

IICA's Technical Cooperation Towards a Development Agenda



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I. Foreword

When I assumed leadership of the General Directorate of IICA, in January 2002, I expressed my firm determination to redefine IICA's role at all levels of action and to spur a principle-centered process of institutional transformation. The aim is to reposition IICA as an institution of excellence, one that is relevant and capable of responding to the challenges and demands involved in bringing about change in agriculture and rural life in the Americas.

Cognizant of the Member States' desire for technical cooperation to respond to their demands and priorities, and as indicated in IICA's Medium Term Plan for the 2002-2006 period, we fostered a broad process of consultation, dialogue and consensus building that resulted in the Technical Cooperation Agenda. This is the instrument through which the Institute implements its technical cooperation actions at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

In preparing and implementing the Cooperation Agenda, we have placed special emphasis on ensuring that a clear and direct link exists between the 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan and the Agenda. Moreover, it is of capital importance to the Institute to report to the Member States on the results it has achieved in comparison to those it has planned.

This Executive Summary of IICA's Agenda is being submitted to our Member States, strategic partners and stakeholders of agriculture and rural life in the Americas for their consideration of IICA's proposed technical cooperation at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

Our objective is to open a frank discussion of the cooperation being proposed so that we may be assured that our work programs are consistent with the objectives and interests of the countries and the regions.

Finally, I would like to underscore that the Technical Cooperation Agenda is the instrument that should respond to the countries' needs and priorities, which are in constant review due to changes taking place in the global setting. Therefore, to ensure their relevance and viability, the Cooperation Agenda will be revised and updated on an ongoing basis. Your contribution to this process of revision will be greatly appreciated.



Chelston W.D. Brathwaite
Director General

II. Introduction

The present document summarizes the IICA's Technical Cooperation Agenda (TCA), prepared by the Offices in the Member States, the Directorates of Regional Operations and the Strategic Areas in response to the mandates derived from the Summit of the Americas process and the Ministerial Declaration of Bavaro (2001), and in compliance with the guidelines set forth in IICA's 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan (MTP), which states that IICA's actions will be carried out through technical cooperation agendas at the national, regional and hemispheric levels.

The preparation of the TCA stems from the decision of the current Administration to redefine roles throughout the Institute, in order to ensure that the Institute's new vision, mission and objectives are fully aligned with the needs and priorities of the Member States.

Given this objective, the Institute undertook a process of renovation, redefinition and evaluation at all levels, in order to bring its programs into line with the objectives and interests of the countries. The goal is for national and international authorities, in both the public and private sectors, to participate fully in the design, implementation and evaluation of strategic actions.

The new institutional vision attaches priority to the promotion of sustainable development, food security and rural prosperity. Consequently, IICA's cooperation focuses on supporting the countries in the formulation and implementation of policies and actions aimed at achieving these objectives

The TCA were prepared in response to the interest expressed by the Member States in ensuring that cooperation actions responded fully to the needs and priorities of the Governments. The current Administration is aware of this and has placed emphasis on two aspects:

- the need to establish a clear and recognizable link between the 2002-2006 MTP and the TCA;
- the need to report, frequently and precisely, to the Member States on what has been achieved vs. what was planned.

In this regard, the 2002-2006 MTP establishes a direct link between the national, regional and hemispheric agendas. Their preparation constitutes a new approach to technical cooperation in which emphasis is placed on the concepts of partnership, cooperation and demand-driven efforts, and is a key element of the 2002-2006 MTP.

The TCA recognize the unique nature of each country and region, and are aimed at complying with the mandate calling for greater participation by the Member States in the design and implementation of cooperation actions. Also, these agendas promote transparency and ongoing dialogue with our stakeholders.

The set of TCA presented herein for consideration places emphasis on the tools used to implement technical cooperation actions, and are based on IICA's six strategic areas:

- Trade and Agribusiness Development
- Technology and Innovation
- Agricultural Health and Food Safety
- Sustainable Rural Development
- Education and Training
- Information and Communication

The document focuses on the identification of the changes brought about by the technical cooperation, as well as their implications, matching the strengths of the Institute with the issues of interest in the Americas, and establishing a preliminary list of actions for discussion.

III. Process of Preparing the Agenda

1. Methodology

The process of preparing an overall strategy for IICA's actions at the national, regional and hemispheric levels is based on a broad-based process of consultation and consensus building with representatives of the key stakeholders in agriculture and rural life in the Americas, conducted to determine and corroborate their perception and opinion of the work of the Institute, and to identify specific areas in which IICA should concentrate its technical cooperation efforts, based on the interests and priorities of the Members States.

The process of consultation and consensus building was based on the following guiding principles:

- D The strategy must be based on the interests of the countries, and be designed so as to impact on each one as soon as possible;
- D It must take into consideration the mandate, the new vision, the mission and the priorities of IICA, and match them with the countries' priorities;
- D Their preparation is an ongoing process based on the consultations with partners, and their participation, but does not impose a result or create a commitment. The strategy should reflect what IICA believes can effectively be done in each country and region;
- D The strategy must define those areas in which the interest of the parties, and the human resources available for its implementation, coincide. The recognition of resource constraints is a key consideration.

2. Purposes of and Stages in the Preparation of the TCA

A consultative approach was adopted in an attempt to involve as many public and private organizations as possible, including universities and agricultural high schools, NGOs and other stakeholders. The results in the short term were a redefinition of IICA's role at the national, regional and hemispheric levels, the clarification of national and regional priorities and expectations, a proposal on annual and medium-term actions plans, and a restructuring of relations between the Institute and the Member States.

In the process of preparing the TCA, the following stages, and corresponding activities, were defined:

D First Stage – Preparation of National Agendas

A thorough review of pertinent documentation was conducted, and different groups of IICA stakeholders at the national level were interviewed to determine their priorities, interests and assessment of the Institute's current approach, and to learn of their proposals for mutual collaboration, and the potential of same. This enabled the IICA Offices to identify a number of options for collaboration, which were presented and discussed with institutional clients.

Once agreement on cooperation actions had been reached with national authorities, each Office prepared a draft national TCA which included a timetable of activities for each year, as well as an assessment of opportunities for accessing financial resources in support of cooperation actions. This draft was submitted to Headquarters for review and subsequent approval.

► **Second Stage – Approval of National Agendas**

Once the consistency of the proposed draft with the 2002-2006 MTP had been assured, and programming and budgetary considerations had been reviewed, the national TCAs were approved and communicated to national authorities and the representatives of the private sector, universities, NGOs, and other stakeholders. Their execution is the responsibility of the IICA Offices, with support from the units at Headquarters and the Regional Specialists.

The fact that, for all intents and purposes, they are considered an integral part of the 2002-2006 MTP, reflects the importance the Institute attaches to the national TCAs.

► **Third Stage – Preparation of Regional Agendas**

The third stage consisted of preparing the Regional Agendas, which are the outcome consultations involving the Regional Specialists, the Representatives and specialists at Headquarters, and include two important components:

- The National Agendas and regional actions aimed at solving problems common to a groups of countries;
- The institutional commitment to continue supporting integration processes through existing mechanisms at the regional and subregional levels.

► **Fourth Stage – Preparation of Annual Reports**

In the spirit of transparency and accountability being promoted by the current Administration, at the end of each year, the Offices in the countries must prepare an Annual Report that includes the cooperation actions taken at the national and regional levels, as part of the implementation of the TCA. The first of these reports, for 2002, was submitted to national authorities, representatives of the private sector and other stakeholders for consideration.

► **Fifth Stage – Ongoing Review of the National and Regional TCAs**

As a result of new challenges and opportunities emerging from the changing context, the countries' priorities and interests change. In this regard, the responsibility of the Offices, the Directors and the Regional Specialists is to ensure that the TCAs reflect the actual situation in the Member States. To this end, in August 2003, the Administration asked the Offices, the Regional Directorates and the Specialists, after consulting with national authorities and representatives of the agricultural and rural sectors, to review and update the TCAs, and to prepare Annual Actions Plans for responding to such changes.

► **Sixth Stage – Preparation of Hemispheric Technical Cooperation Agenda**

Lastly, in line with the premises of the 2002-2006 MTP, and in consultation with IICA specialists throughout the hemisphere, the Technical Cooperation Secretariat has prepared a hemispheric agenda based on the priority lines of action of the Institute's Strategic Areas and on inter-thematic and integrated programs, which respond more comprehensively to the priorities and expectations of the Member States in a systematic and comprehensive manner. The inter-thematic programs are aimed at undertaking actions that will produce important results in the following areas:

- Promotion of trade, agribusiness and food safety
- Support for regional and hemispheric integration

- Strengthening of the rural communities to reduce poverty and promote rural prosperity
- Competitiveness and global trade facilitation
- Support for environmental management
- Promotion of institutional modernization

These programs are based on the principles of partnership and strategic alliances, cooperation, result-driven actions and accountability. All of them are examples of programs that demonstrate the determination of this Administration to gradually shift from a vertical and thematic approach, to one in which the Institute focuses its cooperation actions in accordance with a horizontal and inter-thematic approach. The current Administration is confident that the design and execution of the inter-thematic programs will result in proposals and actions that will have a greater impact, which will enable IICA to secure greater political and financial support.

The following chapters offer as summary of the priorities, actions and results proposed by the Directorates of the Strategic Areas, the Directorates of Regional Operations and the IICA Offices in the countries.

IV. Hemispheric Agenda

4.1. Trade and Agribusiness Development

Objective

To integrate the Institute's actions to provide technical cooperation for the public and private sectors. A holistic approach to agriculture will be

adopted, and trade will be the driving force used to improve the standard of living of our peoples.

Strategic Lines of Action

Trade Negotiations and Integration

Most Member States are immersed in unprecedented processes of integration and bilateral trade negotiations at the bilateral, hemispheric and multilateral levels. The agricultural sector will play a fundamental role in these processes. IICA will therefore support Member States in the technical aspects of trade negotiations on agriculture, as well as in the administration of multilateral and regional trade agreements.

Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

In this regard, IICA will play an ongoing role, facilitating consulting and training services for the evaluation and monitoring of trade and sectoral policy. The Institute will also act as a vehicle for the dissemination of successful experiences.

Strengthening of Domestic Markets

The market – particularly at the local or regional level – is not properly organized, and is thus unprepared to meet international challenges. Most of these challenges involve food quality and differentiation. Any strategy aimed at maximizing the participation of agriculture in the international market must be accompanied by programs that promote efficiency in domestic markets. The Institute's objective is therefore to cooperate with member countries in designing and administering market development instruments that help improve agricultural competitiveness.

Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

Strategies must be developed to make trade processes more efficient and enable production sectors in member countries to increase their competitiveness in local, national and international markets. To that end, IICA will support countries in their efforts to identify and access international markets in order to achieve sustained growth both with regard to exports and the number of exporters.

Participation in External Markets

This line of action involves the Inter-American Program for the Promotion of Trade, Agribusiness and Food Safety. The program's objectives are to help IICA member countries successfully enter international markets, and to promote international trade in high-quality agricultural and agroindustrial products in a manner that is consistent with international food security and food safety rules.

Priority Activities:

The activities of the Trade and Agribusiness Division are conducted through four lines of action.

- **Training in trade policy and negotiation:** Technical cooperation in the understanding and use of the trade and sectoral policy instruments contained in international agreements and negotiations, as well as the institutional structure required to participate in the negotiation and administration of such agreements.
- **Information on trade agreements:** Technical support on the current status of various trade agreements, particularly the multilateral agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and those

pertaining to the ongoing process to create the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

- **Information on trade negotiations involving agriculture:** updated information on trade negotiations will be made available at www.infoagro.net/comercio.
- **Analysis of impact of trade policies:** Analytical studies will be drafted on the impact of negotiations and agreements – special attention will be paid to sensitive products – and methodological proposals will be submitted to help improve the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.
- **Institutional strengthening:** Support for the strengthening of institutions in the agricultural sector – this includes both public and private institutions, at the local and regional levels – as well as the formulation and design of strategies pertaining to sectoral and trade policy.
- **Generation of statistical/production indicators for the hemisphere's rural sector:** Development of performance indicators for the agricultural sector of the hemisphere, the true contribution of agriculture, and local and international trade in agricultural products.
- **Development of domestic markets:** Modernization of systems used to supply, store and distribute agricultural products.
- **Organization and operation of modern agricultural marketing systems designed to facilitate integration processes.**
- **Development of alternative financing mechanisms for agricultural activities.**
- **Agri-food chains:** Creation of permanent organizations that involve the various actors of the agri-food chain; generation of data to

facilitate decision-making and thereby overcome the critical factors that limit competitiveness.

- Rural agroindustry: Development, integration and operation of small and medium-sized rural agroindustry, with a view to establishing and executing business plans and alliances and increasing access to information needed for decision-making.
- Business development: Strengthening of the export capacities of businesses in the agri-food sector, in order to facilitate their successful entry into international markets.
- Access to international markets: Facilitation of access by the hemisphere's small and medium-sized businesses to international markets, using market information systems, actions to upgrade food safety, and export promotion.

4.2. Technology and Innovation

Objective

From an external perspective, IICA will contribute to the reduction of rural poverty, the improvement of competitiveness and the efficient use of natural resources. This will be accomplished by supporting countries in the transformation of their institutional structures to increase technological innovation and modernize their scientific and technological policies.

From an internal perspective, the Institute is working to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of technical cooperation in the field of technology and innovation by promoting developments in new areas and

integration at the hemispheric, regional and local levels, in order to achieve quality, conceptual harmony and efficiency in technical cooperation.

Strategic Lines of Action

Strengthening of national capabilities for technological innovation

Given their national and international challenges, countries must accelerate their product transformation processes. The generation and transfer of traditional linear technology are necessary but insufficient. Organizations and institutional structures must therefore encourage the development of national technological innovation systems that are demand-driven.

Accordingly, support will be provided to new institutional structures that focus on the creation of new mechanisms to tap demand in accordance with market needs, new relationships between the public and private spheres, mechanisms for financing technological research and development, and greater social control over technological institutions by their users and beneficiaries. This line of action includes the development of new institutional policies, as well as conceptual and methodological guides for the organization, management and financing of technological innovation systems.

Support for the design and implementation of technological innovation policies

The performance of the agricultural sector and the characteristics of agricultural supply will be increasingly influenced by new biotechnologies. While some countries in the region are making progress in this area, investment in biotechnology is still low, as are the capabilities

required to access same and use it in a manner that is safe from the environmental, agricultural and human-health standpoints.

In light of that fact, IICA will join other agencies in supporting the efforts of countries to monitor, analyze and implement international agreements on biotechnology. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB) is one such agreement. IICA will also promote the creation of an institutional environment capable of managing biosafety issues, and will support the harmonization of policies and regulations at the international level.

Support will also be provided for negotiations involving the supply and acquisition of new biotechnologies, and the marketing thereof. This includes addressing the issue of intellectual property. IICA will also foster the creation of platforms linking the institutions in charge of developing and implementing new biotechnologies with persons who possess related capabilities, processes and products.

Support for the consolidation of the Regional System for Technological Innovation

Awareness of common problems and opportunities in the field of agricultural technological development at the regional and sub-regional level and the difficulty which the development of full-fledged agricultural research programs represents for most countries have led to the emergence of mechanisms for the exchange of knowledge and collaborative research.

This organizational structure – which is open to improvement – is a platform that can be used to meet the region's technological requirements in the 21st century. The challenge lies in successfully using this institutional structure to promote technical change and the investment in regional agricultural research necessary to develop an agricultural sector that is competitive, sustainable and capable of having an impact on the reduction of rural poverty.

Actions in this strategic category will promote cooperation and the creation of strategic alliances between research centers, transnational technological research and development networks and other agents of technological change. Research on agricultural issues and technological development, which is carried out at national and international research centers and through the joint efforts of various national, regional and international actors (including the private sector, universities and NGOs), will also be encouraged.

Development and management of a scientific and technological information system for agriculture

Scientific and technological information is a key strategic component of technological innovation systems. IICA will work to develop an information management system that ensures greater availability of and access to scientific and technological information. This system will aim to link national and regional innovation systems of the hemisphere with each other and with the global research system.

In this regard, the Institute will support institutional modernization in the countries, so that they may make use of information and communication tools in the process of agricultural technological innovation. The starting point for this endeavor will be to consolidate INFOTEC. The participation of INFOTEC members will be maximized, its online modules (virtual library, news, links, events, institutional directory and regional agricultural technology market) will be improved, new participants will be brought in, tools will be developed to enable different groups to communicate with each other, and virtual communities will be created or strengthened.

Priority Activities

- Outlines and guidelines for IICA technical cooperation in the aforementioned areas will be developed, and the Institute's various technical departments will support and monitor application of

same. Cooperation between IICA and the PROCIs and similar programs is an essential aspect of this activity.

- Studies will be prepared on the current state of agriculture and trends in that field. They will focus on technology at the hemispheric, regional and national levels. Regional and international agreements on agricultural technology and innovation will also be monitored.
- IICA will promote hemispheric dialogue by supporting and developing the Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO). Dialogue will also be encouraged among sub-regional research entities on issues that represent a threat or an opportunity for the Americas.
- The Institute will encourage reciprocal cooperation between countries, regional financing (particularly through the Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology – FONTAGRO) and the creation of ties between countries through institutions that meet a high standard of excellence.
- Strategic conceptual frameworks and guides will be generated, validated or adapted. These frameworks and guides will be designed to strengthen technical cooperation by the Institute with regard to policy and institutional development in the field of technological innovation. They will interact with other IICA strategic areas and external allies.
- Technological observatories will be promoted, as will the development of systems for the management of scientific and technological information in the agricultural sector.
- Opportunities for national, regional and hemispheric projects will be identified, their viability and impact will be analyzed, and the

Institute will collaborate with countries in their formulation and implementation.

- Training will be developed in conjunction with users, external beneficiaries and IICA staff, in order to improve the management of technical cooperation.

4.3. Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Objective

To assist Member States in strengthening their agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) capacities – including their capability to implement and comply with international norms and standards – in order to compete successfully in global markets and contribute to safeguarding consumer health.

Strategic Lines of Action

Support for the development of regulatory mechanisms, science-based technical capacities and sustainable institutional infrastructure

The importance of AHFS must be stressed before national authorities, and a comprehensive approach to the improvement of national services must be promoted, based on an updated vision of AHFS services.

IICA has completed a study of the overall capability of national AHFS services in three areas, namely regulatory mechanisms, technical capacity and institutional sustainability. The study shows that the general level of

development for 31 countries in the hemisphere is 40%. Hence the need to support national AHFS services in upgrading those areas.

Support for the application of the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement and OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius decisions

While IICA countries account for only 22% of WTO membership, approximately 60 to 70% of all trade-related issues brought before the SPS Committee are either submitted or verbally supported by countries from the Americas. Active participation by member countries in the international reference organizations (OIE, IPPC, CODEX) will also be promoted, given the important role the decisions of these bodies play in international agri-food trade.

Development of standards and norms, leadership capabilities and technical competency in food safety

An IICA study of the current state of food safety has shown that only two or three countries in the Americas have food safety policies and practices in place for exports and products consumed at the domestic level; 17 countries have policies and practices only for exports, and 14 lack them altogether.

Identification and management of emerging issues

Recent events have underlined the importance of adopting a proactive approach to emerging issues that may constitute a threat or an opportunity in the field of agricultural health and food safety, or that may put animal, plant or human health at risk. Such is the case with the traceability requirements proposed in Europe, the southern migration of the West Nile virus in Latin America and the first domestic case of mad cow disease (BSE) in the Americas. It should be noted that, between 1968 and 1998, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) invested approximately three percent of its budget in agricultural health. Most of this capital was used to build new laboratories and quarantine posts or to purchase equipment.

It is assumed that the necessary activities for each strategic line of action are being carried out at the national level. If countries fail to invest time and resources in the WTO and the three standard-setting organizations mentioned earlier, the actions of IICA will be rendered ineffective and difficult to sustain.

The strength of the strategic lines of action will depend on their degree of interconnection. Many emerging issues that require technical measures and leadership throughout the agri-food chain are addressed by international bodies. If a sustainable infrastructure is to be achieved, however, individual countries must also become involved, basing their actions on science and investing in their national AHFS services.

Priority Activities

The Agricultural Health and Food Safety Program approved for the 2004-2005 period by the Executive Committee, at its twenty-third meeting (July 2003), gives priority to the following activities:

- Helping countries to evaluate and measure the progress made by their national AHFS services with regard to performance and quality.
- Developing management, leadership and communication capabilities with regard to food safety throughout the agri-food chain.
- Forming technical partnerships with institutions capable of providing financial resources.
- Coordinating a short-term, country-to-country technical assistance program.
- Analyzing and providing information on SPS-related norms, standards and trade issues.

- Compiling and disseminating information through the AgroSALUD program, in order to document successful experiences with national AHFS services.
- Increasing the participation and effectiveness of countries at WTO SPS Committee meetings.

4.4. Sustainable Rural Development

Objective

To support Member States and other strategic partners of the Institute, both public and private, in the formulation, development and implementation of initiatives that promote sustainable development in rural areas, giving full consideration to economic, socio-cultural, eco-environmental and political-institutional issues.

Strategic Lines of Action

Strategies, policies and investments

The objective is to strengthen the technical capacity of IICA and its institutional partners, to enable them to formulate regional and national rural development strategies from a territorial perspective.

The Institute will support the adoption of programs and projects that soundly articulate objectives and aspects of the fight against poverty, the quest for food security and environmentally friendly management. IICA hopes to improve rural access to physical and financial capital, appropriate technologies, markets and information.

Modernization and institutional development

Support will be provided for the creation and modernization of institutional mechanisms geared toward promoting sustainable rural development. Such mechanisms are to include development management models, and will explicitly address issues of governance and civic awareness in rural areas. Support will also be provided for processes to modernize and create intermediate-level institutions for territorial entities (between the national and local levels).

As part of its new functions, and in order to fulfill its regional political-technical mission, IICA will pay special attention to strengthening institutional mechanisms and processes as a means of preparing for the integration of agriculture and the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

At the local level, the Institute will promote the development of capabilities in productive areas such as rural micro- and small-business management, market information management, appropriate technology, rural agroindustry, cleaner production, environmental quality management, eco-labeling and appellations of origin. All of these areas will be approached from a territorial perspective.

Natural resource management in rural areas

A territorial approach to sustainable rural development will be promoted, in order to encourage rational management of renewable natural resources (soils, water, forests and biodiversity). To that end, the Institute will foster the development and adoption of innovative environmental management tools that help internalize environmental costs, lead to cleaner production processes and generally encourage better production practices and ways of dealing with the environment. The development of new activities resulting from the prioritization of environmental services will also be encouraged.

Management of rural development with social actors

The Institute aims to strengthen the social and cultural dimension of sustainable development, using a territorial approach, broadening the framework of technical cooperation beyond priority groups (rural women, rural youth, indigenous peoples) and including the wide range of social actors that are present in rural areas. Gender, culture and ethnicity are cross-cutting issues in this regard.

With regard to integral development, the Institute will encourage the development of capabilities by groups and social actors, enabling them to establish relationships of cooperation and shared responsibility with public and private institutions. Such relationships will be created through alliances that make sustainable territorial development viable. Special attention will be paid to training for human capital, social capital and civic awareness as objectives in the quest to develop capabilities among groups and social actors. This will be accomplished using tools and mechanisms designed to provide education, training, access to assets and institutional strengthening.

Knowledge management

The Institute will promote knowledge management as a decentralized, collaborative working tool designed to facilitate the formulation of policies, strategic planning, implementation of actions and development of technologies for rural development.

Knowledge management can be used to: a) catalyze experiences; b) allow for experimentation with new practices; c) create a training forum; d) facilitate integration with key partners; and e) attract opportunities.

Priority Activities

- To provide technical cooperation to countries in order to: a) formulate rural development strategies and policies from a

territorial perspective; b) identify investments that contribute to the sustainable development of rural areas; c) create and strengthen national institutional structures that specialize in formulating, executing and evaluating rural development policies, strategies, programs and projects at the national and local levels.

- To support the development of graduate-level programs to train human resources in the use of new sustainable rural development approaches, analysis methods and techniques, work methodologies and management methods.
- To develop training activities on rural development issues, using both on-site and virtual methods. These activities will be designed for officials from public and private entities (national and local) who participate in the formulation, execution, monitoring and evaluation of territorially-oriented rural development policies, programs and projects.
- To devise conceptual, methodological and operational frameworks for the implementation of a territorial approach to sustainable rural development.
- To participate and collaborate in the organization of technical gatherings, both on-site and virtual, on issues involving rural development. These gatherings should serve as a source of conceptual and methodological guidance, especially with regard to policy, institutions, natural resource management and management with the participation of social actors.
- To prepare informational and training materials on issues relevant to the promotion of sustainable development in rural areas. Such issues include natural resource management, environmental quality management, rural finance, agroindustry, tourism, etc.

- To promote horizontal technical cooperation based on the concept of knowledge management.
- To systematize successful rural development experiences carried out by IICA, governments, international institutions, the private sector, the academic sector and NGOs, as well as indigenous knowledge and successful experiences in rural communities and ethnic groups.
- To disseminate knowledge derived from the systematization of successful experiences, among decision-makers, persons in charge of operating rural development initiatives, Institute staff, the academic community and other interested entities.
- To disseminate updated and relevant information on rural development issues through the website www.infoagro.net/codes.
- To promote the development of a hemispheric network of rural development knowledge. This network will be comprised of experts, professionals and educational and research institutions.
- To work with key partners working in the hemisphere that are members of the Inter-Agency Group on Rural Development.

4.5. Education and Training

Objective

To strengthen higher, intermediate and rural agricultural education programs, in order to increase the human capabilities needed to fuel sustainable agricultural development and raise the standard of living of rural populations.

