal number of countries, in accordance with its technical specifications, operating team, and budget. That number may vary from project to project.*
- 10) *Increasing collaboration between technical programs and country Offices in project implementation so that all team members may be active and effective participants. This is also essential to promoting the exchange of experiences and the transfer of knowledge among member states.*
- 11) *Continuing with the institutionalization of the FonTC without sacrificing its competitive character, by synchronizing the activities of multinational projects with the national activities of IICA Offices in member states and also with the activities of technical institutional programs.*



Lessons learnt





The constitution and implementation of the FonTC, two-and-a-half years into its operation, have left a legacy of lessons learnt in several areas, the main ones are highlighted below.

Implementation of the Fund

- 1) The FonTC is an institutional innovation - a new internal mechanism, put in place for the first time at IICA, with the aim of allocating resources to support technical cooperation - which requires a process of adoption by professionals of the Institute and the Offices in member states as well as a period for institutionalization.
- 2) The establishment of a Steering Committee with officials committed to the success of the initiative is a key factor in charting its course and in implementing and operating the Fund. Also, the Director General's strong and consistent support of the initiative has been a fundamental factor in its successful implementation.

Participation in Calls

- 3) IICA's professional staff has demonstrated widespread interest in becoming involved in the FonTC initiative, as evidenced by the 90 proposals submitted to the competition via the Calls.
- 4) The proposals submitted vary in quality, and this reveals differences in the ability and competence of the Offices in the preparation of projects.

Evaluation and Selection of Project Proposals

- 5) Using only external evaluators to evaluate proposals for the Fund's second call enhanced credibility with respect to transparency and impartiality in the selection of proposals and the allocation of resources for technical cooperation.

Management and Implementation of Projects

- 6) The follow-up on projects has been crucial to making decisions that improve the use of institutional resources and which contribute to the success of projects.
- 7) The Offices which commit to participating in the implementation of a project that has been submitted to the competition do not always support its execution, and this reduces its scope and effectiveness.
- 8) The external factors that cause the most delay in the implementation of projects are natural events which affect activities in the field and in the territories, as well as changes in governmental authorities who are either directly or indirectly involved in the projects.

Results from projects

- 9) There is a tendency to place very high expectations on the outcomes to be achieved in the proposals submitted to the competition, but in several cases these are not realized with respect to the established budget and timeline.
- 10) Several projects produce unanticipated results which are nonetheless worthy of attention as they provide significant benefits in the short term. For example, some benefits unexpectedly result from the creation of a farmers' association in a territory where project activities are being carried out.



Final remarks

IICA has demonstrated its capacity to design, implement and manage a competitive fund, aimed at financing, with its own resources, technical cooperation projects in the Americas and the Caribbean in partnership with other institutions.

The lessons learnt and the institutional challenges described in this document point to areas in need of improvement and the way forward.

Prospects are good in terms of the Fund's ability to successfully address the current challenges and for it to become a significant tool in attracting external resources as well as to spur technical cooperation provided by the Institute at the multinational level, particularly in the creation and application of international public goods and the transfer of meaningful and practical knowledge among member states.

In meeting this objective, the Fund will need to enhance its transparency and its association with relevant partners to facilitate joint financing and implementation of its projects.

IICA's Administration as well as the Steering Committee and the Technical Secretariat are committed to pursuing the development and improvement of the FonTC, as they are convinced of the substantial benefits that this form of technical cooperation is producing for member countries as well as for all the technical staff at the Institute.

The FonTC will continue operating as long as it continues to produce results and to receive the enthusiastic cooperation of the IICA technical staff, for whom it is intended.

It is an initiative that is available to institutions and countries who wish to contribute to its development and empowerment.

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INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE
FOR COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE
Technical Secretariat of the FonTC

Headquarters. P.O. Box 55-2200 San Jose,
Vazquez de Coronado, San Isidro 11101 – Costa Rica
Phone: (506) 2216 0222 / Fax: (506) 2216 0223
E-mail: fondocooperaciontecnica@iica.int
Web site: iicahq@iica.int