



Our commitment to
agriculture
in the Americas

A cooperation model
for producing **results**



Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture



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Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), 2015



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What is IICA?

More than 70 years ago, a group of visionaries recognized the need to create an agency specializing in agriculture for the Americas, with a purpose that still remains valid today: to promote agricultural development and rural well-being in this hemisphere.

As a result, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) was born. Throughout this time, the Institute has succeeded in identifying challenges and opportunities and, most importantly, evolving into an international technical cooperation organization that permanently responds to the new demands of the agricultural sector.

We provide cooperation by working closely and continuously with our 34 Member States, addressing their needs in a timely manner. Our most valuable asset is undoubtedly the close relationship we maintain with the beneficiaries of our work, which is facilitated by our offices in each of those countries.

We have a wealth of experience in areas such as technology and innovation for agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, agribusiness, agricultural trade, rural development, natural resource management and training.

We are also committed to achieving results. Our 2014-2018 Medium Term Plan (MTP) contributes to the evolution of our technical cooperation model with the aim of consolidating IICA as an organization geared toward accomplishing concrete and visible results.

Mission, vision and principles of the Institute

Our **mission** is to

encourage, promote and support the efforts of the Member States to achieve their agricultural development and rural welfare by means of international technical cooperation of excellence.

Our **vision** alongside our Member States is

to contribute to the development of an Inter-American agriculture that is competitive, inclusive and sustainable and that will feed the hemisphere and the world and, at the same time create opportunities to reduce hunger and poverty among producers and rural dwellers.

IICA is characterized as being:

- ✓ Innovative
- ✓ Purposeful
- ✓ Respectful
- ✓ Inclusive
- ✓ Transparent
- ✓ Committed to accountability
- ✓ Environmentally responsible

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Foreword

In the Americas, the second decade of the 21st century has brought new challenges and opportunities for agriculture, which is destined to become a real engine of development, capable of generating economic growth and prosperity for the region's population. Unlocking the agricultural sector's potential in our countries is crucial if we are to meet one of the greatest challenges facing humankind: achieving food security.

Since 1942, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has assisted its member countries in achieving increasingly inclusive, competitive and sustainable agriculture.

To improve the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of its technical cooperation, IICA has updated its cooperation model and strategic planning instruments so that they may serve as road maps over the next four years.

This publication seeks to synthesize the 2014-2018 Medium Term Plan (MTP), which was approved by the Executive Committee at its Thirty-Fourth Regular Meeting for the purpose of offering guidance. The MTP promotes an evolution of the technical cooperation model, in order to consolidate IICA as an organization that achieves concrete results and facilitates the accomplishment of the agricultural and rural changes that the 34 Member States wish to bring about.

The 2014-2018 MTP focuses on four technical cooperation instruments: flagship projects (FP), rapid response actions (RRA), pre-investment initiatives of the Technical Cooperation Fund (FonTC) and externally funded projects.

The operation of IICA will be strengthened through the integration of its technical and administrative services, a results-driven management, the improvement of monitoring and evaluation processes, and transparency in its activities.

My thanks to the staff of the Institute, for all the work they have put into creating this MTP; to the authorities of the member countries, for the open dialogue that enabled us to enrich the plan; and to the Executive Committee, for approving it.

Following the example of thousands of farmers who approach each new planting season with hope, the Institute, under the banner of “A Single IICA,” is committed to achieving results to support agricultural development and rural well-being in the Americas. We look forward to reaping a speedy and bountiful harvest.



Víctor M. Villalobos
Director General

Challenges

A wide-angle photograph of a lush green soybean field. The rows of plants stretch far into the distance under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. The perspective is from a low angle, looking down the rows. The word 'Challenges' is overlaid in the top left corner in a large, white, bold font with a black outline.

Turning challenges into opportunities

There is a growing acknowledgement that agriculture plays a key role in the development and prosperity of nations, in fighting poverty and inequality, and in achieving environmental sustainability and food security.

Agriculture in the Americas has the necessary potential to take advantage of that acknowledgement and turn it into a great opportunity, and present circumstances are ideal. However, the countries of the hemisphere must make adjustments to realize their full agricultural potential, based on how complex and interrelated the main tasks to be executed are, the limited availability of financial resources from the international community and the fierce competition for them.

The major challenges of agriculture in the hemisphere are related to productivity, competitiveness, rural inclusion, sustainability, adaption to climate change, innovation and the integrated management of water resources.

These challenges require the greatest amount of attention from IICA, which will play a leading role in helping its member countries to address them. In addition, this task falls within the Institute's framework of activity, which is stated in its strategic objectives and in the explicit mandates of the Ministers of Agriculture of the Americas.

Improvements required to realize the agricultural potential of the Americas

- Modern and dynamic political and institutional frameworks.
- Changes in producers' organizational capabilities
- Participation in the private sector.
- Involvement of local stakeholders.
- Creation, adaptation, and use of new technical and scientific know-how
- Emergence of new and modern leaders and professionals in the agriculture sector

The greatest challenges

Productivity and competitiveness

Growth rates for agricultural productivity and yield in this hemisphere show clear signs of stagnation. The region responded to the increase in demand for food by putting more land into cultivation; however, much of existing agricultural land is now degraded. Price volatility and climate variability, among other factors, have a combined impact on agricultural productivity in the hemisphere.

The difficulty accessing increasingly dynamic markets and the inadequate interworking of agricultural chains are factors that make the sector less competitive. Practical and innovative agricultural technologies and practices are needed in order to increase the yield and efficiency of natural resources. Production needs to be carried out with greater quality and fairness, and public and private investment in the field must be increased.

Sustainability and climate change

Clearly, agriculture depends heavily on climate, and is expected to become more volatile as a result of climate change. Therefore, two strategic processes must be launched to respond to these issues: mitigation and adaptation, resulting in new long-term policies, research, investment and modifications in production systems.

In Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), close to 14 million small farmers are particularly vulnerable to climate change since they have fewer resources with which to face them. This calls for integrated risk management as a tool for making agricultural activities less vulnerable.

Inclusion

There is a clear correlation between rural prosperity and agricultural development, which means that this sector will always play a crucial role in fighting poverty.

Innovative technologies are required for intensive, sustainable soil use.

Indeed, one of the most effective poverty reduction strategies is to invest in agriculture.