Strategic Lines of Action

Training on strategic issues

The availability of knowledge and skills for key actors must be increased. Requirements will be determined in accordance with the training needs established in the Cooperation Agendas. Special attention will be paid to implementing training programs that use innovative methodological approaches.

Improvement of quality and relevance of educational and training programs

Little quality control is exercised over the programs offered, and participation in the accreditation and certification of training programs is low. To remedy this situation, the Area will support public and private institutions and organizations in the modernization of their educational plans, programs and accreditation processes, adjusting them to the problems, opportunities and challenges of agricultural and rural development.

Support for the integration of agricultural and rural education

Mechanisms that promote dialogue, horizontal cooperation and the integration of agricultural and rural education, including national and regional fora, will be strengthened.

Strengthening of distance education and training programs

Availability of distance education and training programs is limited. Such programs are necessary to offset the high costs of on-site education. In 2001, IICA joined the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN), thereby facilitating cooperation in this area on issues of importance to countries.

In that same vein, IICA will focus its efforts on the creation of a hemispheric network of institutions offering distance higher education. This will be a joint effort involving IICA, regional fora and the United States Association of Agricultural Schools (ADEC).

Creation of digital educational materials: video-conferencing, CD and online materials

New technologies can play a very important role in distance education and training programs. In Latin America and the Caribbean, however, the development of digital educational materials is still in its early stages, and is very limited. IICA will therefore work to substantially increase the availability of this type of educational materials.

Priority Activities

- To offer the knowledge, skills and abilities required to transform and modernize agriculture and rural life.
- To use appropriate and modern educational methods, procedures, systems and resources to transfer content and information from the Strategic Areas.
- To help upgrade capabilities to design, organize and execute sustained digital distance training programs.
- To support the institutional modernization and educational plans and programs of agricultural and rural schools, adapting them to the priorities and requirements of the global environment.
- To offer institutions of higher agricultural learning a methodological strategy that will increase the quality and relevance of their services.

- To encourage the exchange of experiences through national and regional fora, with emphasis on the role of education and training in sustainable agricultural development.
- To promote alliances and mechanisms for the coordination, interrelation and integration of agricultural educational institutions.
- To establish ties and promote joint programs among institutions of higher agricultural learning at the national and regional levels.
- To establish a business plan for the development of GLDNA in each of IICA's regions, to be submitted to donors and interested institutions.
- To form a team to digitalize traditional materials for use in distance education programs.
- To develop and support the creation of courses using various electronic media, such as the CD format, video-conferencing and the Internet.

4.6. Information and Communication

General Objective

To develop an inter-American platform of information on agriculture, the environment and rural life. This platform will systematize and offer technical information, and provide services and specialized cooperation, in order to contribute to sustainable agricultural development, food security and the prosperity of rural communities in the Americas.

Strategic Lines of Action

Technical information and Internet services

In order to achieve agricultural and rural development and environmental sustainability, timely and relevant information on strategic issues must be made available. In this line of action, countries will be furnished with services and information involving IICA and its activities.

Institutional positioning and positioning of issues

Information should occupy a key position in the working programs approved by the political, technical and financial decision-makers in charge of agricultural and rural development. This line of action also includes the need to strengthen cooperation with countries, positioning IICA as the continent's leading development cooperation agency with regard to agricultural information.

Direct cooperation

IICA will promote and support the organization of national and regional information networks and systems on agriculture and rural life. These networks are to be joined together in an inter-American system that is itself integrated with global agricultural information systems (IICA.CRIDIA.INT). It is also important to promote a culture of agricultural and rural information.

Priority activities

- To provide technical services and information on-line; the source of such information and services may be the Institute or national and international agencies.
- To develop a hemispheric agricultural search engine.
- To develop a virtual library.
- To maintain and expand the data base of experts on strategic issues.
- To develop and maintain a data base of technical cooperation projects and products generated in each country.
- To develop and make operational interactive information systems that will support the Summit of the Americas process and the Institute's government bodies.
- To create an institutional directory that includes the Medium Term Plan and the Cooperation Agendas.
- To draft reports on activities.
- To provide public information.
- To promote the formulation of national policies on the subject.
- To create fora for dialogue and horizontal cooperation.
- To systematize and communicate experiences. The source of such experiences may be the Institute or third parties.
- To help design and execute strategies for the promotion and use of agricultural and rural information systems.
- To consolidate the Institute's digital and printed technical information resources in a single system.
- To apply an institutional policy that regulates the use of Web resources.
- To strengthen and regulate the production of physical and digital documentary information by the Institute.

- To facilitate the management of institutional technical information.
- To organize national agricultural information networks and systems.
- To consolidate the national networks of the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas (SIDALC).
- To develop SIBIICA (the IICA library system)
- To promote the organization and training of teams of national technicians.
- To help design and execute strategies to promote the use of agricultural and rural information systems.
- To overcome the digital divide by promoting and following up on rural telecenters and their results.
- To promote the inclusion of information theory and use in educational curricula at the rural basic, intermediate and graduate technical-agricultural and extension levels.

V. Regional Agendas

5.1. Andean Regional Agenda

The general setting for the region and for agriculture

The Andean Region is made up of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. With a total land surface of 4.7 million km², the region displays

wide geographic and environmental diversity. Within its borders can be found nearly all the climatic zones, from the shores of the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean to the high peaks of the Andes, including tropical jungles, the plains of the Orinoco River and pre-montane formations.

The region is home to a multiethnic, multicultural population of nearly 119 million people. It posts a total GDP of nearly US\$268 billion and a per capita GDP of nearly US\$2,250. These overall figures mask profound gaps among countries, and income distribution in the region as a whole is marked by severe inequalities. This problem, found all over Latin America, is particularly acute in the Andean countries. Indeed, income inequality and the lack of opportunities have repeatedly triggered serious social upheavals and crises of governability in all the countries.

The Andean States have a limited capacity for redistribution. Allocated resources have been insufficient to meet the population's needs for basic health, education and social welfare services. Welfare and health indicators are low in all the countries, including high rates of infant and child malnutrition and generally low rates of education; all this poses a serious obstacle to development and modernization processes.

Over one third of the population inhabits rural areas in all the countries of the region except Venezuela, and approximately two thirds of these live below the poverty line. Nevertheless, most of the countries lack integrated rural development policies or consolidated programs able to unify government efforts at the national, regional and local levels. Although heavy investments are certainly being made in the rural sector, as a general rule, they are isolated and inconsistent.

The appearance and rapid growth of the drug trade and subversive armed groups have worsened the situation of the rural poor, hindering government development and assistance programs, especially in Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Perhaps the areas most affected by political instability are the border zones, especially where the production of illicit crops predominates.

Despite all these difficulties, agriculture continues to account for more than 11% of the GDP, as attested to by national accounts taken on the average. Around 25% of the economically active population works in activities related directly to agriculture. To these should be added sectoral linkages generally not included in traditional national accounts, but without which it would be impossible to provide fresh and processed foodstuffs for domestic and export markets. These include the service sectors that provide technical assistance, financing and transportation, and that engage in post-harvest activities, food processing, agro-industry, and the distribution and marketing of products of agricultural origin.

The production and marketing of agricultural and agro-industrial goods are the foundation of the economy for Andean countries, with the exception of Venezuela, and the agricultural sector is one of the region's main sources of foreign exchange.

Because the region is home to a broad diversity of agro-ecological zones, it is able to produce an extensive variety of products. The lowlands of the Orinoco and Amazon Rivers are dotted with cereal, legume and oilseed crops and beef cattle. In the high Andes, South American camelids and sheep are an important source of fiber and meat. Highland grain crops (kiwicha, tarwi and quinoa) are important not only for their place in the local diet, but also as exports to the European Union and Canada.

The region has vast potential for producing fruits and vegetables. Ecuador is the world's largest exporter of bananas, and Peru and Colombia have seen substantial growth in a variety of fruit exports. Other Andean fruit crops, such as tree tomato or tamarillo, lulo or naranjilla, granadilla or passion fruit, annonaceae (the cherimoya family) and caricaceae (the papaya family), are able to supply major market niches, both current and potential.

Despite all this, Peru and Venezuela continue to be net food importers.

Political and institutional setting

The Andean countries are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Colombia and Bolivia both belong to the CAIRNS group, and Peru is in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Colombia and Venezuela have joined with Mexico to form the G-3.

At the regional level, the Andean countries comprise the Andean Community (AC), an economic bloc that pursues a variety of objectives, including the establishment of a customs union by the end of 2003. Bolivia belongs to the AC and is also the additional member ("4+1") of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), making it an important ally to promote integration initiatives toward a free trade area for the countries of the South American continent.

The executive body of the Andean Community is the General Secretariat (SG-AC), which manages the integration process and is headquartered in Lima, Peru. The SG-AC is the major political and economic institution in the region, supporting the countries not only in trade, but also in integration-related matters if the countries so decide, through the different bodies created within the Community. The resolutions of these bodies become supranational binding mandates.

The AC has adopted the Andean Common Agricultural Policy (PACA) and other agricultural policy tools including the Andean Agricultural Health System and the Andean Price Band System, which has been under negotiation with MERCOSUR since 1997. The PACA provides the AC with a framework for decisions on such issues as industrial property rights, plant breeders' rights, and access to plant genetic resources.

The CAN General Secretariat is IICA's counterpart in matters involving the integration process. It is also a recipient of joint actions on collateral issues associated with border-zone development, agricultural health, food safety and alternative development.

The region has a financial support agency, the Andean Development Corporation (CAF), which serves both public and private sectors and is headquartered in Caracas, Venezuela. The CAF channels loan resources from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The CAF, working in tandem with other international agencies, is a source of financial resources for development. To date, it has allocated relatively few funds for agriculture in the region, by comparison with those available to other sectors such as industry, tourism, and the like. Resources for rural and agricultural development come primarily from the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and IFAD. These institutions have asked IICA to take part, either directly or through national counterpart agencies, in supporting components of technical cooperation or resource administration.

The countries of the region (with the exception of Venezuela) have a valuable ally in the United States International Development Agency (USAID). It invests in development programs in rural areas, both through direct monetary outlays and by financing food donations. Most of these resources are invested through companies or NGOs.

Another important partner is the German Cooperation Agency GTZ, which is working together with IICA on projects in areas such as appropriate technology for natural resource conservation and management, innovation in alternative development, and information systems.

The Andean countries have adopted the Plan for Andean Cooperation to Fight Illicit Drugs and Related Crimes, with support from AID and other international agencies. The Andean Alternative Development Committee (CADA) was incorporated as a specialized center of the plan to foster an exchange of experiences and undertake joint actions to support alternative development programs.

IICA's capacities

IICA provides leadership in the region in the areas of trade, agri-food chains, agricultural innovation and technology, agricultural health and food safety, rural development and education for the agricultural sector. The Institute is held in high esteem by state agencies and private organizations associated with agriculture and rural life.

In the area of agribusiness, IICA combines its efforts with Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to promote small- and medium-scale agricultural enterprises through the Cooperative Rural Agroindustry Development Program for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRODAR).

In technology innovation, the Cooperative Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer Program for the Andean Subregion (PROCIANDINO) coordinates efforts with the national agricultural research institutes (NARIs) and the national agricultural technology research and innovation systems (NARSS) in the region to ensure that technological innovation and development are meeting the challenges of competition in a globalized market. The Andean countries are also members of the Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS), a joint effort to promote ecosystem management in the Amazon watershed.

On the education front, IICA coordinates the work of the member countries to develop human resources for agriculture and related sectors through the Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development (SIHCA), in a joint effort with the Government of Venezuela.

The consultation process

The Andean Regional Agenda was drafted in accordance with guidelines set out in the IICA 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan. It was also guided by

the mandates from the Summits of the Americas and instructions from the IABA that urge IICA to extend its efforts beyond the limits of the agricultural and the rural sector and include activities of regional scope that will promote integrated development of the Member States, to the extent that the Institute's capacities allow. Three major sources provided input for this Regional Agenda:

- Needs expressed in the region's National Agendas, especially for multinational actions that bridge two or more Thematic Areas.
- Requests for action to overcome or alleviate situations and problems of regional scope, as identified by IICA's Regional Specialists. These regional and national demands were examined during two in-house workshops held in September and November 2002, leading to consensus.
- Joint actions with strategic partners in the region, in areas of particular interest to IICA.

A number of key stakeholders have been identified, including:

- The General Secretariat of the AC, which will orient regional needs.
- The Ministers of Agriculture of the Andean Region, who meet informally to identify needs and issue requests for IICA cooperation.
- National and international cooperation agencies operating in the region.

Because the region lacks a formal decision-making entity on agriculture, the IICA Representatives and regional specialists maintain close working relations with the Ministers and national authorities. This is critically important for responding effectively to cooperation service requests.

General objective

The objective of the Andean Regional Agenda is to contribute to repositioning agriculture and rural life by developing sustainable agricultural activities and viable rural enterprises. The Agenda seeks the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed and socially equitable for the people of the Andean Region. In the framework of this general objective, it sets the following specific targets for regional cooperation:

- Direct IICA's actions so as to achieve significant results for agricultural and rural development in the countries of the region by maximizing efficiency, technical excellence and coordination across Thematic Areas.
- Create an intra-institutional operating network to orchestrate cooperation actions at the national, regional, hemispheric and global levels; this will facilitate an exchange of best practices and the development of innovative capacities.
- Support the Summit of the Americas process, initiating and supporting national, regional, and hemispheric fora on strategies and actions to improve agriculture and rural life.
- Promote strategic partnerships with multilateral cooperation and financing agencies and public and private organizations to mobilize resources in order to tackle poverty and create prosperity in rural Andean communities.
- Promote IICA's image as an international development organization, recognized and respected as a reliable strategic partner in actions to promote the development of agriculture and the rural milieu in the region.

- Be accountable to the Member States, engaging in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of its performance in the region.

Critical issues

The greatest problem facing this region is poverty in rural areas, a challenge that brings all the critical issues into play. Consultations with public authorities and private leaders in the region, as well as dialogues with the Institute's own Representatives and regional specialists, have identified the following critical issues:

Developing skills in the Ministries of Agriculture for negotiating and managing trade agreements

Agricultural negotiators in the region need help to develop and reinforce skills for participating successfully in upcoming negotiations, especially for the creation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). In addition to developing negotiating skills, they urgently need to learn how to administer trade agreements. IICA will help implement the Andean Network of Agricultural Policymakers, and will emphasize training. The Institute will also work to bolster their trade policy units by developing and disseminating methods and educational materials on trade policies and negotiations.

Modernizing agricultural marketing systems

Today's agricultural marketing systems tend to be ineffective and lack transparency. They are failing to carry out their two-fold mission of ensuring greater efficiency in both marketing processes and production resource allocation. IICA's specialists have gained extensive know-how and wide experience in this area, and the Institute intends to place this knowledge at the service of the region. Its plans call for strengthening agricultural commodity exchanges by improving their operating capacity. This entails training commodity exchange agents, developing

computerized stock exchange systems, and fostering harmonized quality standards. IICA is also in a position to develop alternative mechanisms for agricultural financing through market mechanisms.

Improving the competitiveness of agricultural commodities

If the region's economic agents are to participate successfully in globalized markets, they must work continually to make their goods and services more competitive. It takes a broad spectrum of interrelated conditions to penetrate a market, stay there, and expand sales. These conditions range from geographic considerations and capital availability to appropriate technologies and human resources. IICA plans to work with the countries in preparing studies on the competitive position of select agricultural commodities from the region and in identifying proposals that will improve their competitiveness.

Developing national technology innovation systems (NTISs)

The NTISs and NARIs in the region are just beginning to develop, unevenly, and their work is not always fully synchronized with the sector's needs. The countries are active on two fronts. First, they are working to modernize policies for organizing and managing technology innovation and biosafety processes in agribusiness. Second, they are integrating public and private research and technology development capacities. IICA has much to offer in both areas.

Modernizing and strengthening national agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) services

For the Andean countries, the general level of development is directly related to the modernization and strengthening of AHFS systems and services. A properly structured and maintained AHFS system offers benefits to many areas, including primary production, public health, tourism, trade, competitiveness, food security and the environment. For

all these reasons, IICA is interested in offering broad support to the countries in this field.

Alleviating rural poverty

The extent and depth of rural poverty in the region is one of the main barriers to integrated economic development, lying at the root of other problems that threaten social stability and good governance. The food insecurity affecting many rural communities, the presence of vulnerable groups (ethnicities, women, rural youth), and the bias of certain economic policies have been heightened by a lack of integrated rural development policies.

Other issues of concern are border-zone development and alternative development. IICA is in a position to support the countries in these fields by helping with policy design for sustainable rural development (SRD) using the territorial approach, and developing institutional modernization proposals for SRD.

Curriculum reform for agricultural education and training

The curricula of agricultural education and training programs tend to be out of date. As a result, the region lacks human resources qualified to respond successfully to the conditions of a globalized environment. The countries need support for assessing their programs, developing new curricula, and establishing systems for mutual accreditation and comparability of their agricultural education. IICA has much valuable experience and know-how to contribute.

Information system in support of rural and agricultural development

Information is a critical issue that cuts across all the others. The region has made impressive efforts to create and maintain information systems on agricultural and rural development, but these systems need to be modernized and strengthened.

Ministerial Forum on Agriculture

Special attention needs to be given to coordinating actions between IICA and the Secretariat of the AC to create a Ministerial Forum on Agriculture with the authority to direct sectoral policies in the region's macroeconomic framework.

Principal actions and expected results, by Thematic Area

Trade and Agribusiness Development

The objective in this area is to support the analysis of agricultural and sectoral policies, the development of skills for trade negotiations and integration, the strengthening of domestic markets, and efforts to achieve better access to global markets for agricultural enterprises. The expected results are:

- Information system and system for disseminating indicators on the performance of agriculture and food security implemented.
- Studies carried out on the competitiveness of selected agricultural products from the Andean Region, organized in agri-food chains.
- Analysis and evaluation of approaches, concepts and methodologies for managing agri-food chains in the Andean countries. Design of a working agenda to address weaknesses identified and strengthening work in this field.
- Discussion, cataloguing and dissemination of experiences with the strengthening of production chains; Andean workshop on agri-food chains.

- Business and technical people associated with IICA more familiar with the concept of seals of differentiation, including their usefulness and impact on small- and medium-scale rural agribusinesses.
- Technical skills of national public and private sector employees improved on the subject of agricultural negotiations and the administration of trade agreements, with a view to ensure successful participation in negotiations in the framework of the FTAA and WTO.
- Maintenance of the system for disseminating information on the progress of the international agricultural negotiations.
- Agricultural commodity exchanges in the region strengthened: training for commodity exchange brokers and laboratory analysts; process begun to harmonize quality standards.
- Alternative agricultural financing instruments developed.
- Management skills of SMEs diagnosed and launching of the Export Platforms Program under way.

Technology and Innovation

The objective is to increase the participation of PROCITROPICOS and PROCIANDINO, help develop and strengthen the capabilities of NARSS and NARIs in the region, and modernize public and private research policies and infrastructure. The expected results are:

- The NARSS strengthened with external resources for agricultural research and development, through the PROCi mechanisms.
- Policies for organizing and managing technological innovation modernized, through the NARSS and NARIs.
- Knowledge for technological innovation and the consolidation of INFOTEC/FORAGRO mobilized, in a horizontal cooperation effort through the NARSS and the Regional System.
- The Innovation Observatory implemented as an instrument for the design and evaluation of institutional policies in this area.
- Regional harmonization processes implemented in the field of biosafety, biotechnology and intellectual property.
- Instruments developed for creating public/private alliances and consortia on the subject of innovation.
- Technological information and knowledge produced by regional projects disseminated, with assistance from the INFOTEC platform.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA's objective in this area is to support processes for modernizing and upgrading national AHFS services and systems, aligning them with the needs and demands of the global market. Expected results include:

- Greater internal articulation achieved between the public and private sectors to create a shared vision on AHFS, identify priorities and improve services and access to funding.
- The region's capabilities developed vis-à-vis SPS measures of the WTO and FTAA, and effective participation by the Andean countries in international bodies and activities related to SPS.
- Institutional assessments of the status of AHFS systems, identifying priorities for modernization and upgrading.XXX

- Development of technical skills and management and leadership capabilities in national AHFS systems, making it possible to implement and supervise programs and develop new initiatives.
- More effective participation by the countries in activities of Codex Alimentarius.
- Bilateral AHFS programs strengthened between Peru and Chile, Colombia and Venezuela, and Peru and Ecuador.
- A new stage for the Andean Agricultural Health Forum (2004) developed.

Sustainable Rural Development

IICA's objective is to focus its regional cooperation efforts on territorial management, the management of rural development and indigenous issues. The efforts with respect to **territorial management** will focus on the following aspects:

- Border development, with emphasis on human capital formation;
- Microregional development, including the deployment of territorial laboratories, training and the provision of materials and tools;
- Local development of rural communities, with an inter-thematic approach.

With regard to the **management of rural development**, the regional effort will be aimed at the following elements:

- Support for the countries of the region in defining policies, strategies, institutional structures and instruments for rural development with a territorial approach;

- Implementation of a Regional Forum for National Officials Responsible for Rural Development.
- Creation and promotion of the National Interagency Groups to promote improved living conditions in rural areas without affecting natural resources. The expected results are:

With respect to indigenous issues, the Institute will undertake efforts aimed at developing a strategy for addressing the subject, with a corporate vision, in collaboration with the Central and Northern Regions.

Education and Training

The Institute's objective is to support the countries of the region in modernizing and upgrading academic and technical institutions that train human resources for the agricultural sector. IICA cooperation in this field is expected to produce the following results:

- Andean Regional Forum held and attended by representatives from institutions of agricultural education in the countries of the region.
- A workshop conducted on curriculum evaluation and development for teachers engaged in modernizing the schools of agronomy.
- Methodological information compiled to support processes of accreditation and comparability of university programs in the Andean Region.
- Up-to-date agricultural training courses offered over the SIHCA Web site (www.sihca.org).
- Internet/tutorial training opportunities established in an agricultural educational institution that has appropriate computer infrastructure.

- Information on training courses disseminated through the Global Distance Learning Network for Agriculture (GDLNA-WB), by means of a link on the SIHCA Web site.

Information and Communication

IICA plans to organize bibliographic information units into a single-source system at the service of agricultural development in the Andean Region. Expected results are:

- National agricultural and rural information systems strengthened, including the design of programs and strategies for setting them up.
- Support provided to SIDALC.

Principal inter-thematic actions proposed

In accordance with the principles established in the 2002-2006 MTP and the guidelines of the General Directorate, and in consultation with IICA's technicians and specialists in the Andean Region, the Directorate of Operations proposes, in addition to the inter-thematic programs related to the actions of the Institute itself, to sponsor the development of three programs related to the Region: Rural agroindustry (PRODAR); Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Livestock Practices (GLP); and biotechnology and biosafety in the Andean Region. The implementation of these programs calls for efforts by several of the Institute's Strategic Areas at the same time and aims to achieve results that have a major impact on the countries of the Region.

▮ PRODAR and the development of rural agroindustry

IICA's regional action aims to strengthen PRODAR, a hemispheric project that is markedly inter-thematic, in which strategic partnerships, the

articulation of national and regional agendas and work with local players all come together. PRODAR's objective is to promote, support and strengthen rural agroindustry, as well as the environment in which it operates. Efforts will be made to reinforce the national rural agroindustry networks (Redar) and the IICA projects in the region related to this topic, and to articulate the initiatives of entities linked to the program.

▮ Good agricultural and livestock practices

The regional technical cooperation effort in this field is aimed at developing, disseminating and supporting the adoption of Good Practices (GP) with an integrated vision, taking into account both food safety issues and the preservation of the environment and the social accountability of production, and including agriculture (GAP), livestock (GLP) and manufacturing (GMP).

IICA's aims to support and advise the countries on the regulations and institutional framework needed for the adoption of GP by production, post-harvest, processing and trade systems. Special emphasis will be placed on the development of an information and communication platform that will facilitate education and training for the actors in agrifood chains, including consumers.

▮ Biotechnology and biosafety

The trade environment of the countries of the region calls for the drafting of biosafety policies aimed at the control, prevention and management of the likely impacts on the environment, ecology and public health of the free circulation of transgenic products.

Therefore, IICA intends to support the quantification and assessment of the region's institutional capabilities in the fields of biosafety and biotechnology, with a view to supporting the development of proposed policies and regulatory processes for the areas of trade, safety and public health. IICA's actions will achieve at least the following results: a proposal

for strengthening institutional biosafety capabilities in the Andean Region; a definition of the concept of "Institutional Capabilities (IC)" in biotechnology and biosafety; and the dissemination of the strategies and efforts of each country with regard to biosafety.

5.2. Caribbean Regional Agenda

The general setting for the region and for agriculture

The Caribbean region is made up of Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The region is highly diverse, with the 14 countries varying widely in size and levels of socioeconomic development that comprise a crucible of ethnic, linguistic and cultural wealth.

The region's economy is dominated by the service sector, especially banking, finance and tourism. Industry is still incipient, with mining and oil drilling occupying a dominant role in some of the countries. The contribution of agriculture to GDP, not including value generated by agro-industry and other agricultural production linkages, ranges from 3% in Trinidad and Tobago to 31% in Guyana. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy in four countries: Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica, and the main agricultural products are bananas, sugar, rice (considered traditional goods) and tropical fruits.

The Caribbean also produces dairy, meat and poultry products. As a whole, however, it is a net food importer (mostly meat and grains) owing to conditions inherent in its historical development, shortage of adequate cropland, and insufficient levels of investment in agriculture, food and appropriate technology. The new globalize setting places additional

constraints on the sector, and as a result, concerns about food security have recently come to the fore.

The countries of the Caribbean, especially the former British colonies, have in the past enjoyed preferential trade benefits from their former mother countries and from other countries of Europe and North America. However, as a consequence of globalization and the spread of trade agreements based on WTO standards, these preferential conditions have begun to erode. The region's ability to compete is coming under more intense pressure, and the institutional, physical and human infrastructure is straining to penetrate world markets. These pressures are now degrading the quality of life for people in rural areas, especially in the Windward Islands.

