

**INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR
COOPERATION ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

IICA-CIDIA



**AN INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND
CONFERENCE CENTER**

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May 1990



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ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

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**AN INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND
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DESCRIPTION

1. NAME OF THE PROJECT: International Training and Conference Center
2. PRESENTED BY: Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)
3. ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 55
2200 Coronado, Costa Rica,
FAX (506) 294741
4. COUNTRIES INVOLVED: All Member States
5. FIELD OF ACTIVITIES:
 - Training Related with Agricultural Reactivation and Modernization
 - Technical Assistance and other Training Activities for project formulation, evaluation and management
 - Information Sciences
6. DURATION: 3 years
7. COSTS: Under US\$4 million
 - 7.1. Supported by Canada Phase A
 - 7.2. Requested from Japan Phases B/E
8. TYPE OF ASSISTANCE REQUESTED: Securing of funding, drawing up of plans, Construction, and Programming of Activities

A TRAINING AND CONFERENCE CENTER

1. Background

The actions of IICA are currently governed by its 1987-1991 Medium Term Plan, and by the Plan of Joint Action for Agricultural Reactivation in Latin America and the Caribbean (PLANLAC), which was approved in October 1989 by the ministers of agriculture of the hemisphere.

The specific objectives of IICA's Medium Term Plan for 1987-1991 are to encourage, promote and support the efforts of its Member States to propel the development of agriculture as the major source of economic growth and to intensify modernization of that sector. The PLANLAC is a plan of action designed to revitalize and modernize agriculture in the region by providing support for national efforts to define and execute agricultural policies that will contribute to economic and social recovery. Its aim is to respond to specific problems of the agricultural sector through regional and subregional joint action among countries, foster regional integration and establish truly hemispheric strategies on technical cooperation, training, investment and trade negotiations.

Modernization of the agricultural sector must include programs to strengthen institutions, and this requires: upgrading the skills of human resources involved in policy areas related to agricultural reactivation and modernization; conducting studies on public sector modernization and ascertaining concomitant technical assistance and training activities; developing networks linking practicing professional and academic specialists in this subject; training human resources in project formulation, evaluation and management, and in the use of the information sciences in institution building.

Over its almost 50 years of existence, the Institute has been very active in education. Originally, the Institute was created as an agricultural research and training center. Over time it evolved into an organization providing technical assistance to boost agricultural development in its member countries. At the country level, and at its Headquarters, one of IICA's primary activities has been the development of human resources. In close collaboration with its Member States, IICA has provided training for government leaders, leaders of farmers' organizations and cooperatives and agricultural scientists, which include the best talent available in the hemisphere.

IICA has also served as a forum for senior-level discussions that have lead to the adoption of a variety of innovative and creative agricultural policies in the countries. It has used specialized multinational networks as a very effective mechanism for providing training, and for the exchange of experiences and the dissemination of new research findings, technology and information.



2. Justification

Existing Institute meeting and conference facilities are now saturated, and, in light of IICA's renewed emphasis on training and horizontal exchange experiences with a view to modernizing agriculture and strengthening institutions, certainly inadequate. Although limited now to one large conference room that can accommodate up to 200 persons and is equipped to provide interpretation services in four languages, and several smaller rooms, some of which are equipped to handle two-language meetings, these facilities are much sought after and used by a multitude of organizations including the OAS and its specialized agencies, organizations of the United Nations system, the Costa Rican government, as well as other governments of Central America and other agriculture-related organizations.

IICA has developed considerable skill and a very positive reputation in conference and meeting management. Its capacity to mobilize interpreters, translators, multilingual support staff; coordinate all aspects of logistic support including ground transportation, hotel accommodations, reception at airports, informal and formal social gatherings; and provide modern, in-house document production and reproduction services, are factors favorably considered when governmental and non-governmental organizations decide to hold meetings at IICA Headquarters in Coronado.

As Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, President of Costa Rica and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, said at the inaugural session of the Fifth Regular Meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture, held at IICA Headquarters in October 1989: "It is our wish that Costa Rica continue to be home to IICA. It would give us great pleasure to see the Institute create an International Training and Conference Center where concrete ideas and projects leading to agricultural development based on peace, progress and social justice could flourish."

After an analysis of existing facilities at its Headquarters, and more generally, of the meeting facilities available in Costa Rica and the rest of Central America, it was decided that in order for IICA to comply with its mandate, it needed to have ready access to facilities that would enable it to hold and provide support to meetings and training activities with little or no increase in staff and administrative infrastructure. The best way to accomplish this would be to expand IICA's existing facilities, thus minimizing the need to duplicate existing support services and ensuring maximum use of present conference areas at the Institute.