Fostering inclusion in a comprehensive manner requires that agriculture rise above mere production concerns and address other key issues including producers' organization, the addition of value in chains, access to information, exchange of knowledge, good governance of territories and an acknowledgement of contributions made by women, young people, and the indigenous populations.



Food and nutritional security

Safeguarding everyone's right to food does not depend on agriculture alone; gaining physical and economic access to high-quality food, and using it well, depends on factors far beyond the realm of the agrifood sector.

Millions of people in the Americas suffer from food insecurity mainly because they live in poverty, which is particularly noticeable in the countryside. Rural smallholders can be less vulnerable to poverty if small-scale and family agriculture receives support such as fostering better management in rural territories and promoting farmers' participation in and access to agricultural chains.



Innovation

Agriculture in the Americas is facing the challenge of the triggering intensive and permanent innovation processes with participation from all actors in the sector.

The development of new production, institutional, organizational and knowledge paradigms is required to overcome the challenges of competitiveness, inclusion and sustainability. The potential to innovate can be put to use in three areas: technology, to boost productive capacity; markets, to boost competitiveness; and institutions, to contribute to governance.

The high-priority tasks for countries in the region should be to strengthen national agrifood innovation systems and to promote technology transfer.

Integrated management of water resources

Achieving a more productive and sustainable agriculture depends largely on the sector's ability to manage water resources well and thus efficiently transform water into food.

The environmental, social, economic and political wealth and diversity of the Americas provide the opportunity to identify water management models that can be shared among countries to improve their public policies and investment plans for sustainable water management.

Improving the productivity of water in agriculture is of the utmost urgency; technological, institutional and organizational innovations are therefore crucial.

Data collection and the operation of meteorological and hydrological information systems in the hemisphere need to improve in order to face the challenge of integrated water management.



Strategy for achieving results

IICA's strategic objectives

Achieving significant results is the main goal of IICA for 2020. During the 2014-2018 period, the Institute will continue its efforts aimed at achieving the following strategic objectives, as defined in the 2010-2020 Strategic Plan (SP):

1 To improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector

To improve production, organization and trade, the Institute will support the management of agricultural innovation systems in its member countries. In addition, it will foster the strengthening of agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) services, the development of trade and agribusiness and the establishment of regulatory frameworks and positions based on consensus in international forums.

2 To strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of rural areas and the well-being of the rural population

IICA encourages integration between the agricultural sector and the rural milieu, as the best pathway to achieving equity and inclusion. This implies developing public policies that promote investment in rural areas, reinforcing extension services, strengthening small-, medium-scale, and family agriculture, and reinforcing their link to value chains and markets.

The Institute's main strength lies in its technical capacities and its stable presence in the hemisphere, through both its Headquarters and its offices in the 34 member countries.

3 To improve agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and make better use of natural resources

IICA will promote processes to adapt agriculture to climate change and mitigate its effects, to effectively manage soil and to efficiently use water resources. In addition, the Institute will support the development of technologies to reduce the impacts of agriculture on the climate and on natural resources, and the strengthening of climate information systems and integrated risk management.

4 To improve agriculture's contribution to food security

The formulation of public policies aimed at ensuring the availability of and access to food, as well as the application of competitive, sustainable, and inclusive business models relating to family agriculture will be encouraged. Additionally, reducing food losses at the processing stage will be promoted.

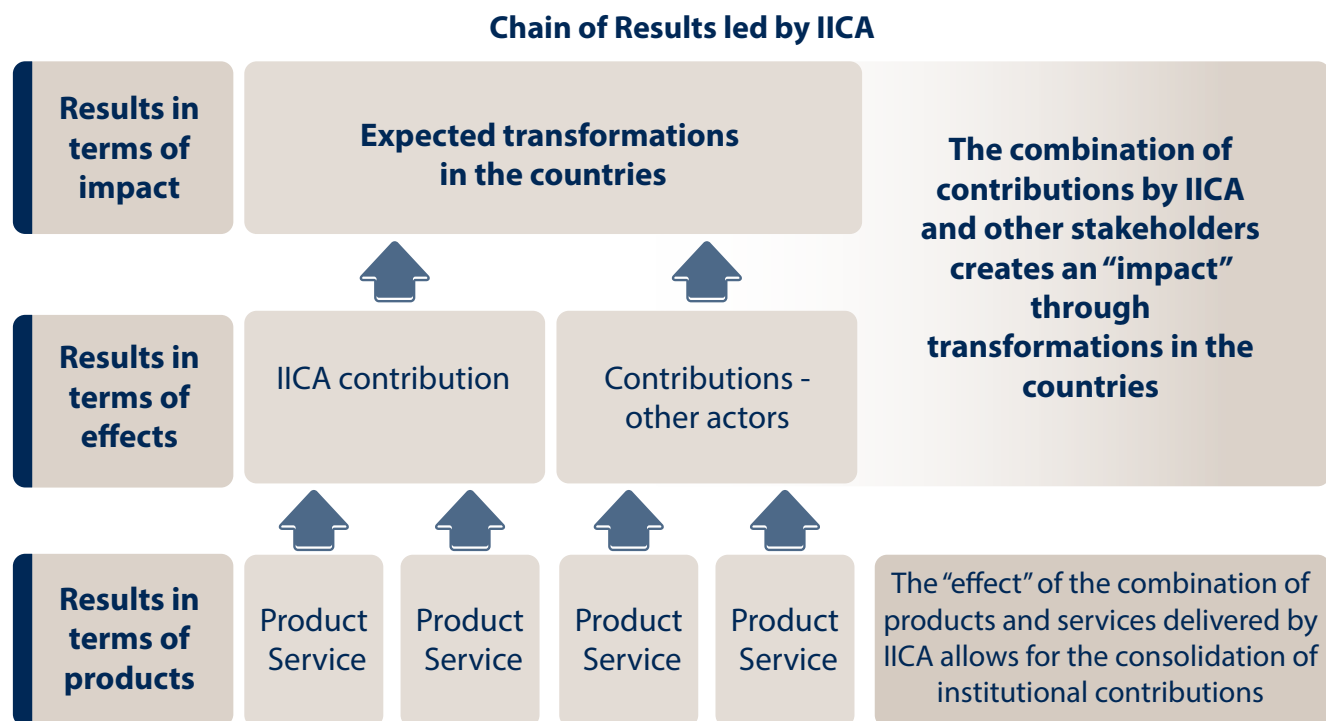
Generating innovative responses

The Institute rises to the great challenges of agriculture in the hemisphere described in the 2014-2018 MTP through **projects** that use all its capacities, experience and resources intensively. In addition, IICA's operational flexibility allows it to address unanticipated situations using the Institute's **rapid-response** mechanisms. In order to maximize the efficiency and potential of these initiatives, the following has been proposed:

- To adopt a **results-based management** approach to trigger changes in the agricultural sector required to move closer to the aspirations for sustainability, competitiveness, rural well-being and food security described in the strategic objectives of the 2010-2020 SP.
- To draw a direct relationship between projects, actions and the concrete results IICA expects to achieve, thus facilitating the planning, evaluation and accountability processes.
- To understand results as the measurable changes that occur in a country or sector, in this case agriculture, achieved as the result of a planned intervention.