Against this backdrop, the following factors pose serious challenges for the region:

- A declining, irregular economic growth rate.
- Steadily shrinking share of agriculture in the GDP.
- Weak domestic support policies.
- Infrastructure and services inadequate or non-existent for responding to a changing, dynamic environment.
- Supply shortages, especially for the agricultural processing subsector.
- High rates of rural poverty, resulting in unacceptable rural-to-urban migration.
- An aging farm population.

Despite these challenges, the region has many strengths that open new opportunities for development, including:

- Ever-stronger links between agriculture and the more dynamic production sectors, including tourism, mining and manufacturing.
- A widespread understanding that food security is an essential condition for sustainable economic development and good governance.

- Expanding market niches for organic crops and products having more added value (especially under regional trade agreements).
- A new awareness among social and economic agents of the need to join efforts and include more education, information and technology in agri-food activities and businesses.

Political and institutional setting

The countries of the region (with the exception of the Dominican Republic) constitute the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and all are members of CARIFORUM, an entity that supervises relations with the European Union. The administrative structure is headed by the Conference of Heads of Government (CHG), with support from several sectoral ministerial committees. One of these, the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), is made up of the Ministers of Agriculture and Trade. In 1996, the CHG approved the Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture (RTP) and set up a Committee of Lead Agencies (CLA) to plan and monitor implementation.

The general environment changed radically with the agreements of the Uruguay Round and establishment of the WTO, quickly followed by trade agreements with the European Union, the Dominican Republic and Cuba, and the advent of the Caribbean Common Market. The region then took on the added challenge of administering new agreements with other countries (such as Costa Rica / CARICOM) alongside its negotiations for participation in the FTAA.

The institutions of the region have been hard pressed to react expeditiously to changes in the institutional and overall environment. In 1998-99, the CHG set up the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM), followed in 2001 by the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ).

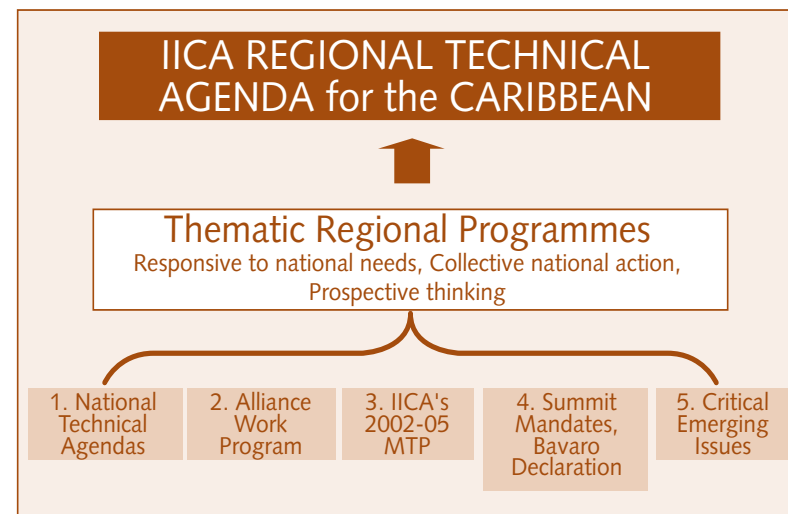
Similarly, the Alliance for Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu (known as “the Alliance”) was created in 1999 as a forum for the ministries of agriculture, academia, agribusinesses, rural women, researchers and youth. Its main objectives are to build consensus on

policies, strategies and programs to reposition agriculture, and to identify and assign responsibilities for implementing the agreed actions.

The consultation process

IICA’s Technical Cooperation Agenda for the Caribbean region is a program that builds synergy by combining the work of the six thematic areas in the region: Trade and Agribusiness Development, Agricultural Health and Food Safety, Technology and Innovation, Sustainable Rural Development, Education and Training, and Information and Communication.

The Regional Agenda was developed as the outcome of a consultation process involving the region’s main stakeholders, both regionally and nationally, taking into account the strategic guidelines of IICA’s Medium-Term Plan, the Work Plan of the Alliance and the National Agendas. The proposal calls for actions that, by their nature and breadth, exceed the national capacity of individual countries, and seeks solutions and results that will have an impact on the most important critical issues identified (see illustration).

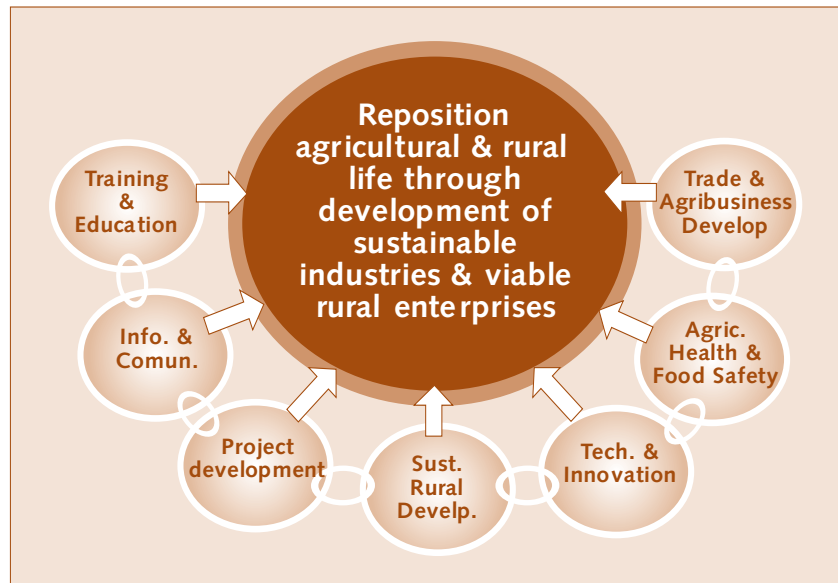


General objective

The objective of the Caribbean Regional Agenda is to contribute to repositioning agriculture and rural life by developing sustainable industries and viable rural enterprises. The Agenda seeks the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed and socially equitable for the people of the Region.

The Regional Agenda will pursue specific actions under each of the components of the Institutional Vision described in IICA's 2002-2006 Medium-Term Plan: promoting sustainable agricultural development, food security and rural prosperity.

WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVE



IICA's efforts will support the Member States in:

- policy and strategy design;
- institutional strengthening and modernization;
- adopting a regional approach to agriculture;
- increasing investments in the agri-food system; and
- improving education and training for sustainable agriculture.

Promoting food security

IICA will contribute to the countries of the Region in the following areas:

- defining and adopting a common conceptual and operational paradigm for food security;
- modernizing institutions for more effective planning, design and implementation of policies and strategies;
- attracting investments in the rural sector so as to reduce poverty, increase the food supply and improve food distribution; and
- developing and modernizing domestic agricultural markets, including goods, services and capital markets.

Promoting rural prosperity

In this area, IICA will use its capacities to support the Region in:

- designing and implementing appropriate policies and strategies for vulnerable rural groups;
- education and training processes to increase the know-how and practical skills needed by marginalized groups to participate effectively in agricultural and rural markets;
- strengthening civil society organizations and increasing interaction among social stakeholders so as to generate common agendas and improve negotiating skills;
- modernizing and expanding agricultural services; and
- working with agricultural and rural organizations, developing their institutional capacity and enhancing their influence, effectiveness and capacity to participate in joint public / private actions.

Critical issues

Emphasis on specific agri-food activities

If agriculture and rural life are to be repositioned, a new approach is needed. In a break from the traditional perspective of agricultural production, with its limited sectoral focus, the CLA has decided to adopt an approach covering the entire agri-food chain, centering its efforts on specific agri-food activities. In support of this position, IICA is holding consultations to identify specific activities and rank them by priority. Emphasis will be placed on the following:

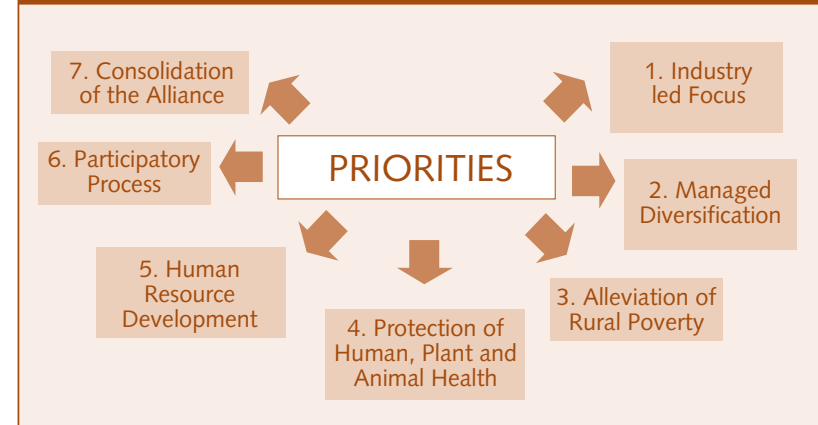
- application of the agri-food chain approach;
- adding value to agri-food activities through appropriate thematic interventions all along the chain;
- promoting intersectoral linkages to ensure national and institutional identification with the process; and
- recognizing the importance of food security and export for the development of sustainable agri-food activities.

Within the above, seven priority Areas of Strategic Focus have been identified:

Industry Led

In an effort to achieve greater success in the implementation of the Regional Transformation Programme (RTP), in 2000/2001 the Committee of Lead Agencies (CLA) decided to adopt an industry specific (as opposed to sectoral) approach. The IICA will adopt this approach and in full consultation with the agricultural stakeholders and the CLA identify and prioritize the industries.

Priority Areas of Strategic Focus



Within this framework the following will be emphasized.

- Recognition of the importance of both food security and export.
- The use of the commodity chain approach and the conduct of industry assessments to industry development with the appropriate thematic interventions throughout the chain.
- The promotion of inter-sectoral linkages to ensure total institutional and country “buy in” to the process.

Management of economic diversification

With the continuing erosion of preferential markets for the region’s traditional crops, farm lands have been abandoned and newly unemployed workers have many unmet needs. It is important to understand that much

of the rural population is not involved in agricultural production. In order to improve well-being in rural communities, IICA will support the Caribbean Region in the following tasks:

- promoting diversification to favor the production of goods with high added value;
- engaging the entire rural community in the process of directed diversification, including the entire natural resource base;
- creating economic linkages with agro-ecological tourism;
- promoting and protecting traditional knowledge as a tool to facilitate traditional and commercial management of natural biodiversity.

Alleviation of rural poverty

Given the high rates of poverty in rural areas and heavy migration to cities, emphasis needs to be placed on alleviating poverty in the countryside. On this sensitive issue, the Agenda is oriented toward:

- promoting full integration of women, young people and indigenous groups;
- providing a better understanding of rural poverty and its interrelationships with agriculture by means of data collection and analysis; fostering new policy design for rural development;
- identifying and promoting issues that have an impact on community food security; and
- identifying the ideal combination of types and methods of intervention, and the likelihood that communities will accept them.

Protection of human, animal and plant health

The countries need to adopt agricultural health and food safety (AHFS) measures for many reasons, including to gain access to local and

international markets. With the appearance and spread of agricultural pests and diseases in the Caribbean, the countries of the region have developed a new awareness of the need to develop regional strategies for prevention, early detection and eradication. They also understand clearly the importance of sharing information and skills to address emerging issues that pose a threat to human health and agricultural and livestock production. In this framework, IICA's cooperation activities will focus on the following issues:

- supporting modernization of AHFS systems and developing capacities and skills to implement strategies and policies for prevention;
- identifying and responding to emergency situations;
- developing a legal framework on agricultural health and food safety, consistent with international standards; and
- managing pest and disease eradication and control programs, with a view to identifying and eliminating factors that may threaten the sustainability of AHFS programs.

Human resources development

In order to reposition agriculture, the Caribbean urgently needs more and prepared better human resources. The countries require improved opportunities for education, training and access to information and technology. In the area of education, IICA will support the Caribbean Region in the following:

- completing the Network of Distance Agricultural Education Centers to offer ongoing training to producers and technicians; and
- supporting the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture (CACHE) in curriculum improvement, and developing specialized Centers of Excellence whose graduates will be better prepared to take on today's challenges.

Information and Communication

The region has extensive needs for information, and IICA will contribute in the following ways:

- developing and consolidating the SIDALC project;
- developing an appropriate information network as an integral part of the IICA Network; and
- technical publications.

Consolidation of the Alliance

The Alliance, still embryonic, needs to be consolidated. IICA will work with the CARICOM Secretariat to:

- have the Alliance included as an integral institution in the CARICOM framework;
- work with Alliance members to make them self-sustaining (the Forum of Ministers of Agriculture; the Caribbean Agribusiness Association (CABA); the Caribbean Council of Higher Education in Agriculture; the Caribbean Network of Rural Women Producers; PROCICARIBE; and the Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth); and
- promote the development and consolidation of national chapters of the Alliance.

A participatory process

The Regional Cooperation Agenda will succeed only if the public and private sectors and rural communities become involved. A broad-based participatory process to this end will include:

- working inside the public sector to promote cooperation;
- strengthening the private sector through organization and integration;

- promoting dialogue and cooperation between the public and private sectors;
- enhancing inter-institutional cooperation in the organizational, technical and financial spheres; and
- making better use of IICA's human resources and infrastructure in the hemisphere.

Expected results, according to critical issues

Industry Led approach to Agricultural/Rural Transformation

Expected Results

- Importance of both food security and export agriculture recognized.
- Commodity chain approach to industry development with the appropriate thematic interventions throughout the chain promoted and utilized.
- Selected Industry profiles completed, industry competitiveness determined and individual enterprises being reengineered.
- Inter-sectoral linkages to ensure total institutional and country “buy in” to the process promoted.
- CARDI and PROCICARIBE with its key networks strengthened.
- The Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery strengthened through development of options

Managed Economic Diversification

Expected Results

- Diversification strategy implemented through the development/commercialization of value added products within traditional commodities and the utilization of the available rural spaces.

- Economic agro-and eco-tourism linkages operational and supported by a functional Agro tourism linkages Centre based in Barbados.
- Traditional knowledge protected and utilized to facilitate commercial and sustainable use of the natural biodiversity and development of products, such as, nutraceuticals, particularly herbal products, and handicraft.

Alleviation of Rural Poverty

Expected Results

- Member States reviewing, analyzing and reformulating their existing economic environmental, technological, etc. strategies policies and programmes to facilitate investment, technology innovation, and viable rural industries.
- Issues relative to community food security as a component of national food security determined and identified.
- Relationship between the rural poor and their contribution to national, rural and community development understood.
- Relationships between acceptance/rejection of interventions and characteristics of groups understood and used for planning purposes.
- Lessons learnt from the use of the concept of rural territories in two indigenous communities.
- Project documents for the operationalisation of viable rural enterprises completed
- Increased availability and access to knowledge, skills, processes, for stakeholders and agroentrepreneurs through various mechanisms, particularly Distance Learning Programmes.
- Commercialization of products produced by selected rural microenterprises.
- Selected disadvantaged rural groups of women, youth and indigenous peoples more economically independent and better integrated into the economy.

Strengthen the Capacity to Protect Human, Plant and Animal Health.

Expected Results

- National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems developed/strengthened and operational.
- Agreement on the establishment of the proposed Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency and its subsequent operationalisation.
- Institutional capacities and capacities of the private and public sector (singly and collectively) to identify and respond to emergencies and emerging situations strengthened.
- Agriculture Health and Food Safety Legislation and standards rationalized, harmonized and strengthened.

Human Resource Development

Expected Results

- Selected farmers, technicians and managers and other agroentrepreneurs more aware of the technological and other requirements for the repositioning of agriculture.
- Restructured curricula being taught in at least two members of CACHE so as to produce a graduate more suited for the 21st Century.
- Capacity of IICA Staff enhanced to deliver technical cooperation programmes
- Regional capacity and capability in the Preparation and Implementation of the Project Cycle and Strategic Planning Enhanced.

Participatory Process

Expected Results

- Increased involvement of rural communities in the national, regional and hemispheric dialogue.

- Improved public/public, private/private and public/private/civil society sector dialogue and coordination.
- Greater inter-institutional collaborations at the organizational, technical financial and implementation levels.
- More effective intra-IICA consultation and coordination with improved relationship with Strategic Partners.
- Continuous improvement of IICA's image in the Caribbean.

Consolidation of the “Alliance”

Expected Results

- The Alliance recognized as an integral entity within the CARICOM/CARIFORUM framework.
- Increased involvement of major agricultural organizations in the operations of the Alliance.
- Constituent members of the Alliance, e.g., CABA, CACHE, strengthened.
- Local Chapters of the Alliance, CABA, CACHE, CAFY, CNRWP and PROCICARIBE and the Regional Agricultural Policy Network developed/strengthened, functional and approaching self-sustainability.

5.3. Central Regional Agenda

The general setting for the region and for agriculture

The Central Region comprises the seven countries of the Central American Isthmus: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. They are small countries from the territorial, population and economic standpoints. The total area measures 520,154 km² and total population is 38 million inhabitants, of whom 51% live in rural areas. In

2001, the regional GDP was approximately US\$70 billion and per capita GDP was US\$1,646, with notable differences between countries and considerable inequalities in income distribution within each country.

Geographic location, coasts on both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, and the configuration of an isthmus give Central America three exceptional characteristics:

- a) it has the possibility of serving as an economic bridge between the most important trading blocs of the world;
- b) it has privileged biodiversity assets (7% of the biodiversity of the planet); and
- c) it has a high potential for crop and forest production throughout the year for a broad range of tropical products, which can be directed to different markets in the world.

At the same time, however, its geographic location and geomorphology make Central America a region subject to many natural hazards, primarily those of hydrologic origin (hurricanes, floods, landslides, droughts).

Central America is a region with considerable agricultural potential, favored as it is by its privileged geographic position, tropical climate, abundant natural resources, rich soils, water resources, forests and marine resources. As a result, the Central American countries have historically based their development on the agricultural sector, agribusiness and related activities.

In 2001, the added value of the agricultural sector in total GDP ranged between 7.8% in Panama and 30% in Nicaragua. Nevertheless, this share is much greater when including the linkages of the agro-production chains for coffee, banana, sugar, oils, flours, concentrates, fruit trees, meat, dairy products, fisheries, and aquiculture, among others. The extended agricultural sector, which includes primary activities and the

manufacture of food, beverages and tobacco products, results in relative shares in GDP ranging from 14% in Panama to 43% in Nicaragua.

The agricultural sector is an important source of foreign exchange. Its contribution to the total value of exported goods was 35% in 2001. The agricultural trade balance is positive: in 2001 agricultural exports totaled some US\$5 billion and exceeded sectoral imports by US\$1.9 billion. Only El Salvador reported a deficit of US\$382 million in this balance.

The agricultural sector is also an important source of income and employment: from 16% (Costa Rica and Panama) to 43% (Nicaragua) of the active population of the region earns its livelihood in agricultural activities.

Another characteristic of the Central American region is the high incidence of poverty, affecting some 60% of the total population. Poverty affects 22% of the rural population in Costa Rica, 42% in Panama, 62% in El Salvador, 70% in Guatemala, 77% in Nicaragua and 86% in Honduras.

Despite the efforts of the governments, international cooperation agencies and the private sector, both individually and collectively, the great opportunities for well-being associated with the wealth of the Central American countryside have not reversed the growth of rural poverty and food insecurity in the region.

Political and institutional setting

Agriculture appears at the highest level on the political agenda in the region, and has occupied an important place among the topics addressed in 2002 during the meetings of presidents. For example, within the framework of efforts to create the Central American Customs Union, the Presidents of the five Central American countries (CA-5) requested, in March 2002, preparation of a Central American Agricultural Policy. At the Fifth Summit of the Tuxtla Dialogue and Consensus Mechanism (Merida,

Mexico, June 2002), the Presidents of Central America and Mexico also agreed to endorse the request of the CORECA Council that "within the framework of the Puebla-Panama Plan, rural and agricultural development be given the importance it deserves, given the dietary and income needs of the population, both rural and urban."

Furthermore, during the Twenty-second Regular Meeting of Central American Presidents (December 2002, Costa Rica), a strategic framework was approved for addressing the situation of food and nutritional insecurity caused by the widespread drought and climate change, and in particular the Agricultural Plan of Action to address climate change, prepared by CAC at the request of the presidents.

The countries of the isthmus make up the Central American Integration System (SICA), an institutional framework for the coordination of efforts and initiatives fostering regional integration in the environmental, cultural, economic, political and social sectors. Belize is also a member of the CARICOM. In the subsystem of economic integration, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua are actively involved in creating a Customs Union, which is expected to enter into force in December 2003.

With regard to external trade relations, this group of countries is involved in an unprecedented process of bilateral, hemispheric and multilateral negotiations. One of the most important of these are the negotiations for a free trade agreement with the United States, the principal trading partner of the region. Other important trade agreements have also been signed with Mexico, Chile, and Canada, and the countries are also participating in the WTO and the FTAA.

The region's trade negotiations with the United States were launched in January 2003 and are expected to conclude this same year. In addition, initiatives are under way to initiate negotiation of an Economic Complementation Agreement with the European Union in 2004. Panama is negotiating a free trade agreement to forge closer trade ties with the five countries of the Customs Union.

There are two Councils of Ministers in the region: the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) and the Regional Council for Agricultural Cooperation (CORECA which includes the Central American countries, Mexico and the Dominican Republic). Both ministerial forums generate requests for technical cooperation from IICA in regard to four areas: a) the CAC's Regional Agenda; b) the Puebla–Panama Plan; c) the Customs Union and the Free Trade Treaty between Central America and the United States; and d) the intersectoral regional forums in which the Ministers of Agriculture take part (Agriculture and the Environment; Agriculture and the Economy; Agriculture and Health). The technical cooperation related to each of these areas is summarized in the following paragraphs.

- a) ***The CAC's Regional Agenda.*** In October 2001, the CAC Council of Ministers approved a medium-term Regional Agenda to consolidate the integration and cooperation process in the agricultural sector, which calls for actions in seven areas of work: Regional clusters and competitiveness; Trade policy and international negotiations; Agricultural health and safety; Management of technological innovation; Agricultural environmental management; Reducing the vulnerability of the agricultural sector to natural threats; and Rural development.
- b) ***Incorporation of the agricultural sector into the Puebla–Panama Plan (PPP).*** This proposal was promoted by CORECA and approved by the Heads of State and Government of Central America and Mexico during the Fifth Summit of the Tuxtla Dialogue and Consensus Mechanism (Merida, Mexico, June 2002), placing special emphasis on: Food and nutritional security; Strengthening and integration of regional markets and agribusinesses; Fisheries development and reorganization; Technological innovation and development; and Strengthening of agricultural health, safety and quality.

Along with CABEL, IDB, ECLAC, FAO and INCAE, IICA was made a member of the Technical Sub-commission on Agricultural and Rural

Development created by the Executive Commission of the PPP to support the preparation of the Mesoamerican projects of the Agricultural and Rural Development component.

- c) ***Central American Customs Union and negotiations for the Central America – United States Free Trade Treaty.*** In February 2003, the CAC established the Ad-hoc Commission of the Ministers of Agriculture of the CA-5,¹ to deal with matters related to the subject. This Ad-hoc Commission coordinates its activities with the regional private sector organizations, led by the Central American Federation of Agricultural and Agroindustrial Chambers (FECAGRO). The CAC Council of Ministers decided that the CORECA-CAC Secretariat should also provide the support required for the operation of this Ministerial Commission.

To prepare a Central American agricultural policy within the framework of the Customs Union, the CAC Council of Ministers defined four areas of work: Trade policy; Technology and diversification; Agricultural health and food safety; and Food security and support and information measures.

- d) ***Intersectoral Councils of Ministers of Agriculture and other Sectoral Forums under the aegis of the SICA.*** Efforts to promote greater development and integration of the agricultural sector call increasingly for a series of coordinated actions involving the institutional structure of the agricultural sector and that of other sectors, such the economy, environment and health. In view of this, the CAC Council of Ministers has begun a series of intersectoral meetings with the ministers responsible for economic integration (Economy and Foreign Trade) and the Ministers of the Environment and Natural Resources of Central America.

In the last case, the CAC and the CCAD have established a joint work agenda and made concrete requests for support from IICA with regard to

1. The CA-5 is composed of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

the: a) Proposed Model Regulatory Framework on Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) for Central America; b) Proposed regional agro-biotechnology strategy for Central America; c) Proposed regional strategy for the integrated water resource management; and, d) Proposed Joint Plan of Action of the agricultural and environmental components of the Mesoamerican Sustainable Development Initiative (IMDS).

Other specialized agencies working in some of IICA's priority subject areas are the International Regional Organization for Agricultural Health (OIRSA) and the Central American Institute of Business Administration (INCAE). Both are potential partners for strengthening IICA's action in the region and, in case of INCAE, a proposal for joint action has already been submitted to CORECA on the subject of clusters and agro-production chains.

A partner that has strengthened its operations in the region is FAO, with which IICA has a cooperation agreement. FAO is part of RUTA and supports CORECA and CAC with the regional project *"Food Security in Central America: Preparation of an Orienting Framework of Policies, a Program, and Investment Proposals."* FAO has expressed an interest in working regionally in other subject areas.

The consultation process

The process to prepare the Central Regional Agenda takes into account the guidelines contained in IICA's 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan, which establishes that IICA's actions will be carried out by means of national, regional and hemispheric technical cooperation agendas.

Taken into account also were the mandates of the Summits of the Americas and the guidelines set by the IABA urging IICA to include regional activities to promote integral development in the Member States, in line with the Institute's possibilities.

General objective

The purpose of the Central Region Agenda is to establish a framework for action in the medium-term, for addressing problems shared by the seven countries of the region and for supporting the process of integration, based on an analysis of regional demands and the identification and prioritization of critical issues.