3. Project objectives

The Plan of Joint Action for Agricultural Reactivation in Latin America and the Caribbean, approved by the ministers of



agriculture of the hemisphere in October 1989, refers to the urgent need to upgrade the capabilities of human resources at all levels if the sector is to be successfully reactivated. With reference to training, the PLANLAC document refers in particular to the training and exchange activities needed to promote an understanding of institutional problems in various policy areas related to agricultural reactivation and modernization, and the means for dealing with them. It also discusses the necessity of conducting studies related to the modernization of institutions, and of what must be done to equip them to provide better support through technical assistance and other training activities. It adds that the technical and service components of government organizations must be upgraded through training and modernization, and closer ties developed with academic circles that can enrich the training efforts. More specifically, training is required in project formulation, evaluation and management, and in the use of the information sciences in institution building.

Furthermore, through this PLANLAC document, the ministers of agriculture also agreed that, given the diversity of situations in the rural sector, it is necessary to design "differentiated" policies targetting different rural groups. This will, obviously, require tremendous adjustments in the State apparatus, and the development of an entire series of new skills and functions. To deal with this aspect alone, the severe shortage of technical and teaching materials in public and private institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean must be overcome, and staff must be trained to assume leadership roles in connection with the design and implementation of such differentiated policies.

Two other important subject areas for study and training are: increasing the role of women in development and integrating the concept of sustainability into IICA endeavors.

4. The Proposal

The specific objective of this proposal is to expand the conference and meeting infrastructure at IICA Headquarters and to equip it to provide pleasant, centralized, modern and efficient installations for the extensive training programs and meetings that will be carried out under the PLANLAC, and for purposes related to agricultural and rural development of the hemisphere.

Based on preliminary studies, an analysis of land use at IICA's Headquarters, and taking into account the necessity to develop a scheme that will be both economical and expedient, it is thought that the project will require the following minimum adjustments to present IICA facilities:

- a) addition of approximately 3000 m² of new construction to existing facilities, to be used exclusively for training and conference/meeting activities;
- b) addition of approximately 1000 m² of new office space, to accommodate employees dislodged by the project;
- c) increase the capacity of the parking area by 150 vehicle spaces;
- d) modify present warehouse space, to allow for construction of a road that will give a second access/exit route to IICA property;
- e) construct the access road;
- f) modify existing common service areas to accommodate increase in demand (reception area, cafeteria, etc.); and
- g) improve electrical and water supply, to satisfy increased demand.

IICA estimates that the Center, when completed, will support close to 60,000 participant/days per year. Users of the Center will come from all over the hemisphere, and will include the public sector, the agroindustrial sector, academia, the food production industry, the agricultural sciences, labor and others. They will generally be decision makers with varying degrees of impact on the future of their community, their country and the region as a whole.

It is also felt that the Training and Conference Center Project will have a positive impact on the local economy, albeit modest, by creating new construction jobs in the San Jose area.

As of early 1990, the estimated cost of the Project is under US\$4 million. This figure includes the cost of relocating some of the units at Headquarters and upgrading existing features or services such as security, parking, cafeteria and storage deemed essential to ensure the smooth operation of the Center. It also includes equipment, furniture and fitting up costs.

Scheduling of the project

Phase A. Feasibility study and development of the project.

The Institute is seeking assistance in completing this first phase, which will consist of better defining the nature of the needs, developing the training component and the conference component, specifying the costs and drafting the specifications.

Time frame: approximately two months, that could start at the sponsor's earliest convenience.

Products of this phase: (indicators)

- A feasibility study
- A detailed cost analysis
- A summary that will be used in presentations to sponsors of the following phases.

Phase B. Securing of funding.

This phase will include the development of the funding strategy and its application in securing the necessary sponsors.

Time frame: Between four to six months. Products of this phase (indicators):

- Strategy document
- Signed agreements

Phase C. Drawing up of plans.

Phase C will include drawing up plans, refining specifications, calling for tenders, procuring material, signing contracts with builders, obtaining building permits.

Time frame: six months.

Phase D. Construction.

Time frame: twelve to eighteen months. Performance indicators: receipt of the facilities.

Phase E. Programming of activities.

Approximately six to nine months after construction has begun, the Institute will start scheduling the activities that will take place once the Center is ready for use.

The frame: approximately 100 words; your words last 25-30
seconds: 20 words: approximately.

Product of this phase: (list)

- A feasibility study
- A detailed cost analysis
- A summary that will be used in presentations to donors
at the following phase:

Phase B: Securing of funding

This phase will involve the development of the funding
strategy and its execution in securing the necessary
funds.

The focus: between 100 to 200 words; duration of 10-15
minutes (indicators):

- Strategy document
- Signed agreements

Phase C: Drawing up of plans

Phase C will involve drawing up plans, defining
objectives, setting up a timeline, identifying
resources and contacts with partners, carrying out the
plan.

The focus: 100 words.

Phase D: Construction

The focus: 100 words to 200 words; duration: 10-15
minutes; indicators: 10-15 minutes.

Phase E: Preparation of a report

Approximately 100 words; 10-15 minutes; duration: 10-15
minutes; indicators: 10-15 minutes; duration: 10-15
minutes; indicators: 10-15 minutes.