A chain of results geared towards achieving the strategic objectives

IICA's work is based on a causal chain of results related to the strategic objectives in which each higher-order result is the result of the aggregate accomplishment of lower-level results.



- **Transformations** are results that demonstrate the achievement of the strategic objectives of the SP. They are substantial changes that occur as a result of the intervention of many stakeholders, including IICA. Their accomplishment is determined by national decisions and is the responsibility of the member countries.
- **Contributions** allow for changes, thanks to direct intervention by IICA, or by IICA in collaboration with its partners. They support the achievement of transformations in the countries and are directly linked to at least one of the strategic objectives of the 2010-2020 SP; consequently, they are the best example of technical cooperation. Contributions are built upon the products and services (deliverables) that the Institute provides directly to its member countries as international public goods.
- IICA's **products or services** are the deliverables or tangible goods that stem from the culmination of the activities carried out.

*The causal chain of results means that, in a given context, the provision of **inputs** allows programmed **activities** to be carried out and **products and services** to be delivered to the member countries.*



IICA's contributions

Desired transformations in the member countries

In order to achieve the strategic objectives, the Institute strives to promote the following transformations:

-  Enhanced governability and governance of agricultural and agrifood systems, led by the Ministries of Agriculture.
-  Increased inter-sectorial coordination by the ministries and other public institutions present in the rural territories.
-  Building international consensus in global and regional forums.
-  Increased dynamism, efficiency and transparency in agricultural markets, including efforts to strengthen agricultural chains, link small and medium-scale farmers, and increase the participation of women, young people and ethnic communities (indigenous and Afro descendent).
-  Reduced socioeconomic vulnerability among small and medium-scale farmers, including those engaged in family agriculture.

- Increase in the quality and quantity of agricultural products and improved access to markets for the products of agrifood chains and family agriculture.
- Improved performance of small and medium-scale agriculture in terms of production and business in rural areas.
- Increased level of adoption and dissemination of innovative practices that optimize agricultural productivity.
- Incorporation of sustainable production practices throughout the agricultural chains, with emphasis on integrated management of water and sustainable use of soil.
- Adoption of a culture of risk prevention in agricultural and food systems and reduced levels of vulnerability in those systems.
- Improvements in the nutritional quality of agricultural products, reduction of pre- and post-harvest losses, and increased use of native species.

11 contributions

To enable the member countries to achieve the transformations, the Institute focuses its efforts on the following 11 contributions related to the strategic objectives:

- 1 Strengthening the capabilities of the countries to establish public policies and institutional frameworks so as to make agriculture more productive and competitive, improve management of rural territories, adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change, and promote food and nutritional security.
- 2 Implementing technological, institutional and business innovations aimed at boosting the productivity and competitiveness of agriculture and the production of basic foodstuffs of high nutritional quality.
- 3 Increasing capabilities to ensure agricultural health and food safety.
- 4 Strengthening the business and associative capabilities in the agricultural production chains.
- 5 Increasing the capacity for area-based social management in rural areas.

- 6 Enhancing the capabilities of stakeholders of the agricultural chains and rural areas in integrated management of water and sustainable use of soil.
- 7 Increasing the capacity to implement measures for adapting agriculture to climate change and mitigating its effects, as well as promoting integrated risk management.
- 8 Improving the efficacy and efficiency of food and nutritional security programs.
- 9 Ensuring greater use of native species, promising crops and native genetic resources with food potential.
- 10 Improving capacity to reduce losses of food and raw materials throughout the agricultural chains.
- 11 Strengthening the Member States' capacity for consensus and participation in international forums for the mobilization of resources for agriculture.

Interrelationships between the four strategic objectives in the SP, IICA's 11 contributions and the flagship projects



		Contributions											Flagship projects (*)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Strategic objectives	1. To improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector	√	√	√	√					√	√	√	- Agricultural chains - Family agriculture
	2. To strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of rural areas and the well-being of the rural population	√		√		√				√		√	- Inclusion in agriculture and rural territories
	3. To improve agriculture's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and make better use of natural resources	√		√			√	√		√		√	- Resilience and integrated risk management
	4. To improve agriculture's contribution to food security	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	- Agricultural chains - Inclusion in agriculture and rural territories - Resilience and integrated risk management - Family agriculture

√ Interrelationships

(*) More information on IICA's Flagship Projects on page 35.

IICA's outputs and services

Achievement of the contributions will be demonstrated by the following deliverables:

-  **Policy proposals and strategies** aimed at improving the governance of agricultural and agrifood systems, harmonizing environmental and agricultural planning, promoting innovation and strengthening food and nutritional security.
-  **Specialized methodologies and instruments** that improve public administration in aspects such as area-based management, agricultural health, innovation, agribusiness and adaptation to climate change; and boost the levels of productivity and competitiveness in agriculture and improve the distribution of incomes in rural areas.
-  **Capacity-building processes** aimed at public and private stakeholders, focused on the performance of the Ministries, participation in international forums, innovation and extension, agricultural health and food safety, integrated use of natural resources and knowledge management. These processes may also improve the income of small and medium-scale farmers, including family farmers, in areas such as links to markets, diversification of production and aggregation of value.