Critical issues

Critical issues were determined through a comprehensive diagnosis of the situation of agriculture in the Central American context, an analysis of the institutional environment, and an assessment of IICA's capacity to act in the region. The following critical issues were identified:

Poverty and food insecurity

At the outset of the 1990s, food insecurity in the region affected some 4.9 million people; by the end of the decade, that figure had grown to 7.1 million. During that period, the percentage of the total population affected by this problem grew from 17% to 20%.

This situation has been aggravated by the crisis in coffee prices: between 1998 and 2001, Central American revenues fell by some US\$250 million; in 2001 alone the losses amounted to approximately 1.1 percent of the GDP of the region and included the loss of 170,000 jobs. Consequently, it will be difficult to reach the world goal of diminishing food insecurity by 50% in 2015 in the Central American countries, unless there is an important change in current policies and programs.

It is therefore of the utmost urgency to focus more attention on the problem of poverty and food insecurity, and thought should be given to

developing sources of employment and income through greater investments in strategic areas that increase food availability, stability of supplies, and access to same.

The trade negotiations agenda

Central America faces a complex and varied agenda of trade negotiations that are especially important for agri-food trade, in light of the relatively heavy weight of agricultural exports (35% of the value of exported goods) and the implications of trade opening for local production. Trade negotiations are being conducted simultaneously at the bilateral, hemispheric, and multilateral levels, and efforts continue to strengthen the process of economic integration.

At present, four Central American countries are involved in trade negotiations with Canada; five are negotiating a free trade agreement with the United States (the principal export market and most important source of direct foreign investment). These two negotiations represent a new stage for the countries of the region, as they are negotiating with developed countries for the first time, in situations marked by major asymmetries between the parties. Cooperation agendas are being included in the agreements.

Central America has also negotiated or is negotiating free trade agreements with Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Chile and Panama. Under some of these agreements, many agricultural products (sensitive products) have been excluded from the tariff reduction program, while others (coffee, banana and sugar) have experienced dynamic performance in export markets.

In the hemispheric (FTAA) and multilateral (WTO) contexts, the Central American countries are involved in global trade negotiations with the inclusion of agriculture. The results of these negotiations will intensify agricultural policy reform and trade liberalization.

In this regard, it is worth emphasizing that good negotiations must consider the problems of sensitive sectors and create new opportunities for agricultural exports. However, this will be insufficient unless there is parallel support for the administration of trade agreements, and mechanisms are developed for promoting international trade.

In addition to the need for a comprehensive trade policy, the agricultural public sector should strengthen critical capacities that contribute to increasing the competitiveness of agriculture, especially as regards through the inclusion of new technologies in production processes; the application of good agricultural and manufacturing practices; the application of practices to effectively prevent and mitigate the impact of natural phenomena; the strengthening of AHFS systems; and the development of instruments for mitigating the possible adverse effects of trade liberalization on populations associated with sensitive products.

Agricultural health and food safety (AHFS)

In the past, the traditional role of AHFS programs was to prevent or control, primarily at the farm level, diseases and pests that reduce productivity and earnings. In recent years, however, new requirements have arisen as a result of trade liberalization, which require an expanded role for these programs.

The Central American region has a privileged sanitary status, but the intensity of intraregional and international trade, tourism and new consumer demands for suitable products and processes are challenges that require a strengthening of AHFS systems.

The economic policies to reduce State functions debilitated some countries' response capabilities in this field. Nonetheless, some efforts are under way in the region to strengthen AHFS and to harmonize procedures. In the current environment, the importance of strengthening the role of AHFS is indisputable, not only in its traditional role of

protecting national and regional agricultural resources, but also because of its impact in the areas of trade and competitiveness, public health, food security, tourism and the environment.

Vulnerability to natural hazards

The region is subject to a wide range of natural hazards, especially those of hydrologic origin (hurricanes, floods, landslides, droughts), and which tend to have a severe impact on agriculture and the rural environment. Extreme hydrologic events associated with climatic variability and change have been responsible for the loss of lives, repeated capital depletion of production sectors, significant economic loss, and deteriorated living conditions.

Recently, the 1997-98 and 2002-03 episodes of the El Niño phenomenon and a shortage of rainfall in 2001 (not associated with climatic change) caused prolonged droughts in the Pacific coast area. About 60% of the economic damages caused by the droughts were concentrated in the agricultural sector. In 1998, Hurricane Mitch caused the death of 9,214 people and directly affected more than one million Central Americans. Economic losses exceeded US\$6 billion, practically half of which were attributed to the agriculture sector. In the year 2000, Hurricane Keith caused significant losses in Belize.

Sustainable management of natural resources

The destruction of the natural resource base, one of the region's most important assets, continues in Central America. The rate of natural resource degradation has led the region to be regarded as one of the "critical" sites for biodiversity conservation in the world.

The effects of this phenomenon on the water supply are of concern for the long term. Despite the fact that the region has an apparent abundance of water resources, water distribution is not uniform among the population. Nearly 70% of the water supply is found on Caribbean coast, while a similar

proportion of the population is concentrated on the Pacific coast. In the region, there is an area that is prone to droughts (the Central American Drought Corridor); this area also has the greater population density.

With regard to water resource management, the region lacks adequate institutional framework, and authority and responsibilities are scattered; investment in potable water supply systems, wastewater treatment and water resource protection are insufficient and inefficiently used.

Irrigation must be modernized, for which investments are needed. The greater aquifers are threatened or affected by pollution, and the principal sources of potable water and surface water are rapidly deteriorating. In addition, the lesser aquifers are at risk due to overexploitation, which is causing saline infiltration in those located in coastal areas. Associated with the above, hydroelectric power supply may become a serious problem in the medium and long terms if devastated water basins begin to lose their capacity to retain water.

Technological lag in the agricultural sector

Several Central American countries have a valuable tradition of research and extension, which has resulted in increases in the yields of various crops. However, the countries are currently limited in their ability to increase their agro-technological capabilities, mainly as a result of cutbacks in public sector funding.

The foregoing is a concern for modern agriculture, where technology is one of the most important factors for competitiveness because of its capacity to increase productivity and improve crop quality. In addition to playing a key role in competitiveness, technology can contribute to alleviating rural poverty and reducing environmental degradation.

The situation in Central America contrasts with the rapid technology development in industrialized countries, where genetic engineering, precision

agriculture, information and telecommunications systems, among others, have been incorporated into agricultural production. As a result, the technological gap is widening for a large number of crops. Within the framework of economic and trade opening, this will lead to a loss of competitiveness in the region for key products for domestic consumption and export.

Due to the foregoing, regional capabilities for technological innovation must be strengthened through the modernization of the public and private institutional frameworks for research, technology development and extension associated with the strategic objectives and priorities of the Central American region. In addition, given the geographical proximity of countries that share major agro-ecological territories and similar technological problems, it is advisable to strengthen cooperation and integration for the development and adaptation of technologies with a view to reducing the technological gap between Central America and its competitors in the hemisphere and the rest of the world.

In addition, the Convention on Biodiversity, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, trade negotiations, and the regional integration process have a direct and immediate impact on technology development in the agricultural sector. It is therefore urgent to develop policies and legal frameworks on intellectual property rights, access to plant genetic resources and biosafety. Given this situation, and bearing in mind the trend toward regional integration and market opening, harmonization of these elements at the regional level is an important objective.

Human resource development

The development and strengthening of human capital and talent, through education, training and access to information, is a critical issue for the Central American countries as a whole, and for agriculture and the rural sector in particular, if they are to be able to address the challenges and tap the opportunities offered in the international environment for overcoming underdevelopment in the region.

The regional institutional platform needs to be strengthened in the Central Region, to improve the access of the agricultural and rural community to information. Thus, formal and information educational plans and programs in the region must be modernized, making them accessible to a high percentage of the key stakeholders of agriculture and the rural community, expanding the learning environment with the use of new educational technologies based on informatics, telecommunications, television and radio.

In rural areas there is also a need to link training with employment policies, create new opportunities for education and technical training, and prepare and disseminate educational informatics programs tailored to the needs of the Central American countries.

Principal expected results, by critical issue

IICA's Agenda for Technical Cooperation in the Central Region sets out the results expected for the 2002-2006 period as well as the actions that will be carried out in support of the countries of the Central American Isthmus to address each of the critical issues described above.

► Poverty and food insecurity in the rural environment

Action: Strengthen alliances and coordinate actions with regional and cooperating agencies in the area of food security.

Expected result: Network of alliances among regional organizations, agencies and donor organizations, aiming to increase and optimize regional actions in order to reduce food insecurity, with IICA participation and support.

Action: Promote a Regional Food Security Program

Expected result: The Central American countries have a framework of policies, a plan of action, and an investment program for reducing vulnerability to food insecurity.

Action: Support the design of policies, strategies and instruments, and institutional modernization for Sustainable Rural Development (SRD).

Expected result: The capacities of public institutions strengthened for formulating and executing policies and instruments for sustainable rural development.

► **Participation in negotiations and implementation of international trade agreements**

Action: Institution building of the CAC, the ministries of agriculture and private sector organizations.

Expected result: Capacity of the public and private agricultural sectors strengthened for participating in negotiations and for administering international trade agreements.

Action: Develop instruments for improving the position of Central American agribusinesses in local, regional and international markets.

Expected result: Capacity of Central American agribusinesses strengthened for competing in local, regional and international markets.

► **Vulnerability to natural hazards**

Action: Design regional disaster reduction plans.

Expected result: Capacity of Central American agricultural sector strengthened and integrated for defining policies and strategies to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters.

Action: Promote the development of the agricultural insurance market.

Expected result: Development of national and regional agricultural insurance markets promoted, as well as financial measures for mitigating negative climatic impact.

Action: Obtain, adapt, and disseminate prognoses of regional climatic and ocean behavior.

Expected result: Ministries of Agriculture and agriculture sector as a whole receive reports on prognosis of regional climatic and ocean behavior.

► **Sustainable management of natural resources**

Actions:

- Prepare a regional strategy for integrated water management.
- Exchange experiences with payment for environmental services.
- Promote the conservation and sustainable use of the plant genetic resources native to the Central American region.
- Promote organic agriculture.

Expected result: Inter-sectoral council of Ministers of Agriculture and Ministers of Environment receive support for developing policies, strategies and joint activities within the framework of SICA.

► **Agricultural health and food safety**

Actions:

- Modernize agricultural health and food safety systems (AHFS).
- Strengthen health risk assessment vis-à-vis trade in agricultural products.

Expected result: National agricultural health and food safety services performing better and offering higher quality services.

Action: Upgrade management and institutional coordination capacities.

Expected result: Central American countries receive support and participate more actively in monitoring the meetings of the WTO Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (CSPSM).

Action: Improve the quality, health and safety of beef products.

Expected result: Central American beef cattle sector strengthened with regard to quality, safety and trade.

► **Lag in technology development and adoption**

Action: Strengthen regional capabilities for integration in technological innovation.

Expected result: Central American Integration System for Agricultural Technology (SICTA) reactivated and strengthened.

Action: Develop and manage a hemispheric scientific and technological information system for agriculture and rural development.

Expected result: The Central American agricultural sector has access to a scientific and technological information system (INFOTEC).

Actions:

- Design model regional regulations for the use of modified living organisms (MLOs) in agriculture.
- Promote a regional strategy on agro-biotechnology.

Expected result: Central American region strengthened and integrated with regard to standards and procedures, strategies, and technical capability vis-à-vis biosafety and agro-biotechnology.

► **Human resources development**

Action: Modernize educational programs and increase the availability of knowledge, capacities and skills for key actors of the agricultural and rural sector.

Expected result: The Central American countries have modern educational and training programs on subjects of strategic importance for preparing the skilled human resources needed for agriculture and rural development.

Action: Strengthening National Agricultural and Rural Information Systems.

Expected result: The Agricultural and Rural Community of Central America has more access to better information, through the strengthening of national agricultural and rural information systems and their participation in a hemispheric system.

► **Coordination of regional demands**

Actions:

- Strengthen regional forums of ministers
- Strengthen the technical capabilities of the MAGs for formulating proposals and implementing regional agreements

Expected result: The capacity of CORECA and CAC has been strengthened institutionally for analyzing, making decisions, executing and monitoring regional agreements.

Action: Design investment proposals for agriculture and rural development

Expected result: Ministries of Agriculture receive support for including the agriculture and rural development component in the Puebla-Panama Plan (PPP).

Action: Modernize and strengthen the institutional capabilities of the MAGs

Expected result: Ministries of Agriculture of the CORECA region make institutional transformations for adapting to changes in the national and international settings surrounding the agricultural sector.

5.4. Northern Regional Agenda

Introduction

Canada, Mexico and the United States of America make up IICA's Northern Region Center (NRC) and the Tri-national Council on Agriculture and are all committed to the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA). The IICA Office in the United States (Washington, D.C.) serves as the overall coordinating office. The three countries stand at a unique level of advancement in their economic and technological

development. Together they are engaged in the major sub-regional integration effort (NAFTA) which is of great importance to them and to the other IICA Member States in the hemisphere, especially as part of the process to create the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA).

Agriculture and its related agribusiness components are an extremely important component of the economy of all three Member States of the Northern Region. Total farmland in the region totals more than 1.1 billion acres with over 6.6 million farms. The table below indicates the figures for each of the countries in the region.

As a group, the Member States that make up the Northern Region represent the largest exporters of food in the world. They also are the largest food importers in the Western Hemisphere.

The countries of the region produce basic foodstuffs and more sophisticated processed foods and products. They possess highly qualified technical expertise, innovative technology, advanced scientific capabilities and vast consumer markets.

They play an extremely important role in IICA's general strategy and are indispensable partners in information exchange and horizontal cooperation with other countries of the hemisphere. In this context, the IICA office in Washington acts as regional coordinator.

The consultation process

The Regional Agenda has been in development over the last five years through ongoing consultation with key participants of the three member countries, public and private. This process has produced a strategic action and operating plan that adds value to the existing relationships and activities already in place among its members.

- ▶ A Northern Regional Council (NRC) was established in 2000 made up of Member State representatives and IICA staff to develop and monitor programs and activities for the region. Consensus was reached on the mission and vision of IICA for the Northern Region, and it was agreed that IICA's foremost responsibility was to facilitate integration among the three countries of North America and to serve as a conduit for the exchange of information with IICA Headquarters. Emphasis was placed on the need to continue to identify priority topics for common action by the three countries, and to continue to define their areas of interest so that they may participate more fully as partners in IICA. Since these functions are essential, the group now functions under a new name: the Tri-National Council or Group. There will be more stewardship by the Member States in providing substance and continuity for more effective dialogue and joint implementation of policy initiatives and the development of cooperation and professional exchanges.
- ▶ PROCINORTE, a regional cooperative program on agricultural research and technology transfer was initiated with specialized task forces dealing with library and information services, genetic resources, plant and animal health, and tropical and subtropical fruits. Each task force has a country designated as the lead, and support is provided by the relevant IICA Office. In 2000, PROCINORTE was endorsed by its Member States with the signing of a declaration to work together to promote the integration of a regional research network and to facilitate its integration with the other regional research networks, and with the hemispheric network FORAGRO. It also confirmed establishment of the PROCINORTE Umbrella Task Force to guide the policy and operations of that program.
- ▶ The Libraries and Information Services task force made substantial progress in completing its two year action plan and incorporating the three countries into IICA's hemispheric initiative to strengthen

the Agricultural Information and Documentation System for the Americas (SIDALC). The Antonio Narro Autonomous Agrarian University (UAAAN) was designated as the official depository for Canadian and U.S. publications and documents in Mexico. Training and software has been provided to connect Mexican agricultural libraries to the United States and Canada. Finally, work was begun to strengthen the Mexican Network of Agricultural Libraries.

- ▶ The Genetic Resources task force was established and defined its action plan. The focus of its efforts is to: (1) reconcile existing national collections; (2) support training and education; (3) share information; (4) foster integration with other networks in the hemisphere; and (5) develop joint projects.
- ▶ In March 2000, the Member States of the NRC approved the development of the Regional Forum on Agricultural Health and Food Safety among the three countries of the region. A steering committee was established to guide the process and the first forum was held in December 2000 in Miami, concurrently with the Caribbean/Latin American Action (C/LAA) conference.
- ▶ In the area of rural development, NRC Member States agreed to conduct the First Dialogue on Rural Development in order to discuss issues of common interest. The governments of Mexico and Canada are particularly interested in the topic of rural development.

The consultation process continued in 2003 with the fifth meeting of the Northern Regional Council held in Mexico City on February 11. At this meeting, representatives of the Member States agreed to the following:

- ▶ that the overall thrust of regional programs should be to foster dialogue among the countries of the Americas and to incorporate a hemispheric element into programs and activities;

- ▶ to continue the Agricultural Health and Food Safety Fora since this topic is of high priority to the three countries;
- ▶ that the specific task force on Animal and Plant Health Research, under the PROCINORTE Umbrella, requires more consultation to define how to address this issue;
- ▶ to continue the Rural Development Dialogue as a regional initiative; and
- ▶ to reaffirm their endorsement of the PROCINORTE initiative, including the specific task forces on Agricultural Libraries and Information; Genetic Resources; and Tropical and Subtropical Fruits.

During the next two years, ongoing activities will be continued and strengthened and a series of new endeavors will be undertaken to respond to the emerging priorities of the Tri-national Council.

Institutional capacity and critical priorities

The Northern Regional Agenda seeks to articulate the needs of the three North American countries within the framework of IICA's 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan. Joint cooperation actions of the three countries is carried out through the creation and operation of the Tri-National Council as a consultative and participatory mechanism made up of the three countries. The consensus reached on the goals and priorities for the region and the definition of regional initiatives of common interest to the three countries is a result of the inter-American dialogue carried out at the regional level.

Strengthening the capacity of the Tri-national Council to implement regional initiatives will be a focus of IICA's activity, and will be based on a process-oriented policymaking approach that encourages participation,

partnership and concrete actions that provide sound results. The strategy will be implemented taking into account the corporate strategy developed by the Director General to better focus and consolidate activities. This corporate strategy is framed by IICA's strategic vision:

- to promote sustainable development
- to improve food security
- to increase rural prosperity.

The Institute will take on a more ambitious technical agenda as it transforms itself into a development agency that provides a more comprehensive approach to problems related to agriculture and rural development, one that is founded on a holistic and multi-sectoral approach to natural resources, human talent and public policy.

Institutional objectives: the interests of the Northern Region countries and their relation to IICA's mandates

IICA is an important partner of the countries of the Northern Region. The Institute provides a unique mechanism in the hemisphere with its 34 Offices in the countries for supporting agricultural development throughout the Americas. It also provides a hemispheric forum for advancing the inter-American dialogue on agriculture and related issues. IICA supports several hemispheric initiatives of critical importance to Canada, Mexico and the USA, a description as follows:

- **Summit Mandates:**

The Declaration and Plan of Action approved at the Third Summit of the Americas in Quebec highlights IICA's role in supporting the implementation of its mandates, particularly vis-à-vis "Agriculture Management and Rural Development." In compliance with this mandate, IICA will support the Ministers of Agriculture of the hemisphere in their

efforts to promote the involvement of all related stakeholders in carrying out activities leading to the improvement of agriculture and rural life. IICA will also play a significant role in the promotion of dialogue and coordination among the agencies of the Inter-American System in order to ensure effective implementation of the mandates.

IICA will continue to enhance hemispheric integration by supporting dialogue on agricultural related issues (from farm to table) and building common understanding on principles that will guide hemispheric and world agricultural production, trade and sustainable development. Examples include the transformation of IICA's Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA) into the Ministerial Forum of the Americas for Agriculture, approved by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) in June 2000; the creation and consolidation of the Regional Forum on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO); and the creation and development of the Tri-National Council on Agriculture, which represents a new phase of reorganization and strategic definition.

- **Free Trade in the Americas and throughout the world**

Trade and agribusiness make up one of six strategic areas of IICA's cooperation, for which it provides inputs on agricultural and food policy, builds institutional capacities to negotiate trade agreements, and develops information systems to facilitate the negotiation process. In this area, special attention is given to the Informal Consultative Group of Agricultural Negotiators of the Americas (GINA), for which IICA and FAO share the technical secretariat and work together to design and operate key electronic forums to facilitate dialogue and information exchange among the members of the group (<http://infoagro.net/comercio>).

- **Sustainable development and environmental protection**

IICA provides cooperation services to its Member States and assists in implementing the mandates of the Bolivian Summit to improve

sustainable development capabilities. IICA's programs will address water and its implications for agricultural development as well as the need to share technologies in these areas. IICA also plays a critical role in providing information on the rural sector for the OAS Secretary General's report to comply with the recommendations issued at the Summit. IICA also participates in the Inter-Agency Group on the Bolivia Summit Follow-up, the Inter-American Committee for Natural Disasters Reduction (IACNDR), and the Inter-American Water Resources Network (IWRN).

- **Education and training**

IICA sees human development as a key strategic area for developing competitive agriculture and improving rural living conditions. A training component is built into all development projects. The organization is also involved in strengthening the educational capacity of Member States. Building infrastructure throughout the hemisphere for a distance learning network is also an important contribution for increasing learning opportunities. IICA has been involved in several important initiatives such as the creation of the Inter-American System of Standing Forums for Discussion on the Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education in the Americas. The Northern Region Center sponsored the First bi-regional Caribbean/Northern Region Workshop on Education in 1999, and has initiated an agreement with the World Bank to make IICA's Distance Training Center in Costa Rica part of the Bank's Global Network. IICA will continue to give high priority to all types of educational activities.

- **Improving living standards in rural areas**

IICA's work in this area covers a broad spectrum of activities, and has a strong focus on small- and medium-scale farmers, rural women and rural youth. The aim is to contribute to increasing economic opportunities for the rural poor, with a view to stemming the flow of migration not only into urban areas but also into other countries. In addition, dealing with the loss of small-scale family farms and the

implication of their loss to the rural environment is a key political issue in all of IICA's member countries.

IICA was instrumental in creating the Inter-Agency Working Group on Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, for which a formal agreement was signed in New Orleans during the IDB Board meeting. In this agreement, the signatories (IICA, IDB, FAO, IFAD, ECLAC AND GTZ) agree to work together to improve rural development in the hemisphere, strengthen institutional coordination and develop partnership interventions. The World Bank and USAID have also joined this inter-agency group, which is a unique platform for improving coordination and developing collaborative efforts to promote agricultural and rural development in the hemisphere.

- **Agricultural health and food safety**

IICA promotes the use of biological controls and non-toxic methods to control pests, increase food safety, and protect workers and consumers while also assisting efforts to make agriculture more productive and profitable. In many instances, agricultural health battles fought outside the Northern Region countries benefit agriculture in the region. IICA has developed a hemispheric strategy on food safety for implementation in its member countries. It provides key training in the subject and runs workshops to educate and bring influence to bear in this process. A regional forum has been established on agricultural health and food safety issues of interest to IICA's Member States, and the first round of its CERES Leadership Training Series for Food Safety is nearing completion.

In conclusion, IICA is an important institution for agricultural development in the Americas and for the countries of the Northern Region. It is strategically positioned to capitalize on the expertise, capabilities, and technical innovation of these three countries, for promoting integration among them and with other regions of the Americas. It also facilitates cooperation in the aforementioned areas, which are of special interest to its Member States.

Lines of Action and Expected Results

The plan of action for the North American countries, through the Tri-national Council, includes this action plan for the region as well as the plans for the IICA Offices in the three countries, which have been submitted separately. National action plans have been developed after substantial discussion and collaboration with Member States and IICA Headquarters. Following is a description of the key actions proposed to the Tri-national Council and the results to be achieved.

Action 1: Strengthen the process of regional integration with regard to policymaking and program development

Goal: Strengthen policy coherence and tri-national dialogue on agriculture and rural development in North America through support to the Tri-National Council, facilitating effective communication among the three Member States and with IICA Headquarters, as well as policy instruments that support integration.

Long-term impact: Ensure the participation of the three Member States as full partners of IICA and strengthen the regional and hemispheric integration process by identifying and supporting the implementation of cooperative activities for strengthening agricultural and rural development in all the countries.

Approach: As coordinator for regional activities, the Washington Office will serve as liaison with the Council for developing activities based on the terms of reference approved for the Council at the July 1998 meeting. It will maintain open and frequent communication with all members of the Council, using a variety of mechanisms to request their advice, provide information and resolve issues. With the support of IICA's specialists, the coordinating office staff will develop and implement key regional programs and provide follow up and technical support to hemispheric initiatives.

Expected Results:

- Strategic and operating plan approved by the Tri-National Council
- Operating plan fully implemented for the period
- Tri-National Council informed of IICA's hemispheric and other regional initiatives.
- Tri-National Council recommendations on IICA institutional issues presented to the Director General.
- New areas for regional integration identified for developing strategic and operating plans in coming years.
- Strategies developed for coordinating actions with other regions in areas of mutual interest

Action 2: Increase the effectiveness of PROCINORTE as a mechanism to improve agricultural competitiveness

Goal: To implement a Cooperative Program on Agricultural Research and Technology for the Northern Region and promote cooperation with other regional and hemispheric networks including the PROCIs and FORAGRO.

Long-term impact: Improve agricultural competitiveness by improving cooperation in research, information and technology.

Approach: The coordinating office will support the three ongoing task forces and create an additional task force made up of specialists from Member States and IICA. Each task force will define the concept, nature and objectives of its program, identify the specific areas for potential cooperation, and develop action plans and budgetary requirements. The coordinating office will monitor activities and support one meeting a year for each of the approved task forces. When appropriate, activities will focus on gaining access to other networks, such as PROCITROPICOS and EMBRAPA. In the area of libraries and information services, the coordinating office will focus on integrating themes and activities with those of IICA's Directorate of Information and Communication.