-  Risk management **plans**, plans for responding to sanitary and phytosanitary emergencies, disaster prevention plans and proposals for the reactivation of agricultural production.
-  **Development, cooperation and investment programs and projects** designed to improve innovation systems, extension services and synergies between agriculture-environment, among other areas.
-  **Management of development and investment projects** aimed at improving the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of agriculture.
-  **Mechanisms for building consensus between and articulating** the public and private sectors, aimed at promoting the integration of producers into value chains, reducing pre- and post-harvest losses and increasing the supply of agricultural products for the basic family food basket, among other tasks.
-  **Innovations in processes and products** aimed at strengthening agricultural chains, rural territories and good crop and livestock practices, accompanied by technical assistance and regulatory frameworks for biosafety.
-  **Studies and research** on good agricultural practices, pests and diseases, native or endemic species, innovative initiatives for the development of rural areas, biosafety, efficient use of water, precision

The Institute seeks to generate international public goods, innovative responses and synergies that draw on its own human, technological, financial and administrative capacities combined with those of the member countries and its strategic partners.

agriculture, adaptation of agriculture to climate change, integrated risk management and new uses of agriculture.

 **Exchange among member countries and opportunities for collaboration.**

 **Creation of information and knowledge networks.**

Special Interest Topics

Considering the technical cooperation agenda, IICA focuses on an integrated, systemic approach for the following issues:

 **Innovation in agriculture**

The Institute ensures that its member countries have access to updated information in the areas of biotechnology, nanotechnology, precision agriculture, geomatics and informatics that can be used to transform productive and business processes in agriculture.

Similarly, IICA facilitates the coordination of processes between producers and research centers that generate knowledge and technologies.

Efficient use of water resources

This is a multidisciplinary issue that affects all links in agricultural chains and rural areas. IICA incorporates this issue into its agenda in a specific and measurable manner. Its actions are aimed at supporting the integrated management of water, improving the use of water, both in irrigated and rain-fed agriculture, reducing pollution and its footprint and improving water recycling and efficiency.

Women, youth, and small-scale and family farmers

The Institute includes actions to strengthen the links between small-scale and family farmers and agricultural chains, as well as to recognize the participation of women in agriculture and to facilitate succession planning and inclusion of youth in the sector.

IICA promotes gender equality, the participation of women and young people in decision-making processes, the contribution of smallholder agriculture to the economic development of rural territories and access of those stakeholders to services such as credit and technical assistance.

The Institute recognizes and seeks to tap the potential of women and young people to act as promoters of change and innovation.

Coordination by projects



Dimensions of technical cooperation

IICA takes into account the heterogeneity of the hemisphere and the special characteristics of each country and region, which allows it to be more assertive and proactive with the technical cooperation it provides in response at all levels. During the 2014-2018 period, the Institute seeks to:

- **At the hemispheric level,** continue holding the Meetings of Ministers of Agriculture and of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), thereby ensuring that agricultural issues are addressed at high-level meetings, as well as promote the participation of the countries in global forums, in order to safeguard their interests and agriculture.
- Build a **renewed vision of regional cooperation** to move toward multinational models that respond to common problems in several countries, not necessarily integrating the traditional regional architecture.
- **In the countries,** continue supporting the construction of medium and long-term visions, enabling each country to achieve its development goals.

*IICA's strategies in the countries need to be consistent with the **strategic objectives, contributions and institutional functions** of this MTP.*

Constructing IICA country strategies

The overall organization of the hemispheric, regional, multinational and national work is reflected in IICA's country strategies, which encompass all the Institute's planning and actions in the form of programmed projects.

These strategies make it possible to reach agreements with the authorities of the member countries on the priorities that IICA will need to address from baseline studies and the results of national discussions. They also take into account the international vision of phenomena and trends related to agriculture and rural life.

Evolution of the IICA cooperation model

The development of a more robust cooperation model in line with the needs of the hemisphere and individual countries, in which IICA's actions are clearly aimed at achieving measurable contributions, has required an organizational evolution that includes aspects such as the following:

- a)** Shifting from projects geared toward specific levels of action and thematic areas to multi-level and cross-thematic institutional projects.
- b)** Complementing institutional project budgets with external resources, focusing on the Institute's 11 contributions and on the expected transformations in the countries.

- c) Focusing and targeting IICA's work on clearly defined functions.
- d) Promoting results-based management, in a context of financial constraints, adopting an organizational structure that will facilitate action.
- e) Allocating resources to programmed projects and short-term actions with measurable results and accountability.

IICA has modified and simplified its organizational structure so as to focus on producing results, with greater emphasis on horizontal rather than hierarchical arrangements. It is made up of strategic and operational management units, with support from specialized services in the areas of knowledge, information, communication, training, formulation of and support for project management, evaluation and corporate management.

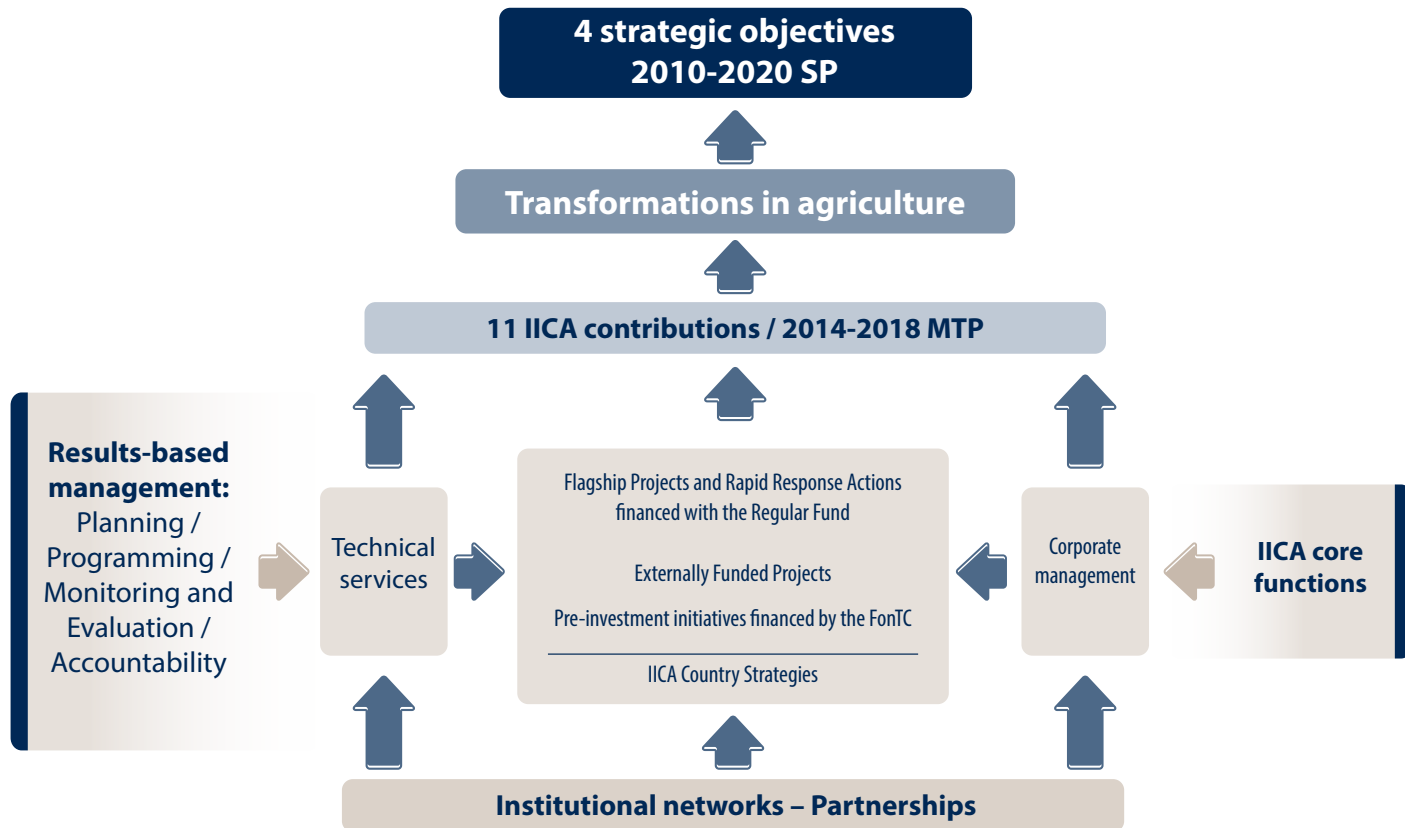
Features of the model

- A clear definition of the Institute's key functions and capabilities.
- A coordination of efforts at the hemispheric, regional, multinational and national levels with IICA's differentiated country strategies.

*The cooperation model is based on the **experience** acquired by IICA throughout more than 70 years; it incorporates its **strengths, values and strategies** and promotes **better use** of its technical capabilities, and at the same time, lays the foundations for a **new way** of allocating and administering IICA's financial resources.*

- Programmatic execution for the achievement of clear results through projects and addressing specific or short-term needs and emerging issues.
- The use of IICA's network of offices and of the technical personnel in the countries.
- The active incorporation of technical services and institutional management activities as an integral part of technical cooperation.
- Priority allocation of institutional resources based on their expected contributions and results expressed in IICA's country strategies.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of results aimed at continuous improvement of the organization and its accountability.
- Intense activity in communicating and reporting results.

Outline of technical cooperation



Key functions of IICA

Specific and distinctive activities through which IICA fulfills the mandates of its member countries may be summed up in the following functions:

- Institutional strengthening to better respond to the challenges facing agriculture.
- Capacity building and development of human talent.
- Creation and application of methodologies and instruments to strengthen public policies.
- Management and use of knowledge, that is, the fostering of processes through which knowledge is used for decision-making.
- Project management.
- Consensus building and coordination of stakeholders.
- Horizontal or South-South cooperation within the hemisphere and on other continents.
- Institutional management based on international standards.

Issues, projects and instruments for coordinating cooperation

In order to promote its innovative capacity, the effective and transparent use of its resources and the delivery of concrete results to its member countries, the Institute uses projects as the units for integrating its actions, programming, allocating resources, generating results and monitoring and evaluating institutional contributions.

The Institute's technical cooperation is organized around five major issues:

- Competitiveness of agricultural chains,
- Inclusion in agriculture,
- Resilience of agriculture,
- Productivity and competitiveness of family agriculture, and
- Agricultural health and food safety (AHFS).

The first four of these are the essence of the flagship projects, while AHFS is a key area for national, regional and multinational projects.

As the linchpin for coordinating institutional work, the project-based approach seeks to organize most of IICA's actions and activities, to make the best possible use of its human and financial resources and its infrastructure, and to efficiently mobilize the capabilities and financial resources of its partners.

Project:

At IICA, a project is understood as a set of activities designed to provide a creative solution to resolve a problem, take advantage of an opportunity, create knowledge, innovate, generate tools and methodologies, provide services to countries and promote organizational and process changes that serve to improve agriculture and increase its contribution and role in the development of rural areas.

The Institute provides its technical cooperation, carries out its functions and delivers its products and services using four instruments of action:

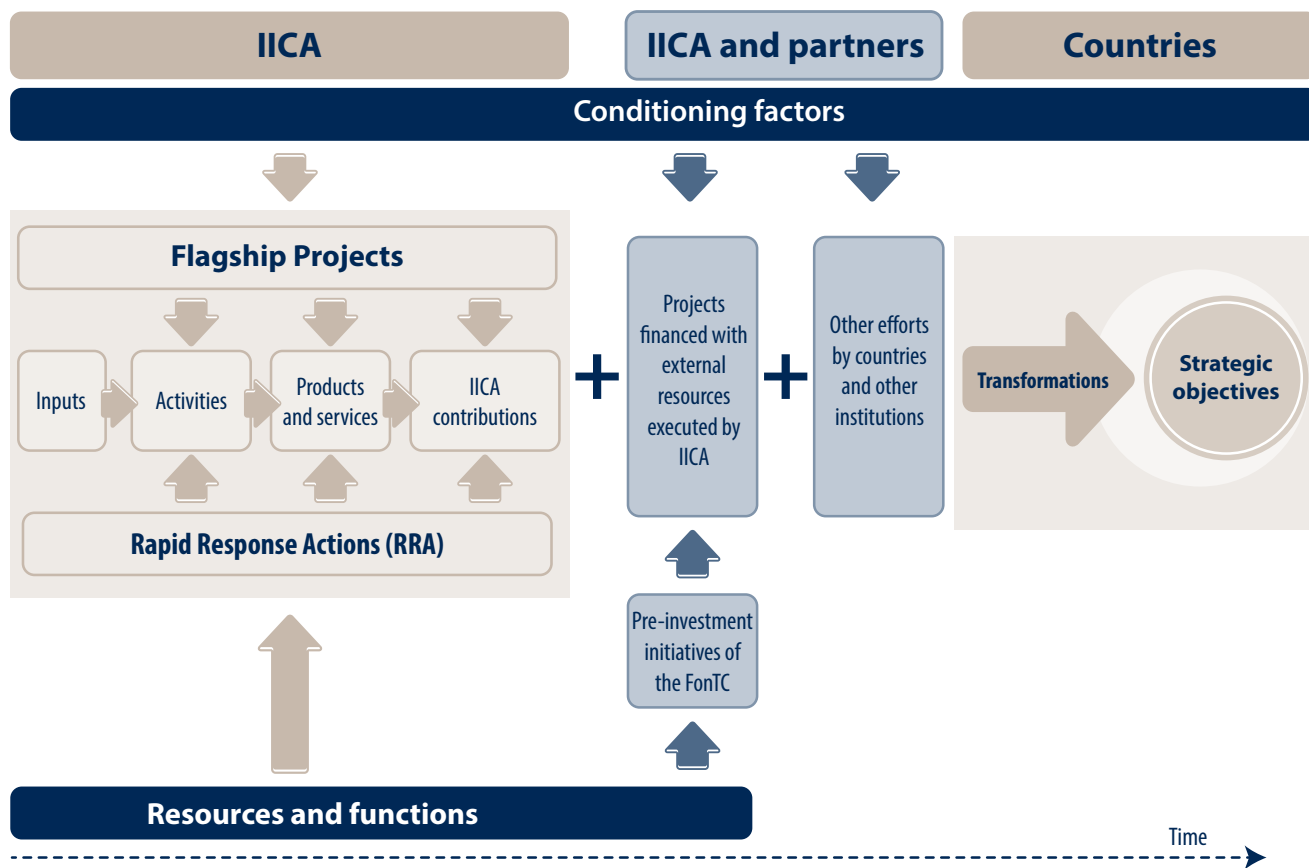
- **Flagship projects (FP)**, which serve as the “backbone” for delivering IICA's technical cooperation, and will aim to achieve the 11 institutional contributions proposed for the 2014-2018 period.
- **Externally funded projects**, aimed at complementing and expanding IICA's actions.