- a. **PROCINORTE Umbrella Group:** Its goals are to define priority actions common to the three countries in the research area, in order to identify key players and issues, assist in the development of a proper mechanism for addressing the issue, and integrate PROCINORTE with the hemispheric research networks and FORAGRO.
- b. **Library and Information Services Initiative Task Force:** Its goal is to support the agricultural sector of the region by improving access to relevant information and supporting regional and hemispheric information networks.
- c. **Genetic Resources Task Force:** Its goals are to strengthen communication linkages among the countries, provide a forum for addressing emerging issues, and facilitate relations with other regional networks.
- d. **Tropical and Subtropical Fruits Task Force:** Its goals are to facilitate among the countries a better understanding of fresh subtropical foods, predict the shelf life of same, and provide and exchange data on species, regions and capability for processing and preservation.

PROCINORTE Umbrella Group

Expected Results:

- Fifth meeting of the group.
- Establishment of the fourth working group under PROCINORTE.
- Implementation of action plan for PROCINORTE and review of results.
- Further integration of PROCINORTE with other regional research mechanisms and hemispheric networks.

Library and Information Services Initiative Task Force

Expected Results:

- Seventh meeting of the task force
- Implementation and review of results of action plan
- Substantial advancement in the development of the Mexican agricultural library network
- Further integration of the Northern Region Libraries into SIDALC

Genetic Resources Task Force

Expected Results:

- Fourth meeting of the task force
- Implementation and review of results of action plan
- Integration with other regional and hemispheric genetic resources networks

Action 3: Improve regional coordination of agricultural health and food safety

Goal: To promote and facilitate cooperation among the three countries of the region and monitor key activities related to agricultural health and food safety within the framework of trade among the countries of the Northern Region; to disseminate this information as appropriate; and to assist in the harmonization of standards throughout the hemisphere.

Long-term impact: Strengthen agriculture trade and benefit consumers through agricultural health and food safety.

Approach: The coordinating office will work closely with its Member States to establish an ongoing dialogue on relevant issues in this area. Staff will keep current with the many new initiatives and changes taking place in the countries of this region. As necessary, information will be disseminated and comments will be collected and submitted to the

relevant agencies. Assistance will be provided for securing the participation of speakers for seminars and workshops in the hemisphere on this subject, and the office will provide coordination and financial support for seminars and workshops on food safety and standards harmonization. In addition to coordinating with IICA's Directorate of Agricultural Health and Food Safety, the coordinating office will explore alliances with IICA's partners, such as PAHO.

Expected Results:

- Third meeting of the Steering Committee of the Agricultural Health/Food Safety Forum
- Forums held on the following topics: current agricultural practices under scrutiny; traceability; interpretation of preferential and special treatment of developing countries under SPS
- Follow-up for Third Equivalence Symposium with MERCOSUR countries
- Participation in INFAL initiative as member of its advisory committee
- Maintain up-to-date information on the web on regulations and policy guidelines for U.S. imports
- Food safety activities monitored and information disseminated, as appropriate.

Action 4: Support policy innovations in sustainable rural development programs

Goal: To promote and facilitate knowledge and information exchanges among the three North American countries with a view to improving rural policymaking, and support cooperation between IICA and the international community (including public and private institutions) for applying more holistic and multi-disciplinary approaches to sustainable rural development and environmental conservation.

Long-term impact: Improve the socio-economic situation and well-being in rural areas throughout North America and the hemisphere.

Approach: Working very closely with its three Member States, the coordinating office will continue to promote dialogue on rural issues of interest to the countries and cooperate with the three countries in policy implementation. The rural development dialogue among the countries of the Northern Region will look to develop synergy with the themes and activities advanced by IICA's Directorate of Rural Development. The IICA Offices in the region will continue working with the Strategic Area of Sustainable Rural Development to formulate an institutional vision, determine action priorities and foster dialogue as it relates to rural poverty reduction, gender, youth, indigenous groups and environmental conservation. The tri-national program will consider as a potential priority the new Zocalo program being developed as a new IICA rural development agenda in Mexico.

Expected Results:

- Dialogue promoted on specific regional issues related to rural development, in conjunction with public and private sector organizations in the North American countries.
- Support provided for the discussions and proposals prepared for establishment of new policy instruments.
- Support provided for implementing IICA's resolution on gender in the region.

5.5. Southern Regional Agenda

The general setting for the Region and for agriculture

The Southern Region comprises Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, which, together, cover some 12,611,086 km² and have a combined population of 228.5 million (1999), approximately 18% of

which lives in rural areas. These countries occupy 11% of the Earth's land surface, account for 4% of the world's population, are home to 35% of the population of the Americas and 60% of the population of LAC.

The GDP of the Region was over US\$1 trillion in 1999, 6.5% of which was the agricultural GDP. That same year, the Region accounted for some 4.5% of trade worldwide and, although the per capita GDP was US\$4,786.98, there were marked differences and gaps in the distribution of income among and within countries. National development has been very unequal in these countries, in part due to historical reasons and economies of scale. For example, together Brazil and Argentina account for 80% of the territory and population of the Region, and 90% of the GDP.

After a strong economic performance in the 1990s, the economies of the Region began to show signs of stagnation or recession in 1999; economic growth rates were negative in Argentina and Uruguay, and were below 1% in Paraguay and Brazil. Per capita income in the four MERCOSUR countries began to decline in 1999, and was showing no sign of recovery as recently as 2002. This notwithstanding, in 2003, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay reported relatively high Human Development Indices (HDI) (34th, 43rd and 40th place on a list of 175 countries, respectively), while Brazil and Paraguay find themselves in 64th and 84th place on the list, respectively.

As regards the agricultural sector, the Region has become the world's leading meat producer and exporter thanks to increased production of corn and soy beans. Brazil is the second largest producer of chicken in the world, and pork production is also on the rise. The principal constraints on the livestock sector are sanitary problems that affect beef production and exports, and the use of low-cost forage.

In addition to meat, the Region is a leading exporter of grains, soy, dairy products, fruits and wines. Argentina supplies wheat to the other countries in the Region and to many other countries around the globe.

As a matter of fact, the Region has increased the supply of grains by some 60% in the last 10 years, making it a world food reserve. In recent years, Brazil has become an important producer of tropical and subtropical crops.

Argentina, Uruguay and Chile have increased productivity considerably mainly as a result of technological innovation, and Brazil and Paraguay have brought new lands into production and are moving forward in making use of new technologies. As a whole, the Region is making a major effort to create a new agricultural export structure.

One of the major concerns in the Region is the technological gap between commercial-scale farms and subsistence farms, which translates into a greater mass of rural poor. Despite this, efforts to join the links in the agrifood chain are making production in the region increasingly competitive.

The political and institutional setting

The countries of the Region comprise the expanded MERCOSUR. Established in 1991 as a regional integration agreement aimed at creating a common market, MERCOSUR has been operating since 1995 as an imperfect Customs Union in which member countries have opened up their markets to one another, eliminated tariff and para-tariff barriers to reciprocal trade, and adopted a common external tariff vis-à-vis non-member countries. The tariff reduction process has accelerated since 1995; at present, the average tariff is 10% (4% in Chile).

The Customs Union is in the implementation stage, since some products traded among the four countries will continue to pay declining tariffs for a while longer. In addition, a group of specific products on the so-called Lists of Exceptions to the Common External Tariff receive special treatment.

In June 1996, an agreement was signed with Chile to foster cooperation and economic and physical integration, with a view to contributing to the creation of a greater economic bloc to facilitate the free trade of goods and services and the unrestricted movement of the factors of production. In February 1997, an agreement was signed with Bolivia for establishing a free trade zone between MERCOSUR and that country within a 10-year period. Both Chile and Bolivia receive “four-plus-one” treatment, which means that the two countries can participate in technical aspects of the agreement, although they do not form part of the political structure.

Establishment of MERCOSUR has been slow and this has hindered trade possibilities with countries outside the region. In addition to macroeconomic disequilibria in the countries, agricultural health problems such as foot-and-mouth disease have arisen. Efforts to control this disease, which has had a noticeable impact on meat trade in the Region, have cost more than US\$150 million annually.

MERCOSUR has decision-making bodies, forums and meetings for analysis. Within the framework of MERCOSUR, negotiations are conducted at the following levels:

▶ **The Council of the Common Market**

This forum, which is the governing body of MERCOSUR, meets semi-annually. It is responsible for the political conduct of the integration process, as well as for decision making to ensure attainment of the objectives stipulated in the Treaty of Asuncion, and for establishing the common market.

▶ **The Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture**

Its objective is to propose to the MERCOSUR council, through the Common Market Group (CMG), measures needed to harmonize the agricultural policies of the States party to the agreement. Also, it directs

the work of Sub-Group 8 (Agricultural Policy) which, among other things, is responsible for harmonizing regulations on trade, agricultural inputs and animal and plant health issues. Operating under it, are:

- The Animal Health and Plant Health Commissions, both with Standing Working Groups (SWG)
- The Seeds Commission
- Several ad hoc commissions: Viniculture, plant health products, animal genetics. (The work of the ad hoc commission on fertilizers, additives and inoculants, and the ad hoc commission on animal feed, was suspended.)

Each commission and standing working group focuses on a specific issue. Once agreement has been reached, the matter is forwarded to the respective sub-group. If the sub-group is in agreement, it makes a recommendation to the GMC, which then may issue a resolution that is binding on the four countries. If necessary, the countries then propose the corresponding regulations or legislation. Measures considered to be of great importance must be approved by the Council of the Common Market.

▶ **The Administrative Secretariat of MERCOSUR**

The Administrative Secretariat is the coordinating and information sharing body, which is headquartered in Uruguay. As of 2002, a Technical Secretariat was incorporated to conduct the processes of the Common Market.

▶ **The Southern Agricultural Council (CAS)**

The Ministers of Agriculture of MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile created the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS) in July 2002 during their meeting in Buenos Aires. The objective of the CAS is to facilitate regional cooperation and integration.

Discussions on agricultural topics were transferred to this new body and have focused on negotiations related to tariffs and sanitary issues (in which Chile did not participate). At present, the CAS serves as a forum for dialogue and consultation among the ministers of the Region, including Bolivia, regarding problems of common interest to the agricultural sector associated with the challenges posed by globalization.

In March 2003, the Minister of Agriculture signed the CAS Charter. The Council's main functions are:

- To assess policies and programs that promote the development of the agricultural sector, and act as a standing body for consultation, advisory services and the exchange of experiences.
- To assess the progress of agricultural trade negotiations and coordinate positions for multilateral negotiation forums.
- To assess the sanitary and phytosanitary situation in the region, and coordinate actions to combat and eradicate plant and animal pests and diseases.
- To coordinate positions in international standard-setting forums, including: the Codex Alimentarius Commission, OIE and the IPPC Phytosanitary Measures Commission.
- To formulate a human resource development strategy for the agricultural sector.
- To conduct and coordinate relations between the public and private sectors with a view to promoting agricultural development.
- To develop regional emergency response mechanisms.
- To promote rural development.

The groups, ad hoc committees and mechanisms needed for implementing the regional agenda will also be created. To this end, the Standing Veterinary Committee was established, whose Charter was signed in Washington.

Regional demand

The aforementioned mechanisms channel the demand for cooperation in the Southern Region. In addition to these mechanisms, IICA has commitments with other regional organizations, such as the national agricultural research institutes (NARIs) that make up PROCISUR and the plant protection organizations that make up COSAVE, among others.

Most of the demand for technical cooperation in the region, in IICA's fields of competence, is channeled through the CAS, as described below:

- Trade: Demand is addressed by the Informal Group of Agricultural Negotiators (GINA) and the Network of Regional Agricultural Policy Institutions.
- Technology and Innovation: Demand is handled through PROCISUR and PROCITROPICOS, the latter of which focuses on the Amazon Basin.
- Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS): Demand is handled in coordination with the Plant Protection Committee (COSAVE), and the recently created Standing Veterinary Committee for the Southern Region.
- Sustainable Rural Development (SRD): Demand is generated in the Inter-Agency Group for SRD and, in collaboration with IFAD, a regional project is being prepared on policies and strategies for SRD based on a territorial approach.
- Education and Training: Demand focuses on collaboration with the Forum of University Deans, which promotes the accreditation of schools of agronomy, the regional post-graduate program on trade and integration, and the training of researchers for regional innovation centers.

- **Information and Communication:** Demand is channeled through SIDALC and through the promotion of national and regional information systems on topics of strategic importance. Post-graduate programs in food safety are promoted with the Forum of Veterinarian Deans.

The consultation process

In the process to prepare the Southern Regional Agenda, the guidelines contained in IICA's 2002-2006 Medium Term Plan were taken into account, as were the mandates of the Summits of the Americas and the directives issued by the IABA. The latter urge IICA, to the extent possible, to extend its work beyond the confines of agriculture and the rural sector, and include activities of regional scope for promoting comprehensive development in its Member States. In preparing the Regional Agenda, three principal inputs were considered:

- The needs set out in the National Agendas.
- The needs identified by IICA's Regional Specialists that call for efforts to solve or alleviate regional situations and problems.
- The joint actions with institutional partners in the region, in which IICA has a particular interest.

The key players involved in implementing IICA's regional agenda are the CAS, the Ministers of Agriculture and the private institutions of the region and international organizations working in the agricultural sector in the region. The CAS is the chief vehicle for channeling requests for technical cooperation to IICA.

General Objective

The objective of the Southern Regional Agenda is to contribute significantly to the development of agriculture and rural life in the region.

The agenda promotes the development of an agricultural sector that is competitive, technologically prepared, environmentally managed and socially equitable for the countries of the Southern Region. Within the framework of this general objective, the following specific objectives have been established for cooperation in the Region:

- To achieve significant results for agricultural and rural development in the countries of the Southern Region, through greater efficiency of operations and technical excellence.
- To promote the development and strengthening of strategic partnerships with multilateral cooperation and funding organizations, with a view to securing resources to be used in creating prosperity and reducing poverty in rural communities.
- To improve teamwork between Headquarters and the Region, and the articulation of IICA professionals around thematic issues.
- To promote the image of the Institute as an international cooperation agency and as a reliable strategic partner that contributes to the development of agriculture and rural life in the Americas.
- To encourage IICA's participation as a partner institution in the Summit of the Americas process and foster compliance with the agreements of the IABA and the EC.
- To promote the accountability and transparency of the cooperation initiatives in the Member States.

Critical issues

The topics addressed by the Ministers within the CAS are the principal critical issues facing agricultural and rural development in the Region. They include:

Agricultural health and food safety

The region is one of the leading producers of meat in the world. If the countries are to seize opportunities offered on the world market, they must do more to control agricultural pests and diseases, and exercise greater care in processing products and transporting them to markets.

Alleviating rural poverty

Falling incomes in the countries of the Region (except Chile) have made efforts to combat rural poverty a priority, along with the search for alternatives for sustainable rural development.

Institutional transformation

The transformation of the functions of public sector institutions, and new relations with private sector organizations, are also a priority.

Information and know-how

A critical issue in the Region is the increased demand for the information and know-how needed to take advantage of market opportunities. The regional institutional platform must be strengthened in order to link the community of agriculture and rural life to the “society of knowledge.” In addition, it is necessary to develop a new style of leadership and create institutional arrangements that articulate thematic issues at the national, regional, hemispheric and global levels.

Human resources development

There is a need to increase the number of skilled human resources working in the agricultural sector, as well as the relevance and quality of their training.

Agribusiness / Technology and Innovation

There is less regional demand for cooperation in these areas, although they are beginning to play a greater role in agricultural and rural development. In these areas, efforts are still needed to harmonize certain policies and some trade strategies for dealing with non-member countries.

Principal actions and expected results, by Strategic Area

Trade and Agribusiness Development

In this area, the objective of IICA's actions in the Region is to meet the demand for technical cooperation on topics including: agricultural policy design, training for specialists in international trade and agricultural trade negotiations, dissemination of results of multilateral negotiations (WTO and FTAA), development of domestic markets and new financial instruments for the sector and support for export promotion programs.

Expected results:

- The Regional Network for Cooperation on Agricultural Policy Analysis in the Countries of the Expanded MERCOSUR in operation
- Export development programs promoted.
- The GINA (network of agricultural negotiators) for the Southern Region in operation.
- Regional technical forums, seminars and workshops held on negotiating scenarios and strategies for the incorporation of specific agrifood chains into international markets.
- Regional and multinational joint actions facilitated, aimed at positioning specific commodities.
- Information disseminated on joint technical studies and events and their implementation.

- Information generated and disseminated on MERCOSUR, the Administrative and Technical Secretariat and the SGT-8 (Agriculture).

Technology and Innovation

The objective in this area is to promote integration of the agrifood and agroindustrial innovation system, and to respond to the technological needs of regional and national agribusinesses. This action is complemented by the work of PROCISUR and PROCITROPICOS.

Expected results:

- Regional Technological Platforms (PTRs) and the program for action on environmental sustainability, quality in the beef chain and functional genomics implemented
- The mechanism for coordinating the three PTRs implemented in 2002 established
- Portfolio of externally funded projects monitored: FONTAGRO (8); European Union (1); BMZ/ISNAR (1)
- National capabilities and technical exchanges at the regional level strengthened, on the subjects of genetic resources, natural resources and institutional change.
- Model consolidated for the sustainable management of the process of technological prospecting, and the monitoring of opportunities, capabilities and financing.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety (AHFS)

IICA's actions are intended to promote mutual recognition of sanitary and phytosanitary equivalence of products and processes or between AHFS services in the Southern Cone and their trading partners, to consolidate modernization and integration in the expanded MERCOSUR, as well as compliance with commitments assumed under the WTO's SPS Agreement and the FTAA.

Expected results:

- COSAVE structured to promote recognition of AHFS equivalence, to help achieve modern services and regional integration.
- Support provided to the Standing Veterinary Committee for its work at the international level.
- A permanent electronic information system updated and operated by IICA.
- Regulatory, institutional and technical modernization of AHFS services in the Southern Cone countries promoted, with the goal of achieving a 25% improvement over the current situation by 2006.
- Equivalence for products and government AHFS services recognized by the expanded MERCOSUR countries, and for products with FTAA countries and other trading partners.
- Partnerships with MERCOSUR, APHIS/USDA, PAHO and FAO strengthened.

Sustainable Rural Development

IICA's objective is to support the IICA Offices in the Southern Region in their work with the governments to design policies and strategies for sustainable rural development and for reducing rural poverty.

Expected results:

- Database on SRD programs and projects in operation. All the Representatives in the region have online access. This database will enable the Offices to enhance their technical cooperation capabilities in the area of SRD.
- Database on specialists in specific SRD topics and rural poverty alleviation in operation. All the Representatives in the region have online access. This will enable the Offices to be aware of and offer top-quality specialized technical cooperation, keyed to the SRD needs of each country.

VI. National Agendas

Education and Training

IICA will work to upgrade the quality and relevance of higher agricultural and rural education, at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, focusing on the evaluation and accreditation of courses, and the strengthening of postgraduate programs and agricultural research.

Expected results:

- The Southern Region system for the external evaluation and accreditation of agronomy courses established.
- Regional master's degree program in policy and international trade established.
- Regional program for training new researchers established.

Information and Communication

The objective of the Institute's regional actions in this area is to organize bibliographic information units (both digitalized and not digitalized) into a single-source system to serve agricultural development in the Southern Region. To this end, efforts will be undertaken to promote national agricultural and rural information systems and the national networks belonging to SIDALC, and specialized electronic newsletters will be distributed.

Expected results:

- A study characterizing and describing the information units in the region carried out.
- Events held to promote national agricultural information systems
- A regional network and national networks of information units established.

6.1. Andean Region

6.1.1. Bolivia

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Bolivia, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To support the country in the ongoing integration processes and trade negotiations, to enable Bolivia's agricultural sector to participate in global markets on a competitive and sustainable basis.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Prepare and disseminate periodic studies on the status of, and outlook for, Bolivian agriculture and its opportunities, with support from local officials and professionals.
- Support the strengthening and operation of institutions such as the National Board for Productivity and Competitiveness and the district-level agricultural units.
- Hold forums and seminars to discuss specific issues of national interest that will support the design of public policies for agricultural modernization and for the rural milieu.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Provide cooperation to the International Agricultural Negotiations Unit of the Ministry for Campesino and Agricultural Affairs (MACA).

- Hold training and updating events for government negotiators and professionals from other public and private institutions.
- Provide up-to-date information on the progress of the international agricultural negotiations and integration processes.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Provide cooperation for the creation and operation of the Agricultural Commodity Exchange of Bolivia, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Support the efforts of agroindustrial and producers' organizations to modernize, strengthen and achieve the financial stability of the sector.
- Support the internalization and adoption of conceptual and methodological frameworks for competitiveness and agrifood chains.
- Cooperate in the implementation of studies of chains, the identification of links that require assistance and proposals for corrective actions, to raise productivity and create export opportunities.
- Help the Operating Unit of the National Board for Productivity and Competitiveness implement agreements on competitiveness for priority products.
- Cooperate with small and medium-scale producers in strengthening business management, to make their agricultural production systems more competitive

Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To strengthen the national technological innovation system, made up of public and private institutions, organizations and researchers*

involved in the generation, dissemination and adoption of new agricultural technologies.

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Cooperate with the Bolivian Agricultural Technology System (SIBTA-MACA), a policy-setting vehicle for technological innovation actions.
- Support access to, and the application of, new technologies, breakthroughs and institutional arrangements by agricultural researchers and actors.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Help determine the strategic orientation of the SIBTA, as member of the Support Committee (CAS), together with other international organizations.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Collaborate with the SIBTA via the PROCI mechanisms: PROCISUR, PROCIANDINO and PROCITROPICOS.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To strengthen the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System (SENASAG), and develop the AHFS capabilities of all the actors involved in agricultural production chains.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Assist the MACA's SENASAG in consolidating its new institutional organization.
- Help the SENASAG implement and develop a continuous learning program for managers and professional, technical and administrative personnel.
- Hold events for the discussion and analysis of the SENASAG's responsibilities and commitments at the national and international levels.
- Support the design, implementation and development of an accreditation program for public and private-sector professionals and institutions in AHFS services.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: To strengthen public and private actions aimed at promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and participatory rural development, using a territorial approach.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Support the efforts of producers' organizations and agricultural entrepreneurs to strengthen local development and rural agroindustry.
- Support the transition of small producers towards expanded agriculture, which includes technological innovation, natural resource management, access to market mechanisms and the technical strengthening of local productive resources.
- Promote new forms of organization and partnerships with a business approach, and the training of leaders, drawing on rural youth.
- Collaborate in the creation and organization of rural agroindustries and rural microenterprises, based on producers' organizations.

- Promote strategic partnerships among small-scale producers and rural micro-businesses, the framework of the rural agroindustry networks.
- Implement projects with high value added, such as organic coffee, organic cacao and similar products, that also help eradicate illegal crops.
- Support the strengthening and consolidation of the production chains of banana, pineapple, heart of palm and others, in the tropical region of Cochabamba and the Los Yungas area.
- Provide support for the identification of new markets for alternative development products.
- Provide the links and information needed to facilitate the marketing of alternative development products, with support from the network of IICA Offices.

► Education and Training

Goal: To promote the modernization of agricultural education and training at all levels, to shape the human resources required to promote the modernization of agriculture and the rural milieu.

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Implement training programs and projects to create and develop agribusiness skills.
- Support training in local development and alternative rural development.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs

- Promote the professional updating of teaching staff.
- Strengthen the infrastructure of faculties and schools, especially their facilities, research and experimentation centers, and the supply of equipment.

- Support the evaluation process for the accreditation of institutions.
- Support the operation of the Permanent Forum for the Discussion and Integration of Agricultural, Forestry and Rural Education in Bolivia.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Sponsor the sharing of experiences with regard to educational modernization and accreditation with other countries in the region.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Promote the use of modern means of communication, such as videoconferencing, to train public and private-sector actors.

Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To gather and disseminate up-to-date, timely information on trade negotiations, agribusiness, technological innovation, rural development and agricultural health, of interest to the community of agriculture and rural life of Bolivia.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Strengthen the Agricultural Information and Documentation Network of Bolivia (RIDAB) and the Agricultural Information and Documentation Center of Bolivia (CIDAB), with branches at the faculties of agronomy and veterinary medicine.
- Support the modernization of computer and library systems of the participating centers.

- Establish an electronic link, so that the branches of the network have access to shared information.
- Promote the establishment of a training and updating center specializing in agricultural information management, in coordination with the MACA.

Line of Action: Consolidation of INFOAGRO System

- Consolidate and operate the Information System for Agricultural Production Chains (INFOAGRO-Bolivia), launched in La Paz in 2001 with support from the GTZ.
- Expand its operation to peripheral units in Cochabamba and Santa Cruz.

6.1.2. Colombia

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Colombia, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To develop institutional capabilities in trade negotiation processes and support the framing of policies, programs and projects that help to reposition agriculture and make it more competitive*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Provide advisory assistance with the preparation and dissemination of the new General Rural Act.
- Support the continuity of the operation of the “Colombia 2025 Agricultural Sector Vision” institutional framework.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Prepare policy proposals on agricultural trade negotiations.
- Strengthen public and private technical capabilities, to develop greater understanding and better use of the FTAA and WTO agricultural negotiations (Regional Action).
- Support the Ministry of Agriculture in the negotiations for the FTA with the United States.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Consolidate trade relations between Colombia and Venezuela along their northern common border (Santander in Colombia and Tachira in Venezuela - Regional Action).
- Develop institutional capacities regarding agriculture, its evolution and prospects in international markets (Regional Action).
- Promote the modernization and adaptation of public and private institutions, in line with international regulations (Regional Action).

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Support the creation of a fund for the marketing of agricultural products.
- Consolidate the creation of the Colombian Environmental Chamber, as a mechanism for supporting public efforts in regard to the environmental capital market.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Strengthen the Observatory of Competitiveness in Agricultural Chains in Colombia.