- **Rapid response actions (RRA)**, designed to respond to specific requests and opportunities that arise in a country or in a group of countries prompted by political, social or economic changes, environmental emergencies or other emerging issue.
- **Pre-investment initiatives of the Technical Cooperation Fund (FonTC)**, used to finance projects aimed at securing external resources and mobilizing new financial resources that are complementary to the Regular Fund.

The FP and the pre-investment initiatives with the FonTC are financed with Regular Fund resources; however, this financing may be complemented with external resources obtained through partnerships or special contributions from the member countries and associates, formalized through specific agreements.

*The IICA Regular Fund is made up of the **annual quotas** of the member countries of the Institute and **miscellaneous income**.*

Relationship between technical cooperation instruments



Flagship projects

The **four IICA flagship projects** (FP) are:

- 1 Competitiveness and sustainability of agricultural chains for food security and economic development.
- 2 **Inclusion in agriculture and rural areas.**
- 3 **Resilience and comprehensive risk management** in agriculture.
- 4 Productivity and sustainability of **family agriculture** for food security and the rural economy.

The purpose of the flagship projects is to highlight and make operational the excellence of the Institute's technical cooperation. As the main instrument for delivering the 11 contributions, the flagship projects are designed and managed as a set of interrelated and coordinated technical cooperation actions. They are implemented over a four-year period and are hemispheric in scope.

The FPs are geared toward the provision of public goods to comprehensively address complex problems in agriculture. The Regular Fund resources are allocated primarily to the flagship projects, since these are clearly related to the desired changes in the member countries, in accordance with IICA's strategic objectives.

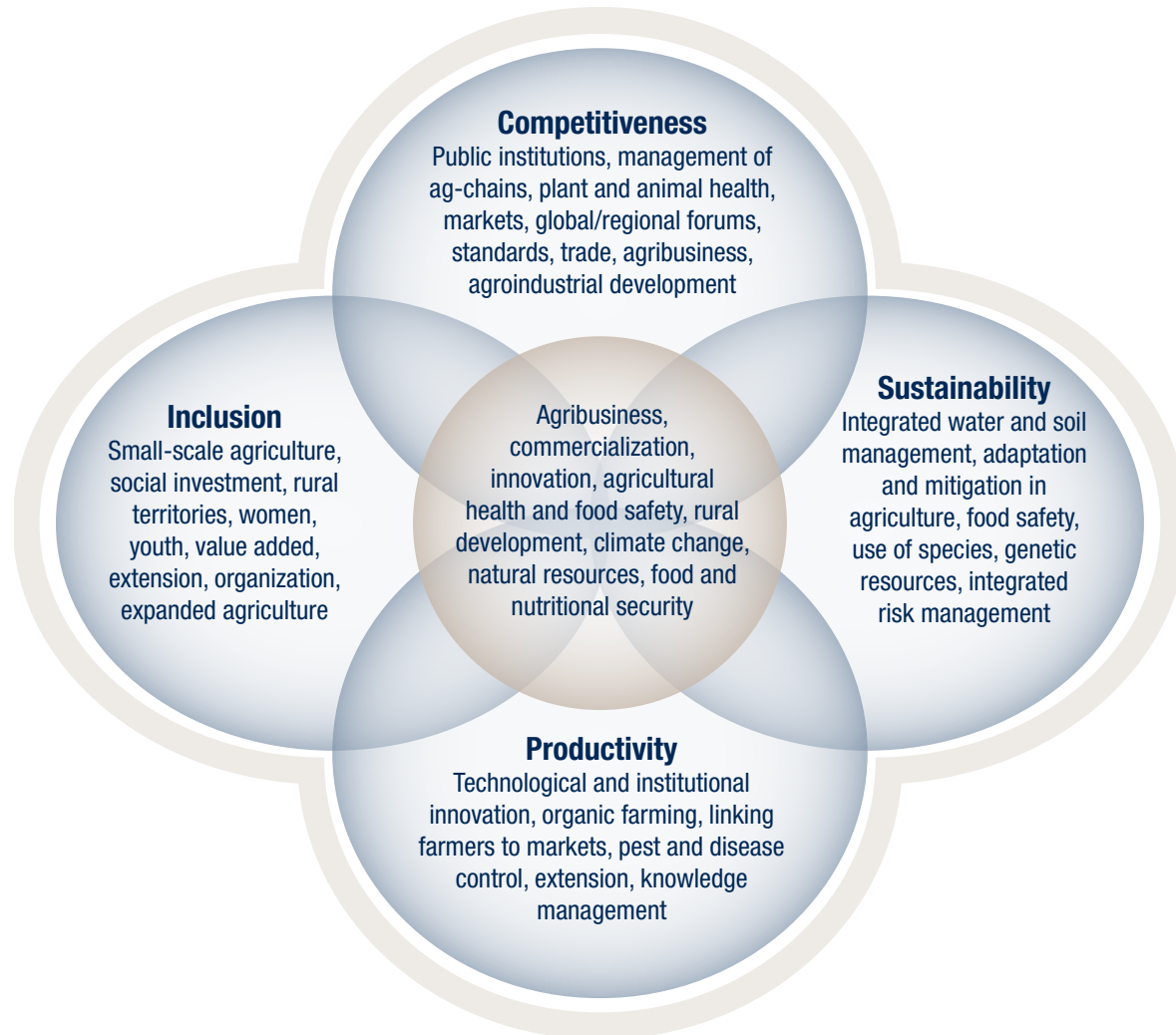
*The flagship projects have **national components** in the countries or **multinational components** with the aim of delivering the contributions pledged by IICA and ensuring an alignment with the achievement of the strategic objectives.*

The success of the FPs depends on their capacity to articulate hemispheric visions with regional, multinational and national actions (expressed in the IICA country strategies); on the application of instruments that respond in an innovative way to specific needs, and which can also be scaled up to the hemispheric level; on the commitment of the IICA team, so as to obtain tangible results; and on horizontal and vertical articulation that exponentially improves the quality of IICA's technical cooperation.

The FPs have the following characteristics, among others:

- ✓ They are medium term initiatives.
- ✓ They integrate different areas; i.e. they adopt an interdisciplinary approach to complex problems and the challenges of hemispheric agriculture.
- ✓ Their activities are closely linked to institutional functions.
- ✓ They incorporate actions related to the institutional focus (special interest topics).
- ✓ They precisely define the activities to be implemented and the products, services and contributions to be delivered, with a set of indicators that will be used to measure the proposed changes.
- ✓ They must demonstrate their *ex ante* feasibility.
- ✓ They have a clearly justified budget.
- ✓ Their financing may be complemented with special contributions from the member countries and associates, as well as from other financial sources or mechanisms.

Comprehensive Approach of the Flagship Projects



Special interest topics

Family agriculture, innovation, water management, youth, women

Externally funded projects

The Institute continues to promote and implement externally funded technical cooperation projects, which must serve to achieve the contributions proposed. External resources may come from the following sources:

- Central, state (provincial or departmental), regional or municipal governments.
- Bilateral or multilateral cooperation agencies, research and financial organizations.
- Institutions of non-governmental sectors.
- The private sector.

IICA performs the following tasks under externally funded projects, whether at the national, multinational, regional or hemispheric level:

- Comprehensive project management: IICA assumes technical and administrative responsibility and, therefore, responsibility for achieving results.
- Administrative management: IICA assumes responsibility for delivering administrative, financial and accounting services for the project,

ensuring that it provides the necessary resources, as well as information for accountability and decision-making purposes, and ensures that expenditures are consistent with the project's objectives, results, outputs and activities.

- Provision of specific technical cooperation: according to its specific terms of reference, the Institute may be responsible for providing total or partial cooperation in a project.
- A combination of administrative management and partial provision of specific technical cooperation.

Limits to projects financed with external resources

In this type of project, IICA does not do the following:

- Assume functions that correspond to bodies or institutions in the Member States.
- Make decisions on the provision of subsidies, financing or any other types of contributions to producers, rural dwellers or direct beneficiaries.
- Provide cooperation in aspects that are not within its areas of competence.
- Contract regular personnel for government institutions.
- Administer operational resources of public or private institutions not associated with technical cooperation projects.

Rapid response actions

The flexibility of the Institute to respond to specific requests or emergencies in its member countries is one of its comparative and competitive advantages.

Although most of the work is being undertaken through carefully planned projects, it is important to emphasize that one of the features most appreciated by the member countries is IICA's capacity to respond promptly to specific requests, opportunities or emergencies that arise.

Accordingly, the Institute may mobilize its own technical capabilities or harness those of other organizations within and outside the hemisphere, thereby ensuring a prompt, efficient and effective response to the specific requests received.

Specific requests for support and opportunities that arise in a country or in a group of countries, prompted by political or economic changes, emergencies and emerging issues are addressed through a mechanism termed **Rapid Response Actions (RRA)**.

Depending on the nature and complexity of the matter to be addressed, technical response teams may be created with professionals of the Institute and of partner organizations. These activities may be financed with IICA's own resources, with external resources or with a combination of both.

A response to a request of this nature will be provided within a maximum timeframe of 72 hours.

Pre-investment initiatives of the Technical Cooperation Fund

In order to mobilize external resources, **pre-investment initiatives of the Technical Cooperation Fund (FonTC)** serve as an internal competitive mechanism, for the purpose of providing funding, whether partial or total, and generating project proposals that dovetail with the proposed strategic objectives and institutional contributions.

The FonTC, established during the 2010-2014 period, has proven to be an effective tool for promoting the integration of institutional efforts and finding innovative solutions to the problems of agriculture.

For this reason, IICA intends to strengthen it so that it can play a key role in mobilizing external resources to complement the financing of the FP and the RRA.

*A combination of outputs and services guarantees the delivery of IICA's 11 contributions to the countries; in other words, **achievement of the strategic objectives** and, particularly, of the project objectives.*

Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)

This topic is particularly relevant for IICA member countries, both on a national and regional scale. The Institute has gained a great deal of prestige and recognition both within and outside of the hemisphere due to the cooperation it provides in this area, allowing it to become a key player and attract external resources for the development of national, regional, hemispheric and global projects focusing on this topic.

The main objective of strengthening the Institute's AHFS capacities and adapting them to the new cooperation model is to promote the creation of strategic alliances and the acquisition of financial resources.

Technical cooperation in AHFS is carried out through the Flagship Projects, the RRAs, the pre-investment initiatives of the FonTC, and the projects that are financed using external resources.

IICA's technical networks and support services

IICA's actions begin and end in the countries, to which it offers cooperation in a coordinated manner through its network of offices and technical networks that made up of its staff members and other individuals, organizations, public and private institutions and civil society. The convergence of these networks will create a single work team, prepared to act with a strategic and cross-thematic approach to institutional projects.