- Establish and implement new agreements on competitiveness and agricultural production chains.
- Set up agribusiness nuclei and an agribusiness network.
- Prepare proposed policies and strategies for negotiations in chains.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: To establish a culture of technological development, within the framework of sustainable development

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Promote Colombian-Chilean technical cooperation for the development, management and marketing of forestry resources and related production.
- Support the consolidation of consortia for technological innovation.
- Support the modernization of the National Agricultural Science and Technology Subsystem, and promote its implementation (Regional and National Action–PRONATTA Model).
- Strengthen technical aspects of the National Science and Technology Service (SNCTA)

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Generate proposals for key public and private rural extension institutions and organizations, to contribute to the development of sustainable agriculture.
- Develop a program on agro-ecological and biodynamic agriculture.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Provide agricultural research centers and groups in Colombia with the Andean Observatory of Technological Innovation, as a methodological point of reference.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

***Goal:** To contribute to the development and strengthening of programs and projects designed to improve agricultural production and food quality and food safety certification systems*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Consolidate and expand the national AHFS network.
- Assist government health and safety services in developing programs for the prevention and surveillance of plant, animal and food-borne diseases.
- Support and strengthen the ICA's Pinky Mealy Bug Control Program, implementing the laboratory for the production of biological controls and diagnoses.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Promote training in GAPs and GMPs that make it possible to improve food quality and safety and social stability.
- Formulate safety projects in the meat, milk and fruit-and-vegetable chains.

- Implement management and dissemination programs that make it possible to expand the services provided by the CEF, at the national and international levels.
- Promote the formulation of the National Commissions on GAPs and forestry matters.

► Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To design policies, programs and projects that promote the well-being of rural society, through the management of development from a territorial perspective.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Promote the Rural Development Observatory, to develop inputs and indicators of policies, performance, opportunities and the outlook for the rural sector.
- Devise new alternative development programs.
- Devise and implement the Twin Cities Project, to reduce the production and consumption of illegal drugs (international horizontal cooperation).
- Provide advisory assistance for the design and implementation of policies, programs and methodologies for evaluating the impact of the production and consumption of illegal crops and drugs.
- Create a forum of donors, with national and international organizations, for the management of resources and technical assistance to specific municipal districts in Cundinamarca.
- Prepare a training and technical assistance package for selected municipalities in Cundinamarca.
- Create a regional vision of agriculture and the rural milieu that harmonizes the productive structure with opportunities and priorities set by local actors.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Strengthen institutional ties with the Colombian Rural Development Institute (INCODER).
- Consolidate the municipal territorial institutional framework, by means of local cooperation networks and through Municipal Information Centers.
- Support the Ministry of Agriculture in designing and implementing plans and programs aimed at reorganizing rural technical assistance.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Contribute to the formulation of a Binational Plan for the Integrated Management of Natural Resources in the Rio Tachira watershed (Regional Action).
- Support the integrated management of resources, through specific projects on agro-forestry, fragile areas, etc.
- Support the implementation of the project for the construction of a pilot lake, to maintain the water tables on San Andres Island.
- Promote the incorporation of new technologies for the management of natural resources.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Implement alternative development projects.
- Strengthen partnerships with the Government for the implementation of agricultural and environmental projects in selected communities.
- Secure specific projects for dealing with the problem of rural displacement in priority areas of the country (microenterprises, community management, etc.).

- Set up Local Financial Funds in municipalities that support the implementation of productive and investment policies and projects for rural development.
- Prepare agribusiness development strategies in support of programs targeted at rural microenterprises (e.g., PADEMÉR).
- Support organizations of small-scale rural producers in formulating and managing business plans, including investment banking services.
- Promote partnerships of small-scale rural producers, strengthening their entrepreneurial and organizational capabilities.
- Promote training in project formulation and access to formal credit, through the program of comprehensive assistance to rural women heads of household.
- Support the design of programs and policy instruments that increase competitiveness, raise income and improve the quality of life of small-scale producers.
- Support the establishment of local companies or associations in the rural sector, capable of generating economies of scale in the delivery of services.
- Provide technical, administrative and managerial support for programs and services that promote the comprehensive development of the rural sector and rural dwellers.
- Strengthen entrepreneurial partnerships that link producers to a dynamic of agricultural reactivation, in the context of production chains.
- Identify and implement projects that make it possible to overcome weaknesses in the production, commercialization and marketing of small-scale producers.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Development of methodologies for documenting cases and systematizing experiences in the area of sustainable rural development.

► Education and Training

Goal: *To strengthen training and education institutions, by means of a national program that links the institutions on substantive issues affecting the country.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Hold forums and meetings for strategic thinking and action on the agricultural sector and the rural milieu.
- Offer the rural sector training processes on priority topics: management, technology, trade negotiations, agroindustry, rural development, ecological agriculture.
- Support the design and implementation of pilot courses for the promotion of local operators in management of agricultural production chains and agreements on competitiveness.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Consolidate the Rural Education Project (PER) of the Ministry of National Education, with emphasis on concepts and methodologies that combine teaching and production.
- Promote the modernization of higher agricultural education in Colombia.
- Design a staff training and updating program, focusing on priority institutional issues.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Forge interinstitutional partnerships and technical and scientific exchanges with universities, on subjects that are a priority for the agricultural and rural sector.

- Support the Ministry of Agriculture in defining and implementing the component for educational partnerships and the fund to which applications can be made, to improve the quality and relevance of education, based on the PRONATTA model.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Make broad use of the training technologies available from CECADI-Colombia, for the benefit of the scientific community and public, private and academic institutions.
- Hold training courses for agricultural development, through the Global Development Learning Network on Agriculture (GDLNA, of the World Bank-IICA/SIHCA).

► Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To contribute to the development of information systems that help create better competitive strengths and reduce poverty in the country.*

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Gather, systematize and disseminate successful experiences.
- Conduct analyses of the agricultural and rural milieu.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Provide technical support to national information systems and their links to related international systems, by means of strategic partnerships.
- Strengthen the observatory of competitiveness, and its expansion to its users.

- Turn the Information and Documentation Center into a multimedia facilitator of access to information from the sector, through the use of modern technologies.

6.1.3. Ecuador

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Ecuador, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To support the efforts of the public and private sectors to increase the country's share of global markets and modernize Ecuador's production and trade structure.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Promote the participation of all the stakeholders in efforts to determine sectoral policies.
- Help develop policies for the sector, based on the strengthening of advisory committees on agrifood chains.
- Support the definition of policies for the agroindustrial sector and for the generation of value added.
- Establish permanent forums of all the actors, with emphasis on achieving accountability and social control.
- Promote the formation of social organizations parallel to producers' organizations.
- Promote public and private, intersectoral, interdisciplinary and inter-thematic coordination, at the micro-, meso- and macro- levels.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Support the agricultural sector's efforts to determine policies and strategies for the FTAA and the WTO trade negotiations.
- Support for the development of information systems for trade, innovation and regional integration.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Support market research, including the identification of market opportunities (location, volumes, costs and prices).
- Support the search for markets for special and nontraditional products.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To collaborate in the proposal for the modernization and development of a national agricultural research and technology system.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Develop a national agricultural research system that involves actors from the public and private sectors.
- Promote the generation of knowledge and technologies to develop agroindustrial processes.
- Promote a project on appropriate technologies the use of natural resources for sustainable agriculture in small economies.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To improve the capabilities of public and private actors with regard to food health and safety issues, to help achieve a growing share of world agrifood markets.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Promote the development of human resources trained in health and safety topics, as required by private AHFS systems and services.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Provide follow-up to, and conduct analyses of, the WTO agreements on sanitary and phytosanitary measures and those adopted by the Codex Alimentarius.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Cooperate in the institutionalization of food safety, at the level of both companies and products.
- Support the creation of certification standards, seals, licenses, HACCP, GAP and GMP.
- Support the process of improvement and accreditation for the application of technical standards.

▮ Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To support national efforts to improve the living conditions and food security of rural dwellers, by promoting development initiatives that facilitate the participation of the social actors.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Assist the national authorities in designing public policies for the rural sector.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Promote products with a territorial identity, attaching value to ancestral knowledge.
- Support the organization of actors by production chain.
- Strengthen the organization of producers to improve the marketing system.
- Identify products with territorial identity and strengthen services designed to foster this activity.
- Promote and strengthen producers' organizations. Support the decentralization and local management.
- Agricultural zoning of products with potential for export and for being given a territorial identity.

▮ Education and Training

***Goal:** To help train the human resources required to achieve the transformation of agriculture and the competitive penetration of global markets.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Projects to support the capacity for institutional management for competitiveness.
- Strengthen the training of organizations of actors by production chain. Partnerships for training human resources in business management.
- Promote training agreements on agribusiness management.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Strengthen a system of education, training and extension for producers.

Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To help strengthen existing information and communication systems*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support the institutionalization of information and connectivity in the agricultural, agroindustrial and trade sector.
- Strengthen existing information and communication systems, to deliver information on prices and markets at every level.

6.1.4. Peru

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Peru, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To promote the evaluation and monitoring of agricultural and sectoral trade policies, and promote access to global markets for Peruvian agribusinesses*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Provide advice and training in the evaluation and monitoring of the agricultural and sectoral trade policies of Peru and the Andean Region.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Support the creation and development of capabilities for agricultural trade negotiations and the administration of multilateral and regional trade agreements.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Promote the Inter-American Trade and Agribusiness Development Program, as the linchpin of actions aimed at successfully incorporating agribusinesses into international markets.
- Promote international trade in high-quality agricultural and agroindustrial products, according to international health and safety regulations.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Cooperate in the design and administration of instruments for developing domestic markets that will make agriculture more competitive.
- Carry out actions designed to strengthen public and private institutions related to rural agroindustry, agrotourism, marketing and the development of differentiated products.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Promote the use of business management techniques by small producers, supporting the development and strengthening of their business and associative skills.
- Support the decision-making processes of small producers, through participatory management and closer ties with other local public and private actors.
- Promote the participation of small producers' organizations in agricultural production chains and agribusiness networks.

Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To support the design and implementation of policies, standards, plans and projects aimed at consolidating the National Agricultural*

Technology Innovation System, and at making use of biodiversity; and to support efforts to strengthen the institutional framework associated with research, technology transfer and agricultural extension services in the country.

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Support the public-private institutional framework with organizational and operational aspects of innovation, at the national and international levels and based on specific demands.
- Organize events and courses related to research for the conservation and use of biodiversity.
- Maintain permanent, formal ties with projects and programs linked to the strengthening of technological innovation processes for Peru's agricultural sector, especially with the chief public and private actors of the SNIAA, helping them develop their activities and interinstitutional coordination.
- Strengthen the Network of Agricultural Libraries of Peru, with training courses to improve the systems of library services for users and the incorporation of the libraries of new universities and NGOs.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Help create the best conditions for promoting the characterization, assessment, development and use of genetic resources in Peru.
- Foster the development and adoption of innovative instruments that lead to clean production and better production practices.
- Help generate criteria for technological innovation, to achieve adequate relations.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Promote the cooperative regional research frameworks promoted by PROCIANDINO and PROCITROPICOS.

Line of Action: Development and Management of an Agricultural Science and Technology Information System

- Help implement a technological information system for the national agricultural sector, in collaboration with the INIA and PROCIANDINO.
- Facilitate the implementation of a Technological Observatory for the agricultural sector in the Andean Region.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: To help modernize and make agricultural health and food safety services more efficient, so as to adapt them to the requirements of global markets and public health.

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Help plan and implement education and training programs and activities dealing with priority agricultural health and agrifood safety issues. Partners: SENASA, UNALM and IVITA. (CED) 1
- Support the institutional modernization of agricultural health services (improvement of their expertise and their active incorporation into the international bodies linked to the OIE, the IPPC, Codex, WTO and CAN). Partner: SENASA. (CTH) 1
- Support the design of mechanisms for the efficient coordination of public and private agrifood health and safety

programs, with civil society participation, with a view to creating a National Agricultural Health System. Partner: SENASA. (CTH) 1

Line of Action: Application of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Help strengthen the negotiating capabilities of national and regional health programs, focused on overcoming the plant and animal health barriers that affect Peru's international agricultural trade. Partner: SENASA (CED and CTH)

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Enhance information and communication systems related to agricultural health and food safety.
- Help consolidate programs aimed at the harmonization of food safety guidelines and standards, pursuant to international requirements.
- Promote bilateral or multilateral, agricultural health and food safety cooperation programs with other countries in the hemisphere.
- Ensure that the cooperative programs and the programs of international and regional agricultural research centers increasingly meet Peru's needs in the areas of plant and animal health.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To promote the generation and adoption of comprehensive sustainable development policies that help increase food security and alleviate poverty in the rural milieu*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Compile, analyze and systematize experiences of public and private local development projects in Peru, and organize an international workshop on the experiences of different actors that have spearheaded local development processes in other Latin American countries.
- Provide advice on studies for characterizing areas of border integration and the development of project profiles in strategic border areas, to promote investments by the private sector and reach agreement on public investments to be financed with national and international financial cooperation resources.
- Formulate general guidelines that make it possible to define a shared global vision and priority areas of work for promoting sustainable and alternative rural development initiatives in the country.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Facilitate the link between the public sector agencies in charge of promoting agricultural production chains and those devoted to the development of the Amazon region, and propose mechanisms to harmonize actions and facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of projects, especially in areas where illegal crops are produced.
- Foster and strengthen coordination links for the implementation of alternative development activities with the principal international cooperation agencies.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Present technical opinions about existing proposals and participate in task forces for the analysis and the preparation of alternative policy measures.

- Cooperate in the formulation and implementation of pilot projects on the management of water and organizations, to achieve the sustainable management of water and soil resources.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Develop, adapt and apply mechanisms and operating instruments for pilot rural development programs at the local level.
- Forge partnerships with local actors linked to rural development activities in the selected territories.
- Help establish programs for NGOs involving internships and the sharing of regional experiences, training in the management of border rural development, the development of institutional networks and the creation of mechanisms for the associative management of funds.
- Support the financial management, positioning and strengthening of the Rural Agroindustry Network in Peru, to decentralize and expand it, and improve its management capabilities and the services it offers, with a view to reducing the transaction costs of rural agroindustrial operations.
- Use the installed capacity of rural development projects to promote agroindustrial activity, based on the implementation of an action plan within the framework of cooperation agreements.
- Take advantage of the FIAR and FOODLINKS competitive funds to develop technology transfer projects in rural agribusinesses and related activities.
- Enter into an agreement to meet short-term needs related to the promotion of agribusiness in rural areas of the provinces of Cajamarca, Arequipa and Junin.

► Education and Training

Goal: *To promote the integration of agricultural and rural education, and improvements in their curricula vis-à-vis the quality and focus of training programs.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Provide training in agrifood chains and policy formulation
- Provide training in rural development with a territorial approach

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Systematize continually information on the state of technical and higher agricultural education.
- Make improvements in the quality and relevance of higher agricultural education.
- Produce, promote and disseminate educational materials.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Link the demand for and supply of training in the region.
- Improve the services offered to users by the Network of Agricultural Libraries of Peru, and provide training for its members.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Promote and hold training events as part of the IICA-WB-GDLNA Business Plan for Distance Education.

Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: To project the information generated by the IICA Office, and contribute to meeting technical needs in specific areas related to agriculture and agroindustry in Peru and the IICA member countries in the hemisphere.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Update the Jacobo Zender Documentation Center, and provide relevant information on agriculture to professionals, specialists and students.
- Support efforts to link the National Agricultural Information Management Systems, in partnership with the library at the La Molina National Agricultural University.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Modernize the hardware and software of the Office's informatics system, acquiring two servers, two shared printers and six computers.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Improve the Web page, upgrading its contents and links in order to provide broader coverage of the activities carried out by IICA.
- Implement and constantly update a data base on experts in different fields of agriculture.
- Organize and incorporate into the Web documents dealing with consultancies and projects carried out by IICA in Peru.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Publish and make improvements in the quality of the printed and electronic versions of the INFOIICA-PERU newsletter,

which is distributed periodically according to the Directory provided by IICA, using a system developed through horizontal cooperation between Headquarters and the Office.

6.1.5. Venezuela

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Venezuela, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: To provide cooperation aimed at generating knowledge and enhancing the capabilities and skills of the public and private actors of agrifood chains, so they can operate competitively in global markets.

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Support the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and the entities created under the Land Act, with respect to the technical and operating aspects of their implementation.
- Support the development of the implementing regulations of the Land Act and the execution of the new law.
- Help develop organizational aspects and institutional coordination mechanisms for the implementation of the Land Act.
- Strengthen the technical and methodological capabilities of organizations for the analysis, formulation and implementation of policies, strategies, programs and projects.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Support the development of rural and community mechanisms for rural financing, promoted by national and regional organizations and institutions.

- Assist the Fund for the Development of Agriculture, Forestry and Related Activities (FONDAFA) in implementing and managing agricultural credit policies.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Strengthen the main producers' organizations, by creating and implementing Para-fiscal Funds.
- Design and support the implementation of regional and local programs aimed at promoting and consolidating rural enterprises.

D Technology and Innovation

***Goals:** To expand the capabilities for technology research, transfer and dissemination for the agricultural sector; linked to the country's problems, needs and priorities; and strengthen the ties among the different public and private actors involved in research, technology transfer and innovation.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Help consolidate the INIA's institutional reforms and financial sustainability, to meet the scientific and technological needs of the productive apparatus.
- Collaborate in the development of human resources for technological innovation, establishing the areas of knowledge and abilities required, the degree of coverage and timeliness, in relation to the objectives proposed in institutional policies and strategies.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Identify mechanisms for improving institutional interaction in the public and private sectors that increases scientific and applied technology capabilities.

- IICA aimed at promoting institution building, by implementing the Agricultural Technology Program financed by the Inter-American Development Bank.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Facilitate the integration of national and regional efforts, through IICA-supported mechanisms such as the PROCIS, FORAGRO and FONTAGRO, to develop a regional work agenda.

D Agricultural Health and Food Safety

***Goal:** To help improve the National Agricultural Health System (SASA), by incorporating a modern food safety and quality approach and effective actions for preventing and combating pests and diseases, in line with international agreements on the subject.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Cooperate in SASA's institution-building efforts.
- Make it possible to carry out technical assistance, training and research activities in the areas defined as a priority by SASA, by renewing and implementing the IICA-SASA technical cooperation agreement.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Support SASA's efforts to disseminate and ensure the implementation of the food quality and safety norms and standards established in global markets.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues

- Promote an integrated approach for dealing with plant and animal health problems (emerging, reemerging and exotic pests and diseases).

Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To support efforts to combat rural poverty and the population imbalance by designing and implementing strategies for promoting sustainable rural development.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Promote the thematic and conceptual leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land and the Vice-Ministry of Rural Development in determining sectoral policies and strategies.
- Strengthen the technical capabilities of public actors for the design and implementation of sustainable rural development policies, strategies and methodologies.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Support the institutional strengthening and development of the Vice-Ministry of Rural Development.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Ensure the comprehensive, sustainable management of natural resources in the service area of the Yacambu–Quibor Project.
- Develop natural resource management, treating it as a process, in alignment with the Yacambu–Quibor Project.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Implement rural development activities with a territorial approach and link the actions of IICA's thematic areas.
- Adopt a territorial approach, with a sense of interagency integration and commitment, for the Yacambu–Quibor Project.
- Strengthen the institutional capabilities of the Yacambu–Quibor Hydraulic System, C.A.
- Consolidate the collective creation of social capital and territorial competitiveness in the service area of the Yacambu–Quibor Project.

Education and Training

***Goal:** To help strengthen the institutions responsible for education and training for agriculture and rural development; and continue training activities, as a core component of the Agenda.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Prioritize and strengthen training in strategic topics under the technical cooperation projects included in the National Agenda.
- Conduct direct technical training, in line with the specific needs of the actors involved.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Prepare and implement specific projects aimed at strengthening education and training institutions, with support from specialized IICA units.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Promote and strengthen mechanisms for dialogue and exchange among the institutions involved in education and training, at the national and regional levels.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training

- Promote up-to-date training for public and private sector professionals, for the development and modernization of agriculture and the rural milieu.
- Support the efforts of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports to establish the "Rural Agrotourism School" project, as a model for the development of the National Rural Education Program.

Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To support and promote national and local initiatives aimed at the collection, systematization, dissemination and use of agrifood information, so it can be used for decision-making in the public and private areas.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support the establishment and consolidation of the National Forum on Agricultural and Rural Information and Statistics, through actions related to interagency linkages, promotion and technical mediation.
- Promote and consolidate the development of local information systems in the states of Monagas and Zulia, and in the central region of the country, based on the experiences and learning generated by INFOAGRO and LUISA.

- Coordinate efforts between the Office and leading institutions, with the support of other IICA units, such as the CRIDIA and SIDALC.
- Promote the intensive use of the information and communication instruments and systems, to support the Office's cooperation projects and actions.

6.2. Caribbean Region

6.2.1. Antigua and Barbuda

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Antigua and Barbuda, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development**Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration**

- Increase the knowledge and capacity of agricultural stakeholders to assess the impact of trade policies on agriculture; to participate effectively in discussions and consultations on proposals related to trade policy and negotiations; and to subsequently prepare them.
- Support the design and implementation of a planning unit to support the government in the areas of trade policies and negotiations.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Increase the productivity and profitability of agribusinesses by providing training in the operation of such enterprises and

access to new technological options, facilitating the transfer of experiences from other Caribbean nations, etc.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Meet the technological innovation needs of commercial-scale agricultural producers, including packing, labeling and brand differentiation technologies.
- Transfer technologies via horizontal cooperation with other countries, especially those in the Caribbean.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Continue to help modernize the AHFS system, especially as regards quarantine measures.

Topic: Food Safety

- Adopt systems that will make it possible to improve significantly the quality and safety of foods in order to ensure the availability of safe foods for the tourism sector.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Assist the government in drawing up proposals on policies for the sustainable management of water used in agriculture.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Assist the government in promoting rural micro-enterprises and organizations of micro-enterprises.
- Improve the management capabilities of agribusinesses, especially agricultural micro-enterprises.

► **Education and Training**

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Provide support for training in the areas of foreign trade, plant quarantine, disease and pest control, rural development capabilities, and the use of information systems.

6.2.2. Bahamas

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Bahamas, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: To support efforts aimed at economic diversification and development of agricultural trade, undertaken by national authorities

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Support the creation of a trade facilitation unit to identify opportunities for expanded trade, in collaboration with the Ministries Responsible for Agriculture, Trade and Economic Development.

- Contribute to the formulation and implementation of policies and programs designed to promote linkages between the tourism and agriculture sectors, in collaboration with the Florida Association of Voluntary Agencies for Caribbean Action (FAVA/CA).
- Conduct a study on the impact on the agricultural sector of trade policies, subsidies and incentives.
- Conduct analyses of the pork, poultry and other chains.
- Prepare a report on the state of and outlook for the agricultural sector of The Bahamas.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Provide support to the public and private sectors in the effective implementation of measures aimed The Bahamas' joining the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Provide cooperation for the development of commercial-scale production of orchids, with support from the specialists in Technology and Innovation.
- Conduct an analysis of the performance of cooperatives of agricultural producers and suppliers, with a view to offering recommendations on how to improve same.
- Support the agroindustrial development of priority products such as broccoli, citrus fruits, tomatoes, and thyme.
- Provide support in creating and consolidating the Bahamas Agricultural Producers' Association (BAPA).

▮ Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To support the preparation and application of the regulatory frameworks needed to comply with the requirements of global markets.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Prepare and propose a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Program.
- Collaborate in the joint IICA-FAO initiative aimed at improving agricultural services in the rural sector, especially diagnostic and quarantine services.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Support the development of and HACCP program for the poultry and meats sectors.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues.

- Promote the use of integrated pest and disease management systems.

▮ Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To support public and private efforts aimed at improving living conditions in rural areas, by including them in agricultural trade cycles.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Conduct studies and analyses of the chains of selected products, with a view to marketing them and raising income levels.
- Support the formulation of a protocol for responding to disasters in the agricultural sector.
- Support programs aimed at further diversifying the incomes of rural communities.

- Assess the situation regarding rural credit, and the options proposed for granting credit to micro- and small-scale rural producers.
- Provide assistance in developing a regulatory framework that will ensure the sustainable use of water in the agricultural sector, in keeping with the Law on Water and Waste.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development.

- Support State efforts to modernize the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Local Governments, aimed at enhancing its ability to meet the challenges currently facing agriculture and the rural milieu.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories.

- Identify options for the management of waste, with a view to avoiding or reducing contamination of underground water.

▮ Education and Training

Goal: *To extend the quality and relevance of on-site and distance training services offered to rural inhabitants.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Provide training in the identification and control of pests and diseases.
- Provide training in the assessment and analysis of risks and the development and management of data bases.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Promote distance education programmes that address the rural development needs of the inhabitants of the Family Island communities.

▮ Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To continue with the formulation and implementation of the information and documentation systems needed to support the development of the agricultural and rural sectors.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Develop an electronic data base that will show the true value of investments and assets in the agricultural sector.
- Continue with the development of the Communication Center, using the SIDALC program, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Local Government.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Design and maintenance of a website for the IICA office in the Bahamas.

6.2.3. Barbados

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Barbados, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Development of Domestic Markets and Agricultural Commodity Exchanges

- Coordinate a project on medicinal plant research and the commercial development thereof, in collaboration with UWI,

Centre for the Development of Enterprise -CDE (Belgium) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation -CTA (Holland).