The Institute's capacities with respect to prospective analysis, information, training, communication and project design and management have also been placed at the service of technical cooperation. These technical support services perform the following tasks:

- Provide up-to-date knowledge regarding agriculture and its prospects via prospective analyses, sectoral research and the generation of baseline information.
- Meet the need for access to and use of technical and scientific information through information centers, publishing materials, systematizing experiences and integrating agricultural information networks.
- Make use of virtual (online) and blended learning tools and strengthen relationships with other institutions to implement training, internship and scholarship programs, as well as academic exchanges.
- Design, manage and evaluate projects and improve the Institute's ability to identify new ones.
- Bring IICA's contributions to the attention of government authorities, key stakeholders of agriculture in the member countries and society in general.

*IICA operates as an articulated international entity at all levels, both **horizontally** (including its different operational units and offices in the member countries) and **vertically** (hemispheric, multinational, regional and national levels).*

How IICA is managed



A modern corporate governance

During the 2014-2018 period, the management of the Institute is based on the following core activities:

A) Planning, programming, monitoring, evaluation and accountability

The Institute not only makes its contributions based on the priorities set forth in IICA's country strategies and primarily through projects, but also implements specific technical cooperation actions (RRA). Projects are the link between strategic planning and operational planning (programming-budgeting).

Programming takes place at four levels:

- ✓ A biennial programming process that allocates the Regular Fund resources needed to implement the MTP and make proposed contributions
- ✓ Use of IICA's own resources in the FPs and of external resources in joint projects defined with the member countries, donors and other partners.
- ✓ Annual planning, which specifies the results to be obtained and the budget for that calendar year.
- ✓ Programming of the work of all IICA professionals, which will match their key responsibilities and activities to different cooperation instruments and the resources allocated to them.

Planning defines, in advance, short- and medium-term Institute actions at both the strategic and operational levels.

Monitoring and evaluation, intended to establish criteria for reviewing the expected results and incorporating recommendations and good practices into decision making processes, is carried out at three levels:

- ✓ Measurement of the effectiveness with which FPs are implemented.
- ✓ Periodic monitoring of the implementation of the FPs and their effectiveness in achieving the contributions of the Institute.
- ✓ Monitoring the implementation of the MTP, based on the strategic objectives, the Institute's contributions, the indicators and the goals set for the 2014-2018 period.

The monitoring and evaluation processes are conducted by a specialized unit, through the use of a system of technical cooperation and management indicators for all areas of the Institute.

B) Financial architecture for ensuring economic viability

The main source of funding for the Institute is the contributions made by the member countries in the form of annual quotas, as well as any adjustments approved by the governing bodies to maintain a minimum level of purchasing power.

To strengthen its finances and improve the quality of its technical cooperation services, IICA:

- Encourages the Member States to remain up to date in the payment of their quotas.
- Manages and forms partnerships to implement externally funded projects.
- Identifies projects of special interest to the member countries, to secure funding through further contributions to the regular quota.
- Applies the Institutional Net Rate (INR) to ensure that externally funded programs and projects cover a portion of the indirect costs IICA incurs in administering them. In 2014 the INR was 7% and is expected to increase to 8% by 2018.
- Identifies new sources of funding with which to complement the contributions of the member countries.

C) Excellence in human talent for technical cooperation

The human talent management strategy is aimed at keeping and strengthening the intellectual wealth of the Institute. The goal is to make IICA more competitive, in order to attract and retain qualified and highly productive human talent. To achieve this, it seeks to achieve rational growth

The Institute promotes the creation of networks among its professionals that will strengthen a sense of belonging to “a single, results-oriented IICA.”

*A critical goal of the Institute's programming process is to **mobilize** additional external resources, for which it seeks to enter into new partnerships.*

in its salary scales, update profiles and review, improve and diversify the benefits offered.

The Institute enhances the competencies of its personnel through a short-term corporate training program aimed at reducing costs and broadening their scope through the use of new technologies.

D) Intensive use of ICTs

IICA maintains a technological environment that facilitates the provision of technical cooperation services. The main goals in terms of information and communication technologies (ICT) are:

-  To provide communication tools for access to technical and scientific contents and training.
-  To update the technological platform for an accounting, financial, budgetary, personnel and corporate management system.
-  To promote the creative use of social media and other telecommunication services to actively address the expectations of a global digital world.

E The Institute and its environmental responsibility

IICA seeks to intensify its campaigns aimed at increasing the environmental awareness of its personnel, by encouraging the rational use of energy, water and consumables and the development of environmental projects related to recycling, waste management and use of new energy sources.

Training professionals to face new challenges

In order to support the enhancement of human resources to promote the development of agriculture and the rural areas of its member countries, IICA is engaged in a scholarship program in Mexico that is supported by the National Council on Science and Technology (CONACYT) in Mexico. This program is geared towards university students from Latin American and Caribbean countries. It is also currently developing a professional internship program for university students or scientists in any of its offices.

Additionally, in order to promote the development of agriculture in the Caribbean and Central America, it is executing a Skills Development Program, implemented by the General Secretariat of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries and Food (SAGARPA) of Mexico. This program benefits 22 countries, whose agricultural technocrats have the opportunity to get training in Mexico in topics such as protected agriculture, water conservation and rural tourism, among other areas.

Measuring the contributions



Decision-Making Indicators

The Institute has defined a number of indicators to monitor the implementation of the MTP, as well as other indicators related to the implementation of the FPs, RRAs, externally funded projects and pre-investment initiatives, that will make it easier to make strategic decisions and report on the results achieved in the member countries.

With regard to measuring the level of compliance with the MTP, these indicators may be divided into general and specific categories. The former are related to:

- ✓ The level of achievement of the expected results of the FPs and externally funded projects.
- ✓ The level of response (adequate attention) to needs through RRAs.
- ✓ The level of satisfaction of clients with the projects and RRAs.
- ✓ The systematization and timely delivery of the main results attributable to the Institute's efforts, in accordance with the work that is required in the respective IICA country strategy.

At the specific level, attention is being paid to the following indicators:

- ✓ Improvements in the public and private institutional framework of agriculture and rural territories: the level of satisfaction of stakeholders, the level of inter-institutional coordination and the capacity to create synergies.
- ✓ Strengthening of the capabilities of the actors in agricultural chains and rural territories.
- ✓ Technological and commercial innovations implemented in agricultural chains and rural territories.
- ✓ Greater joint participation of regions and countries in international forums.

Additionally, the generation of outputs is monitored, primarily through the use of precise quantitative measures that indicate the level of progress achieved and how the outputs contribute to Institute projects, pre-investment initiatives and RRA.

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