- Collaborate with the Barbados Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation -BADMC, CARICOM Export Development Agency -CEDA, Caribbean Tourist Organization -CTO and Caribbean Development Bank -CDB in preparing a feasibility study on calabash handicrafts in the Scotland District.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development -MAR, Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association BHTA, CTO, the Chef's Federation, suppliers and funding agencies to support the existing linkages studied throughout the Farm-to-Table Chain, to quantify the intensity of the linkage between agriculture and tourism sectors, and develop a data base of information reflecting demand and providing information on trade.
- Facilitate commercial relations between agriculture and other sectors, especially tourism, hotels, restaurants, commercial processors and commercial distributors.
- Strengthen the capabilities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development vis-à-vis the compilation, analysis and dissemination of production and trade information.
- Host Linkage Fairs to showcase activities of producer groups and buyers, and to initiate trade linkages.

▮ **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Support the establishment of an Inter-Agency Planning Committee, comprising Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Tourism and Trade, and coordinated by IICA, PAHO and WHO,

which will guide and implement the establishment of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency in Barbados -NAHFSA.

- Work with CARICOM, FAO and PAHO to develop project proposals for the infrastructural and managerial improvement of government institutions to comply with WTO standards and to provide effective services to the sector as regards agricultural health and food safety
- Promote public awareness of food safety and agricultural health issues via the press and television.
- Develop distance education courses, in collaboration with the PAHO, FAO, UWI, Barbados Community College -BCC and the Quality Tourism for the Caribbean -QTC project of the CTO, for farmers, extension agents and food handlers.
- Work with the MAR to increase the public's awareness of the importance of veterinary laboratory services vis-à-vis public health and the safety of animal-based foods.

▮ **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Facilitate joint efforts among the agricultural and tourism sectors, especially in relation to investments for heritage tourism, health and ecology, with emphasis on the integration of rural communities.
- Support institutional building in selected groups in the Scotland District, through distance education courses, exchanges and administrative backup.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Work with the BADMC to implement training courses for extension agents and farmers.

- Establish a Pilot plant / Agro-Processing Training Facility to strengthen business capacity and infrastructure for agribusiness operators.
- Conduct a Feasibility Study for the upgrading and establishment of goat production and processing facilities in the Scotland District.
- Support the certification of organic farmers and the development of organic production and trade.

Education and Training

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Facilitate the training of farmers and extension officers in soil conservation, orchard management, and communal grazing techniques in the Scotland District.

Topic: Modernization of Educational Supply

- Strengthen the capabilities of agricultural professionals through expansion of Distance Learning programme.
- Prepare a “Careers Package” for the agriculture-food chain to encourage youth and investment into the sector.
- Train producers by means of distance training, practical field courses,

6.2.4. Dominica

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Dominica, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Support the establishment of technical teams made up of decision makers, specialists and agribusiness operators having a sound knowledge of policies, trade and integration, and who are capable of addressing the demands of local, regional and international markets.
- Improve the capacity of the Agricultural Information and Communications Technology Unit for monitoring, analysis and support for trade.

Technology and Innovation

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Facilitate access to new agricultural production technologies, in particular for organic production and for sustainable conventional agricultural practices.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Support the establishment of a single unit to coordinate AHFS services at the national level, create confidence in the AHFS system and facilitate agricultural trade.

Sustainable Rural Development

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Formulate a policy to support a changeover to organic agriculture.

- Support the formulation of sustainable rural development policies for the production of fresh foods and for promoting agro-tourism.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Modernize and improve management capabilities at existing micro-enterprises.
- Strengthen the capacity of selected rural sectors to make better use of external aid, both for modernizing attitudes and business practices, and for creating new rural employment opportunities.

▮ **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Provide support in the form of information to efforts to convert to organic agriculture and to adopt market-driven agricultural health and safety measures.

▮ **Education and Training**

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Provide training and education on topics including trade negotiations, agribusiness management, food safety and natural resource protection, at all levels of the agro-food chain.

6.2.5. Dominican Republic

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Dominican Republic, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To support the agricultural trade negotiations in the multilateral and regional forums, to secure better conditions so that the Dominican agribusiness sector can compete and develop its exporting potential.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Support the preparation of a policy framework of compensatory measures for agricultural actors who are vulnerable to market opening.
- Help the national authorities establish and develop a program to support the income of agricultural producers.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Support the design of public policies for the negotiations with the WTO.
- Support policy initiatives for the negotiations with the FTAA.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Promote a program to replace non-competitive crops, with a view to achieving the orderly modernization and diversification of production.
- Promote a program to strengthen managerial technical capabilities, to foster the modernization and competitiveness of the sector.
- Promote ties between agriculture and tourism, for the formation of new agribusinesses.
- Help define policies for the titling and sale of land, so as to have clear, stable, established rules governing property and land transaction.

- Promote the implementation of financing policies, aimed at supporting the initiatives of producers and agricultural entrepreneurs.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Goal: *To support the structural and operational modernization of the national technology generation and transfer system, through support for the National Agricultural and Forestry Research Institute (IDIAF) and other public and private agencies in the sector.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Strengthen programs and projects for the generation and transfer of new technologies that improve the quality and competitiveness of agricultural products.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Strengthen a program of direct technological support for producers, to promote the modernization and diversification of agricultural activities.
- Strengthen the National System for the Generation, Validation and Transfer of Technologies, as a key mechanism for improving the technological options available to producers to meet the challenges posed by competition and economic opening.
- Create technological networks for cooperation among producers, to promote the exchange and flow of information and experiences.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Promote regional and hemispheric cooperation in science and technology, to strengthen national competencies in these areas (CARDI, PROCICARIBE).

Line of Action: Development and Management of an Agricultural Science and Technology Information System

- Promote policies regarding information on agricultural technology, by means of a system for accessing and distributing technological information.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Goal: *To promote the modernization of the National Agricultural Health and Food Safety System, to adapt it to the requirements of the WTO SPS agreement and the demands of global markets.*

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Enter into new strategic partnerships with FAO, PAHO, USDA-APHIS and USAID.
- Strengthen partnerships and ties with national agencies responsible for AHFS.
- Support policies related to transfer and technical assistance in the field of AHFS, aimed at sharing information with extension workers and producers.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Support the structuring of food safety activities, to strengthen the quality and competitiveness of agrifood production.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues

- Support integrated pest management programs aimed at reducing damage levels and achieving sustainable production.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To support public and private efforts aimed at creating sustainable rural development options and alleviating rural poverty in specific areas.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Support the preparation and implementation of a national policy that promotes the protection of the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Support projects in the rural sector aimed at providing environmental services to society.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Support specific actions that increase real job and employment opportunities in rural areas and reduce poverty, migration and environmental degradation.
- Promote comprehensive development programs that improve agriculture and rural life and promote agroindustry.
- Continue to support the Milk Bank Project, implemented in depressed rural areas.
- Promote and implement agrotourism projects (ecological tourism, ecotourism or rural tourism), based on hubs of tourist attractions.

► Education and Training

Goal: *To support the implementation of the education and training processes needed for the actors to assimilate and make the technological and institutional changes that the agricultural sector requires.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Strengthen the training of trade negotiators and actors committed to the modernization of AHFS systems.
- Train officials, technical staff and support personnel of the agricultural public sector in the use of new information and communication technologies.
- Design and implement the training component for the fruit growers and technical personnel taking part in the Special Program for the Development of Dominican Fruit-growing (PRODEFERUD).
- Design and implement the Monitoring and Evaluation System of PRODEFERUD.
- Hold courses on project formulation and evaluation, strategic planning and agricultural policies, with support from other IICA units.
- Facilitate the development of new production, organizational and management skills by the families benefiting from the Milk Bank Project.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Assist the universities and the Secretariat of Higher Education, Science and Technology in reviewing study programs, so as to adapt them to the requirements and needs of the agricultural public and private sectors.
- Promote and manage the development of a Master's Degree in Agribusiness, in partnership with Texas A&M, under an agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Continue the strategic partnership with the Latin American Network for the Strengthening of Rural Training and the

National Network of Training in Rural Development, sponsored by CIARA-IFAD.

► **Information and Knowledge Management**

Goal: *To promote the development and strengthening of agricultural and rural electronic information systems for studies on the performance of the sector and political and business decision-making.*

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Expand and keep the periodical collections up-to-date, by developing a system of exchanges and allocating resources for their acquisition.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Forge a strategic partnership with the SEA's TELESEA database.
- Develop IICA's Agricultural Information and Documentation Center (CIDIICA) and strengthen its role as the coordinator of the SIDALC in the Dominican Republic.
- Facilitate the expansion of the Dominican Network of Agricultural Information Document Units (REDDIA).
- Continue to set up the consolidated agricultural information and documentation system, with meta databases (SIDALC) and documents on line.
- Make progress with the development of the Dominican Network of Agricultural Information and Documentation Centers, developing mechanisms for locating and accessing information in the possession of the member agencies and institutions.

6.2.6. Grenada

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Grenada, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To make the agrifood sector more competitive through the incorporation of business-related knowledge and skills, with a view to establishing a viable agribusiness sector.*

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Enhance agricultural planning abilities of technical personnel, producers and agribusiness operators.
- Promote programs aimed at facilitating the efficient production of high-quality valued added products.
- Support the commercial-scale production of local herbs and spices, as the foundation for developing a competitive agribusiness sector, promoting the use of appropriate technologies, technical support and access to credit.
- Provide training for young people in agribusiness management, the use of new technologies, production and marketing.
- Foster the implementation of inspection and certification programs for selected products.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Goal: *To promote the identification, dissemination and adoption of appropriate technologies, with a view to making selected agricultural activities more competitive.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Introduce and validate new varieties of products with great trade potential, in collaboration with CARDI.
- Develop trade-related strategies aimed at increasing consumption of these products.
- Provide direct technical support in strengthening the production of organic cacao and other organic products.
- Support to the technological development of the livestock industry in one of Grenada's low rainfall regions (Carriacou).

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation policies

- Formulation of policies and strategies aimed at promoting the use of new and improved technologies in selected production activities.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To strengthen agricultural health and food safety systems, in order to bring them into line with the WTO-ASPS and prevent the spread of pests and diseases.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Support the establishment of an effective quarantine mechanism.
- Provide cooperation in the development and use of a data base on the importation and use of agricultural chemicals.

- Facilitate the organization of a workshop to analyze legislation related to food and drugs.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Facilitate the establishment and effective operation of a National Agricultural Health and Food Safety entity.
- Promote the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices by agribusiness operators.
- Foster the development of recognized inspection and certification systems.
- Facilitate access to the Law on Processed Foods of Jamaica.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To promote the sound and sustainable use of natural resources, and increase the level of trust inhabitants of rural areas have in the future of the agricultural sector.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Promote and provide assistance for the establishment of a national chapter of the Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.
- Promote agroindustrial and rural development strategies and actions, through bilateral and regional cooperation.
- Develop a plan of action for promoting the linkage of agriculture, tourism and education, adopting a participatory approach.
- Develop a socioeconomic data base of rural actors.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development.

- Promote institutional modernization for the management of sustainable rural development.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories.

- Promote research on and the adoption of appropriate technologies to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Help small-scale agribusiness operators become more competitive through the provision of direct support.
- Provide training in group dynamics for organizations of rural producers.
- Train NGO technical personnel in the development, management and evaluation of agricultural and rural projects.

► Education and Training

Goal: To support public and private efforts related to the education and training of agricultural specialists and entrepreneurs.

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Offer courses on management, administration, development of agribusinesses, processing and other topics of importance for the agricultural sector.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Update and expand the IICA Center for Distance Agribusiness Education (CEAD)
- Market the courses offered by IICA through the CEAD

► Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: To promote the institutionalization of the use of information and communication technologies and systems in the public and private management of the agricultural sector.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support activities aimed at improving information technologies and enabling agribusiness operators to use information effectively.
- Promote and facilitate increased use of information and communication technologies in trading and marketing agricultural inputs and products.
- Support agricultural groups and organizations in the formulation of viable projects to acquire the information and communication equipment they need.

6.2.7. Guyana

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Guyana, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Conduct systematic analyses of specific agricultural products and their positions in overseas markets.
- Continue and increase support for agribusinesses (in particular, the Caribbean AgriBusiness Association -CABA-), by preparing

agricultural producers to become agricultural entrepreneurs, training technicians and producers, disseminating important information for agribusiness activities, assisting with the adoption of quality and safety standards, etc.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Food Safety

- Support more widespread adoption of Good Agricultural Practices in agricultural production and Good Manufacturing Practices in the processing industry.
- Support the adoption of HACCP, especially in the fisheries sector, with a view to facilitating improving its position in the local market (tourism sector) and the overseas market.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Improve the management capabilities of small-scale rural producers.
- Step up the activities of the Regional Tropical Fruits Project in Guyana.

Topic: Institutional Modernization

- Provide linkages between donors and beneficiaries of rural and agricultural development aid, to increase efficiency.

► **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Establish a system for capturing and disseminating information, to facilitate the adoption of new technologies and promote agricultural trade.

Topic: Publishing and Electronic and Texts

- Produce practical handbooks on agribusiness, agricultural health and food safety.

6.2.8. Haiti

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Haiti, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Develop plans, programs and projects on food security.
- Organize and institutionalize agri-food chains targeting the export market.
- Foster the establishment and consolidation of chambers of agriculture.
- Support the bodies responsible for introducing standards and laws to stimulate growth in the agricultural sector.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Promote seminars, workshops and other events to acquaint small-scale producers and technicians with and to foster the

adoption of new technologies for agricultural production and environmental conservation.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Support national authorities in preparing and implementing health regulations consistent with international standards, and in training groups of technicians to apply them.
- Help draft and adopt laws and standards to regulate the sanitary aspects of agricultural imports and the establishment of quarantine stations at border posts and airports.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Promote the creation of employment- and income-generating agricultural enterprises in the rural milieu.
- Encourage the adoption of environmental protection policies, actions and measures in rural communities.
- Contribute to formulating policies that will encourage the population to remain in rural areas.

► **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Develop services for providing important information to agricultural enterprises.

► **Education and Training**

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Establish education and training programs for agricultural entrepreneurs.

Topic: Modernization of Educational Supply

- Support and foster the modernization of the agricultural education system and the updating of the curricula of schools of agronomy and agricultural sciences.

6.2.9. Jamaica

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Jamaica, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Strengthen the sector's capacity to participate effectively in trade and in trade negotiations.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Continue to provide assistance to the process to modernize the agricultural sector.
- Promote the development of agribusinesses as a means of increasing the competitiveness of agricultural products and as a key mechanism of sustainable rural development.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Food Safety

- Support measures to ensure the production and availability of safe foods, through improvements in sanitary and safety measures and a more competitive agricultural sector.
- Participate in and support the development of a national agricultural health and food safety program, with a view to facilitating and increasing trade.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Support and promote a natural resource management program.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Contribute to measures seeking to increase productivity and market access for rural microenterprises.

Topic: Institutional Modernization

- Support and facilitate a multisectoral, integrated approach to rural development through the coordination of on- and off-farm activities.

► **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Supply information and communication technologies, through the consolidation of IICA's present information and documentation program.

- Link Jamaican institutions with information sources in the Caribbean and Latin America.

Topic: Consolidation of the INFOAGRO Thematic Information System

- Facilitate access to the market and trade information of CORECA and other regional institutions; disseminate important information among the clients of the sector.
- Facilitate links between the AGROINFO database and network and institutions in Latin America.

► **Education and Training**

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Provide training to human resources in policy approaches and instruments, trade and integration, sustainable rural development, agribusiness development, agricultural health and food safety.
- Provide training to human resources by increasing the number of participants in and offering relevant courses through the ADLTC; facilitate links with CACHE and the regional distance agricultural education center based in Barbados.

6.2.10. St. Kitts and Nevis

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of St. Kitts and Nevis, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Sponsor the organization of training forums and events with governmental and private-sector agencies, on trade policies, international and regional trade agreements, trade liberalization, market access and the application of trade regulations.
- Establish national alliances to define and articulate the role of agriculture in sustainable development and other matters of common interest.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Support the establishment and operation of a food security committee.

Technology and Innovation

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Develop proposals for projects on peanut production, onion drying facilities, and irrigation.
- Organize training courses and exchanges for farmers and technicians, at both the regional and national levels, on topics including soil and water conservation, technological advances and information.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Assist governmental, regional and international organizations in modernizing AHFS systems.

Topic: Food Safety

- Support the institutionalization of good agricultural practices, to ensure that agricultural products are not harmful to human health.

Sustainable Rural Development

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Support the development of an agro-tourism plan that will improve the financial situation of small- and medium-scale producers and rural enterprises.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Support the establishment of a community informatics laboratory in order to promote the exchange of experiences with similar groups in other member countries.
- Support the implementation of workshops in rural communities to upgrade their management and leadership capabilities, and to improve agricultural production processes, risk management and technological advances.

Information and Communication

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Establish a documentation and information center to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the clientele, with a view to contributing to modernizing and transforming the sector.

Education and Training

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Establish a Distance Education Center, with the aim of raising productivity and increasing competitiveness in the sector.

6.2.11. St. Lucia

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of St. Lucia, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To collaborate in creating the technical and agribusiness capabilities required to enable the agricultural sector to meet the challenges of the new trade context.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Support the development and implementation of agricultural policies that will lead to the modernization of the sector, enabling it to take advantage of business opportunities.
- Conclude feasibility studies on two proposed institutions: the National Agricultural Company and the Chamber of Agriculture.
- Promote the creation of alliances that will foster the development of new opportunities for trade, in order to mitigate the loss of trade preference schemes, especially as regards bananas, which is critical to the stability of the country.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Provide assistance aimed at strengthening capacities related to trade negotiations, trade policy and integration, including the education and training of professional personnel.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Promote the development of intra-regional trade in selected agricultural products.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Provide assistance to strengthen capabilities of rural agribusinesses and enterprises.

Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To make agriculture more competitive through the adoption of innovative and appropriate technologies.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Promote the introduction of new technologies that will enable producers to offer products that are in demand, have value added and have lower per unit production costs.
- Cooperate with the public and private sectors in improving the quality, health and safety of dairy and meat products.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation policies

- Support the Ministry of Agriculture in designing policies intended to facilitate the use of the best available technologies throughout selected agrifood chains.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To strengthen the agricultural health and food safety systems, in order to meet the requirements of international trade and increase production.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Support the adoption of measures aimed at improving the quality of agricultural quarantine services, and the planning of pest and disease surveillance, control and eradication measures.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Promote the support of the international, hemispheric and regional regulatory entities, for the adoption of health and safety standards.
- Collaborate in the dissemination of global health and safety standards in the public and private sectors.
- Provide advisory services and direct training in the application of health and safety standards.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Promote the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Post-Harvest Handling Practices, by production units.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues.

- Cooperate in preparation of plan respond to emerging issues.
- Support development and application of protocols for the continuation or re-opening of intra-regional trade during and after the appearance of exotic pests and diseases.
- Provide and disseminate information on regional and international pests and diseases that may affect the performance of the agricultural sector and access to markets.

Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To support efforts aimed at strengthening the capabilities of the rural population to gain access to production assets and participate in decision-making processes that affect the lives and well-being of the inhabitants of rural territories.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Formulate and promote policies that encourage diversification and the development of new economic activities.
- Foster the generation and implementation of policies intended to alleviate rural poverty.
- Establish and intensify relations with the regional and hemispheric networks that deal with sustainable rural development.

- Develop strategies for promoting ties with enterprises and corporations willing to invest in or support programs in rural communities.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Promote programs and projects that call for harmonious relations between inhabitants and the environment.
- Promote access to and exchanges of relevant information on experiences in sustainable rural development that may be applicable in St. Lucia.

▮ **Education and Training**

Goal: *To promote the design and implementation of educational and training programs aimed at creating and developing national technical personnel capable of promoting the competitive participation of the agricultural sector in global markets.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Design and support implementation of training programs in planning and management of trade and export processes.
- Develop training programs for agribusiness operators, focusing on the basic knowledge, abilities and attitudes needed for efficient management.
- Train members of selected communities in the efficient use of credit.
- Raise the level of schooling and the knowledge of the inhabitants of rural areas, to facilitate their transition to open and competitive models.
- Continue support for training in topics related to agricultural health and food safety.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs.

- Promote improvements in academic programs at the primary and secondary levels, with a view to graduating technical personnel and entrepreneurs with an innovative and competitive attitude.

▮ **Information and Knowledge Management**

Topic: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support in the development of an effective information system for the timely dissemination of information on progress in agricultural trade negotiations and trade opportunities, involving the public and private sectors.
- Provide information for decision making related to agricultural investments, production and marketing.

6.2.12. St. Vincent and Granadines

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of St. Vincent and Grenadines, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To contribute to making public sector officials and people in the private sector aware of the challenges and opportunities implicit in joining the WTO, CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and FTAA.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Support the Ministry of Agriculture in updating the strategic plan for diversifying and developing agriculture, in collaboration with CARDI.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Carry out training activities to increase awareness of critical issues related to compliance with the trade agreements signed by the country, among representatives of the public and private sectors, entrepreneurs, NGOs and producers.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Hold training seminars and workshops on the administration of agribusinesses, for producers, women and young people who operate businesses, and agricultural exporters.
- Provide access to relevant information on issues that affect the performance of agriculture and the rural milieu.
- Promote the introduction and use of computers in agricultural production and related activities.
- Promote the development and strengthening of the agricultural exports subsector, including small and micro processors.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To promote the improvement of a specific agricultural activity, through the introduction of technological improvements.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Facilitate access to improved germplasm of arrowroot and cassava from Latin America, in collaboration with the

Ministry of Agriculture, the Arrowroot Industry Association and IICA Offices.

- Support the Arrowroot Industry Association in modernizing the production and harvesting of the product.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To support the public and private sectors in adopting international agricultural health and food safety standards, contributing to the competitive entry of agriculture into global markets.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Promote the revision and updating of laws and regulations pertaining to agricultural health and food safety, to bring them into line with international standards currently in force.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Institutionalize Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for selected products.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To cooperate with national authorities to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, creates sources of employment and income and improve the living standards of rural inhabitants.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Promote coordination and articulation of institutions involved in agricultural and rural development.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Contribute to developing the capabilities of individual agricultural producers (including rural women and young people) and of producer organizations.
- Provide access to trade-related and agronomic information for technical personnel, agribusiness operators, producers, young people and women in rural communities.

Education and Training

***Goal:** To promote training programs and activities on topics related to trade, agribusiness, agricultural health and rural development, for people in the public and private sectors, aimed at their successful incorporation into global markets.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Train people from public and private sectors on critical issues related to agricultural trade.
- Provide training in business administration for young agribusiness operators, women, fresh produce exporters and agricultural processors.
- Hold training events on Good Agricultural and Manufacturing Practices.
- Contribute to the development of capabilities of members of producer organizations.

6.2.13. Surinam

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Surinam, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Promote the design and adaptation of regulations and policies that ensure transparency in negotiations.

Topic: Access to International Markets

- Support the promotion and development of hemispheric alliances that facilitate access to the global agricultural market.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Support the formulation of feasibility studies, analyses of competitiveness and marketing studies in priority fields such as harvests, processing, and marketing enterprises.

Technology and Innovation

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Support the design of a technology development program for priority products.
- Support efforts to improve the country's capacity to evaluate, adapt, promote and transfer appropriate technology from other sources.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Topic: Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

- Assist public and private institutions in adopting the international sanitary and phytosanitary standards of the WTO (WTO/SPS).

Topic: Food Safety

- Assist public and private institutions in adopting HACCP processes for agricultural products, to ensure their acceptance and competitiveness on markets.
- Provide training to technicians and producers, processors, exporters and importers on international standards (GAP, HACCP and the WTO's SPS).
- Provide advisory assistance for designing policies and legal controls that ensure correct handling of foods and a monitoring and surveillance system.

▮ Sustainable Rural Development

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Support the preparation of Agricultural Programs, with the participation of public and private agencies.

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Help strengthen food security systems and upgrade capabilities in rural communities.
- Assist in efforts to increase participation of rural communities, through a work program that involving the private and public sectors and NGOs.
- Coordinate efforts to provide training to rural microenterprises through the exchange of experiences.

▮ Information and Communication

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Create a national network linked to national and international institutions and other reference centers, to promote and

operate information, documentation and communication for developing agriculture and agribusinesses.

- Support the establishment of a national information system to facilitate the gathering, transfer and exchange of technology, in order to boost the competitiveness of agricultural production processes.

▮ Education and Training

Topic: Training in strategic topics

- Provide training to producers, processors and consumers on the international regulations governing free access to markets.
- Provide training to technicians and farmers on agricultural production, administration and markets.
- Prepare training manuals on the organization of rural communities, rural extension, HACCP and the WTO/SPS regulations, good agricultural practices, technological processes, agroforestry, organic agriculture, agricultural administration, and technological improvements to production.

Topic: Modernization of Educational Supply

- Assist public and private institutions in evaluating and making recommendations, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of education and training for agribusiness.

6.2.14. Trinidad and Tobago

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Trinidad and Tobago, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To support the country in its efforts aimed at joining the regional integration process and ensuring that its enterprises can compete in global agrifood markets.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Adapt the Jamaican approach in conducting case studies intended to assess the true contribution of selected agricultural and agroindustrial activities to the economy of Trinidad.
- Support decision making related to policies, through research and the preparation of proposals intended to encourage investment in the agricultural sector.
- Conduct research on different options for improving the agricultural economy, within a framework of open markets and integration processes.
- Hold workshops and implement information programs on the key aspects of the trade environment and the agenda for trade negotiations, for people in both the public and private agricultural sectors

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Conduct research on the impact of bilateral, regional and international trade policies and agreements on agriculture.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Conduct analyses of specific agricultural production systems, in order to identify opportunities for increasing their competitiveness.
- Support the establishment and expansion of rural agribusinesses, in the areas of agro-tourism and agro-processing.

- Provide support to the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago in developing marketing systems, in collaboration with CARDI.
- Participate, through the CABA, in studies on the competitiveness of specific sectors such as pork, citrus, oils and fats. Support the implementation of the recommendations issued in the studies.
- Support national and regional organizations in their efforts to prepare and implement plans for increasing trade.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To provide technical support to increase production and incomes, through access to, and adoption of, new agricultural technologies.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Provide support to national research and development institutions and mechanisms (networks) in evaluating their current capabilities and competencies, and the impact of such research.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation policies

- Design and implement technology and innovation policies associated with production of dairy products and certain fruits.
- Provide technical support in improving the production and processing of selected products.
- Provide technical cooperation to national committees dealing with genetically modified organisms and organic agriculture, in the development of policy frameworks and legislation.
- Foster links between research and development institutions and agricultural organizations, to improve the setting of priorities and the management of research.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Promote the strengthening of the research and transfer capabilities of the relevant regional agencies (PROCICARIBE, CLAWRENET, NF).

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

***Goal:** To provide cooperation to the country in its efforts to bring its agricultural health and food safety systems into line with the demands of global trade.*

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Support the strengthening and modernization of the agricultural health and food safety systems so that they can comply with the requirements of the WTO SPS agreement.
- Facilitate exchanges and improve coordination in the area of AHFS with other countries in the Caribbean and the hemisphere.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Promote the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and HACCP.
- Promote the adoption of GAP programs aimed at reducing the damage caused by pests, and making agricultural production environmentally sustainable.

► Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To provide cooperation for initiatives aimed at combating poverty and improving the living standards for rural inhabitants.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Support the consolidation of the National Alliance for the Sustainable Development of Agriculture and the Rural Milieu.
- Support the development and implementation of work programs for rural and agricultural organizations, and facilitate linkages between them and regional organizations.
- Conduct analyses that will show the role and importance of agriculture in reducing rural poverty.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories.

- Facilitate the organization of workshops to evaluate biodiversity and traditional knowledge regarding natural resources.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Support the development of rural enterprises through technical assistance in the areas of production and marketing, with emphasis on specific products.
- Conduct research on the factors that have an impact on the success or failure of small-scale processing enterprises.
- Develop and promote specialized revolving credit schemes, aimed at rural women and dairy producers.
- Provide alternative forage for livestock.

- Coordinate research on and adaptation of the St. Stanislaus dairy production model.

► **Education and Training**

Goal: *To encourage actors in the community of agriculture and rural life to acquire new and update their existing knowledge.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Collaborate with different agencies and institutions in holding training seminars and workshops on relevant topics.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs.

- Support the School of Agriculture and Natural Sciences of the University of the West Indies in reviewing and modernizing its curriculum in agriculture.
- Support student internship programs.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Implement specific training programs through the Agricultural Distance Learning Center (ADLC).
- Support the establishment and operation of a Virtual Trade Academy, to strengthen the preparation of human resources involved in agricultural trade.

► **Information and Knowledge Management**

Goal: *To complement the management of information on specific topics, and promote the image of institutional excellence.*

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Promote and disseminate the results of products of projects executed.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Consolidate and expand the network of agricultural libraries, through the SIDALC project.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Support the maintenance and updating of the website in the Caribbean Region.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Disseminate technical information and information on relevant activities, through virtual and printed publications.
- Support the following publications: IICA Caribbean News, Tropical Fruits Newsletter, CARAPHIN News, In a Nutshell, and Agriview.

6.3. Central Region

6.3.1. Belize

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Belize, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Coordinate technical assistance with BELTRAIDE to provide information on agreements and regulations of the WTO, the FTAA, SICA and CARICOM
- Collaborate with regional integration initiatives (CORECA/ SICA).

Topic: Access to International Markets

- Facilitate access to international markets and to information on the international commodities market

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Provide training on financial analysis (investment returns) in the citrus and sugar industries
- Contribute to policy development at the Ministry of the Sugar Industry.
- Support small-scale producers in moving to organic agriculture (especially organic rice)

Technology and Innovation

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Provide technical assistance to the technical committee of the Citrus Research and Extension Institute (CREI)
- Collaborate with the ministry in converting the Central Farm into an autonomous institution
- Participate as a member of the Research and Development Committee for creating the Belize Agricultural Research and Development Council, Belize Commodities Secretariat, Ministry of Works.

- Provide technical literature on new crops in order to foster agricultural diversification, especially literature on fruit and root crop production techniques

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Support efforts to strengthen the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA).
- Support the BAHA in developing a national plan of action to comply with the commitments assumed under the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures vis-à-vis animal and plant health, safety and quarantine
- Monitor and provide technical assistance to the new quarantine station at Peninsula de Placencia.
- Provide information on sanitary requirements for exporting tropical crops

Topic: Food Safety

- Collaborate with regional training initiatives on food safety and the Codex Alimentarius

Sustainable Rural Development

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Support the Belize Organic Producers' Association (BOPA) in obtaining external funds for improving the production, processing and marketing of organic products

Topic: Development of Management Capabilities

- Promote the participation of women and youth in rural development (business management)

- Support the development of fruit and root crops (planting stock, organization of producers, training)

► **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Information Infrastructure and Systems

- Provide information on agricultural development and international trade through the Office's web site

► **Education and Training**

Topic: Training on Strategic Topics

- Strengthen the responsiveness of some divisions of the Ministry of Agriculture and producers' organizations in the area of projects, organic agriculture and financial analysis.

Topic: Transformation of the Educational Supply

- Provide technical assistance to the ministries of education and agriculture for transferring the National 4-H School from Belmopan to Central Farm.

6.3.2. Costa Rica

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Costa Rica, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

***Goal:** To help facilitate the sustained access of agricultural products to global markets, supporting the country's participation in the trade treaties and promoting conditions that foster market development, value added and the satisfaction of consumers' needs.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Improve the capacity of public institutions and agrifood companies to formulate projects that promote sustainable production, industrialization and marketing.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Help public and private sector actors understand and administer international regulations and trade treaties.
- Assist the MAG in training the staff of the Agricultural Trade and Competitiveness Unit (UCAC) and other negotiators and actors, on international trade issues, the administration of treaties and the use of trade instruments.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Coordinate, with the private sector and PROCOMER, the implementation of four "Export Platforms: Creating Exporters in the Americas" programs.
- Assist the CNP in designing a market intelligence system.
- Prepare, in collaboration with the CNP, INCOPECA, PDR and the private sector, an agroindustrial development and marketing program that includes the preparation or updating of studies on chains, to promote products with export potential.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Cooperate with the CNP and the PIMA in creating regional marketing strategies and programs, in selected rural areas.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- By proposing methodologies and the chains approach, foster the competitive incorporation of Costa Rican agrifood products into global markets.
- Provide business chambers with information on the WTO, the FTAA, the FTAs and relevant international regulations.
- Prepare trade proposals that help businesses make decisions, within the context of the liberalization of markets.
- Strengthen, jointly with the CNP, PDR and PIMA, the links between the PRODAR and PROMER programs and national institutions, undertaking joint studies and projects of interest to micro, small and medium-scale entrepreneurs, on topics related to rural agroindustry, denomination of origin, agrotourism and micro-finances.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To strengthen the public institutional framework that supports technological innovation and agricultural extension, endeavoring to gear the generation of technology and expertise to the needs of producers and rural dwellers.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Help construct and strengthen the INTA, facilitating horizontal cooperation activities to orient its institutional model, policies and action plans.

- Assist the INTA in strengthening ties between innovation and extension, helping to design and implement a model for linking the two.
- Formulate, together with the SNITTA and MICIT, a project that makes it possible to transfer more knowledge among researchers, professional technical associations and farmers. Review the extension models of the universities with the private business sector and the strengthening of the Regional Science and Technology Councils.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To contribute to the modernization and smooth operation of Costa Rica's plant and animal health system, and help strengthen public and private institutions involved in food safety and quality.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Help strengthen state AHFS services, applying the AHFSS model and supporting the implementation of actions identified.
- Assist the MAG with training activities on plant quarantine.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius

- Disseminate, with support from Headquarters, information on sanitary and phytosanitary measures emanating from the WTO, Codex Alimentarius, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the International Office of Epizootics (OIE).

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Assist the Interagency Food Safety Commission (CIIA) with strategic projection and planning tasks.
- Collaborate with the CIIA in formulating projects for implementing strategic training actions in GMP, GAP, HACCP, Bioterrorism and EurepGap.
- Help the CIIA design a project for the creation of a food safety system.
- Promote, together with PAHO, technical exchanges between the CIIA and other countries in the hemisphere on food safety issues.

▮ Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To promote the adoption of the territorial approach to rural development and help formulate plans and projects that promote the country's sustainable rural development and food security.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Strengthen the capacity of public institutions (IDA, PDR, MIDEPLAN, INCOPECA) to carry out appropriate planning and intervention efforts in priority rural communities.
- Assist the Interagency Commission, led by the INAMU, in designing a program for the creation of rural employment and help for women's groups.
- Support the MAG's efforts to design a rural development strategy for the country, with the participation of the public institutions involved, NGOs and civil society.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Assist the MINAE in establishing reforestation mechanisms, strengthening grassroots forestry organizations and improving the marketing of their products.
- Help the MINAE design a strategy for including water resources in the system of payment for environmental services.
- Work with the SENARA in planning the project aimed at institution building, water production and hydro-geological preservation.
- Assist the MAOCO in preparing a concerted strategy for organic production in several regions of the country.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Implement joint IICA-PAHO projects aimed at developing capabilities for self-management, production and social equity that will help improve the food security of priority rural communities.
- Support the MAG, ICT and the private sector in actions aimed at the diversification of production, promoting activities linked to rural tourism, agrotourism and ecotourism.
- Provide advisory assistance to the IDA with the formulation and implementation of a plan to improve the productive capacity of priority rural settlements (EPRODES).

▮ Education and Training

***Goal:** To promote the modernization and updating of agricultural and agroindustrial vocational education, and promote the certification and improvement of the country's agricultural, agroindustrial and agrifood university courses.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Carry out training activities that meet the needs of the agricultural sector, pursuant to the projects and actions included in IICA's cooperation.
- Establish, with the SEPSA, a permanent professional updating program for public and private actors, with emphasis on the use of multimedia technology.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Design and implement recommendations for modernizing institutional programs and plans, within the framework of the Professional Technical Education System.
- Contribute to the process of certification of the University of Costa Rica's School of Agronomy with the SINAES.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Strengthen the alliance between the IICA-Costa Rica Office with the Distance Education Centre (CECADI) to promote the development of videoconferences

Line of Action: Preparation of Teaching Materials using Digital Means

- Develop the training module in international development and seek its implementation for the benefit of the agricultural sector.

► Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To support the strengthening and use of information services and the technological infrastructure by rural dwellers, and facilitate the*

adoption of information and communication technologies by national public and private agricultural sector institutions.

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Design, jointly with the SEPSA, CNP, PIMA, INTA and INCOPECA, computer applications for managing information of interest to the agricultural sector (human resources, technology, organizations of producers and statistics).

Line of Action: Consolidation of INFOAGRO System

- Collaborate with the SEPSA in designing and implementing a plan to strengthen the INFOAGRO information system that includes the reorganization of the technological platform, the improvement of the services it provides and an increase in local management capabilities.

Line of Action: Development of IICA-Costa Rica website

- Update the information of the IICA-Costa Rica Office Webpage.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Publish and systemize in the IICA-Costa Rica Office Webpage the documents and texts of interest, product of the activities and cooperation projects.

6.3.3. El Salvador

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of El Salvador, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To support agricultural diversification and contribute to the dialogue and the efforts to reach consensus on the challenges and opportunities faced by Salvadorian agriculture, by preparing and publishing an annual report on the status of, and outlook for, agriculture and the rural milieu in El Salvador.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Determine the content and methodology to be used for the annual report on the status of, and outlook for, agriculture and the rural milieu, placing emphasis on competitiveness, free trade agreements, marketing, agroindustry, foreign trade, competitiveness of territories and sustainable rural development.
- Involve prominent researchers in the work, in order to create a Scientific Academic Committee.
- Establish stronger links among sponsoring institutions at the highest level: ministries of agriculture / economic affairs / environment, FUSADES, FUNDE and the National Development Commission.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Strengthen the MAG's capabilities for handling the agenda of the agricultural trade negotiations and its direct participation in several rounds of the negotiations.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Diversify and increase the number of exporters, target markets and the value of agricultural exports, including preparations for the platform, training and advisory services, validation of the market and marketing in situ, in fairs in Vancouver and Montreal.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Maintain a continuous process of market intelligence and assistance for the marketing of fresh and processed fruits.
- Energize business links by monitoring and disseminating information on prices, supply, demand, quality standards, etc.
- Provide technical assistance services throughout agricultural trade chains, also involving the CENTA, PROCAFE, NGOs, universities and government projects.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Contribute to the development of an institutional framework that facilitates and stimulates activities related to production, agroindustry, trade and strategic services.
- Continue supporting the National Fruit Program of El Salvador (FRUTALES) by proposing a policy and strategy for the development of fruit-growing.
- Hold workshops to determine the strategy for Salvadorian fruit-growing.
- Facilitate access to credit for agricultural producers.
- Identify and present successful experiences with fruit-growing in other countries.
- Develop three agroindustrial models for small rural indigo and cashew businesses, in support of the Association of Indigo Producers and the SAMO Cooperative.
- Systematize and disseminate the experience of the FRUTALES project.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To provide advice on the design and implementation of the system of partnerships for agricultural and forestry technological innovation, under the aegis of the MAG's Agribusiness Modernization Project.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Start to develop a private market for consulting services in agricultural and forest technology that increases the supply of support services for agricultural producers.
- Promote the Program for Business Management Services in Marketing and Technology (SEGEM) and the strengthening of CAMAGRO's capabilities.
- Carry out interinstitutional coordination for an integrated approach to technical assistance for technological innovation.
- Provide information for the identification of technological opportunities.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Coordinate with institutions to provide comprehensive assistance in regard to technological innovation for rural development initiatives.
- Organize research capacities through the incentive of a Competitive Fund for the generation of solutions.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To support the institutional modernization of AHFS services, with special emphasis on the admissibility and certification of products.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Facilitate the reorganization of the MAG's General Directorate of Plant and Animal Health (DGSVA), through the preparation of an organizational proposal keyed to the new trends.

- Support the regional initiative aimed at harmonizing actions with FTA issues and quarantine control, as part of the preparations for the regional customs union.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Promote the organized production of planting materials of fruit trees, adhering to quality and plant health standards.
- Train and advise public and private actors on the subject of food safety and agricultural health.
- Provide public and private actors with technical training in plant health certification for exports.
- Facilitate, with OIRSA, the exchange of information and experts on food safety and food certification for exports.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To help define the public-private institutional framework required to meet the challenges of the new rurality.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Develop a conceptual and methodological framework for technical cooperation in sustainable rural development processes.
- Promote the definition of a work program with the MAG and the National Commission for Development, to create an opportunity for analysis and reflection on sustainable rural development experiences.
- Devise a shared frame of reference for the analysis of sustainable rural development.

- Systematize sustainable rural development experiences and extract lessons for the processes under way, and make investments more effective.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Create a basic institutional mechanism to serve as the public sector's interlocutor with national and international organizations.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Strengthen and give continuity to the operational implementation of sustainable rural development projects, to ensure the effectiveness of, and feedback from, national strategies.
- Support the Project for the Sustainable Rural Development of Ecologically Fragile Zones in the Trifinio Region (PRODERT), promoting pilot actions related to payments in exchange for environmental services.
- Systematize and disseminate the experiences of the PRODERT Project.
- Systematize and disseminate the experiences of the IICA-Holland-Hillsides Project.
- Systematize and disseminate experiences of the Environmental Program of El Salvador (PAES), on sustainable rural development in 16 municipal districts that involve 9000 families of small producers in the regions of Tenancingo and Guazapa.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Develop the management capabilities of 160 rural leaders in 5 municipal districts, to take advantage of business opportunities offered by the national basic grains and vegetable market.

- Strengthen CAMAGRO capabilities as a provider of technical and market services for small producers.
- Intervene through the aforementioned projects in 20 of the country's municipal districts, for the benefit of 9200 producers and a surface area of 9500 hectares.
- Support the provision of technology for soil conservation, water and timber production.
- Collaborate in the improvement of productive capacities for traditional crops and large and small animals.
- Support the involvement of rural men, women and youth under equitable conditions.

► Education and Training

***Goal:** To promote the development of the agricultural sector by designing and implementing training programs for producers, technical personnel and university students, in support of the MAG.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Train fruit growers in agribusiness management, production technology, agroindustrial processes and trade, with the participation of the ENA.
- Establish cooperation arrangements for training with producers' organizations, foundations, the University of El Salvador and the National School of Agriculture.
- Hold courses, seminars and workshops and share experiences, both within the country and abroad.

► Information and Knowledge Management

***Goal:** To project IICA/El Salvador's commitment to the positioning of agriculture and the rural milieu, and its capacity to make an effective contribution to this process and exert influence in the public and private domains and among society in general.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Establish mechanisms for maintaining the database on agriculture and rural life.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Disseminate widely the document “Annual report on the status of, and outlook for, agriculture and the rural milieu in El Salvador.”
- Disseminate information about the commitments and achievements of the IABA, the Executive Committee and IICA’s activities at the regional and national levels.
- Disseminate press releases and information for the media.
- Generate printed material, such as brochures, reports of achievements, audiovisual material, on IICA’s national-level projects and actions.

6.3.4. Guatemala

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Guatemala, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To help restructure and modernize the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAGA), in order to adapt it to the needs and challenges of the new environment. To promote the competitive strengths of Guatemalan agribusinesses, to enable them to penetrate global markets successfully.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Support the efforts to train personnel of the MAGA’s Policies and Strategic Information Unit (UPIE) and CONADEA’s sub-sectoral task forces in how to implement the Participatory Approach for the Development of the Competitiveness of Agrifood Systems.
- Create opportunities for public-private participation for dialogue and consensus-building on policies, strategies and action plans designed to enhance the competitiveness of priority agrifood chains.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Support the training of MAGA and CONADEA staff who help negotiate and administer free trade agreements.
- Disseminate status reports on the agricultural trade negotiations.
- Help prepare and disseminate position papers for the agricultural sector, regarding the international agricultural trade negotiations and agricultural trade policy.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Train staff from MAGA and rural development projects, and members of producer organizations, in the application of methodologies and strategies for participatory commercialization, to improve its access to internal markets.
- Strengthen the Agricultural Commodity Exchange (BOLPROMER), by means of staff training, an increase in the number of partners and the implementation of new transaction mechanisms in the agricultural sector.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Support the UPIE in prioritizing agrifood chains with competitive potential, by developing and implementing an adequate methodology.
- Develop a project for the improvement of the milk chain in the southwest of the country, to make it more competitive in the regional and national market and improve the situation of the actors.
- Help establish contracts for the buying and selling of milk.
- Participate in the technical team comprised of the MAGA, IICA, INCAP and REDAR-Guatemala, with the objective of preparing a National Agro-Industry Program.
- Assist in the consolidation of the management of rural agro-industrial businesses, through the provision of management and planning methodological resources, in the context of REDAR-Guatemala
- Prepare a manual for the establishment and registry of small rural agro-industries.
- Contribute to the preparation and documentation of a diagnostic of the Agro-Industry in Guatemala.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Goal: *To support public and private efforts aimed at improving the quality and competitiveness of coffee-growing in the country.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Develop technological alternatives for improving the productivity, health, quality, marketing and profitability of coffee grown by members of ANACAFE.

- Train technical staff of ANACAFE and PRODERT in IPM.
- Support the production and distribution of two million parasitoids and breeding stock by ANACAFE.
- Publish and deliver to ANACAFE a study on standards of origin and proceedings of the Regional Workshop.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Goal: *To support the efforts of the public and private sectors related to the adoption and effective observance of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.*

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, the IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Implement a National Information and Notification System for the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement), in support of the ministries of agriculture and economic affairs.
- Promote the participation of official MAGA and MINECO representatives in the meetings of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Establish and implement a network for consultations on SPS for the public and private sectors and other specialized entities.
- Sign an agreement establishing a strategic alliance of IICA, OIRSA, PAHO and FAO and help with the country's notifications to the corresponding international bodies.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Goal: *To support the country's efforts to define a national sustainable rural development policy and a strategy for implementing it, including*

institutional mechanisms for participation, dialogue and consensus-building among all the actors.

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Document and publish a national rural development policy proposal, prepared by the National Coordinator of Campesino Organizations.
- Support the efforts of the MAGA, MARN and MEN to create and consolidate their respective units on gender, women and rural youth.
- Support the training of trainers of the MAGA's Gender Unit in the gender approach.
- Promote the preparation and adoption of a policy on gender, women and rural youth by the MARN.
- Strengthen the Fund for the Development of Guatemalan Indigenous Peoples (FODIGUA) by training its staff and drawing up a strategic plan.
- Promote the elaboration and approval of a strategic plan for the Subsectorial Committee of Rural Women of the CONADEA.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Support the strengthening of the executing capacity, efficiency and control of the MAGA units responsible for the Sustainable Rural Development Projects.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Provide civil society organizations that represent rural women (CIBMMUR and FEDENMURG) with methodological resources and operating instruments that will enable them to reorganize and strengthen their activities.

Education and Training

***Goal:** To help modernize the supply of agricultural education and training, so that there are human resources equipped to tap the opportunities and meet the challenges posed by globalization.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Provide training alternatives to technical staff and producers on issues that are a priority for sustainable agriculture development.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Support the consolidation of the National Agricultural Education Forum (FONEPA) as the body for consensus-building and strategic planning for the improvement of the courses offered by higher and vocational agricultural education centers.
- Validate and publish the study on the current status of the labor market and agricultural, hydrobiological, agroindustrial and environmental education in Guatemala.
- Support the training of instructors of the schools of agronomy of three universities, in methodological resources for academic improvement.
- Provide cooperation for the preparation of strategic plans for the academic development and improvement of five regional centers of the University of San Carlos.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Promote the institutionalization and legal registration of the Guatemalan Chapter of the Central American Association of Higher Education (ACEAS).

- Support the evaluation and accreditation of academic units in Guatemala, including the provision of manuals and technical accreditation documents.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Implement virtual training courses on farm management and the development and implementation of HACCP plans.
- Forge two strategic partnerships to promote distance education programs and the sale of distance education programs to companies or training centers.

6.3.5. Honduras

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Honduras, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▶ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Topic: Development of Domestic Markets and Agricultural Commodity Exchanges

- Support the process to reactivate the agricultural commodity exchange in Honduras.
- Provide technical cooperation to the Secretariat of Agriculture and Livestock (SAG) for designing and establishing the Market Intelligence Institute.

Topic: Access to International Markets (Development of Export Platforms)

- Support the SAG in promoting agribusinesses in Central America, the European Union and the United States.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Provide technical cooperation for restructuring the SAG's Planning and Performance Evaluation Unit (UPEG).
- Provide technical support to UPEG/SAG in monitoring the commitments and agreements of the corn, coffee and dairy product agri-food chains.
- Support the SAG and the private and educational sectors in upgrading their capacity for analysis and for managing agrifood chains.
- Support the private sector (COAGROH) in implementing a Business Training Program.
- Technical support for formulating the National Agrifood Program.

▶ **Technology and Innovation**

Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies

- Provide technical cooperation for reorganizing the national agricultural research and technology transfer system so as to enable it to serve as a supplier of technology, know-how and information, in support of agricultural competitiveness in Honduras
- Contribute to formulating and implementing the Small-scale Agriculture Program (PEAGRO)

▶ **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Topic: Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

- Support SENASA in implementing the sanitary and phytosanitary agreements of the WTO and FTAA.

Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Support the SAG/SENASA in implementing its institutional modernization plan.

Topic: Food Safety

- Provide information and conduct workshops for technicians of the public and private sectors regarding food safety and agricultural health.
- Support SENASA in creating the National Food Safety Commission.

▮ **Sustainable Rural Development**

Topic: Institutional Modernization

- Conduct a technical audit of the new institutional framework for sustainable rural development, to determine progress made and the limitations of the model established for PRONADERS.
- Provide technical support to PRONADERS for documenting the model of the new institutional framework for sustainable rural development in Honduras.
- Collaborate to include the experience of the IICA/Holland/Hillsides project into PRONADERS process.

▮ **Information and Communication**

Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Information Infrastructure and Systems

- Coordinate and manage the training of human talent of information centers, with a view to introducing Technology

Innovations to improve the services of the Honduran Agricultural Information Network (REDNIAH).

▮ **Education and Training**

Topic: Transformation of the Educational Supply

- Promote institutional change at two educational centers, to address new demands of Honduras' agricultural sector.

6.3.6. Nicaragua

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Nicaragua, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Strengthen the technical capabilities of the public and private sectors as well as of civil society vis-à-vis the formulation of proposals for trade negotiations and the administration of agreements.
- Cooperate in the areas of agricultural integration and the exchange of know-how and successful experiences among countries and regions, and through support to investment processes occurring within the framework of initiatives such as the Puebla-Panama Plan.

Topic: Development of Domestic Markets and Agricultural Commodity Exchanges

- Foster domestic market mechanisms, focusing on commercial transactions and price stabilization.

Topic: Access to International Markets

- Provide training for the management and development of agribusinesses, targeting the private sector as well as small- and medium-scale producers, and focusing on tapping market opportunities.
- Conduct market studies and market intelligence information to foster the development of agribusinesses.
- Cooperate in facilitating participation in field trips and fairs (national and international), as well as in trade rounds.
- Foster agro-exports and trade.

Topic: Institutional Modernization for Competitiveness

- Strengthen the technical capabilities of the public and private sectors and of civil society in formulating proposals for macro-sectoral policies and scenario management.
- Promote dialogue, dispute settlement and agreements among the public and private sectors and civil society.

► Technology and Innovation**Topic: Design and Promotion of Technology Innovation Policies**

- Support the design of policies and strategies for technology innovation, within the framework of innovation systems that include research, transfer, technical assistance and extension.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety**Topic: Modernization of Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems**

- Conduct studies vis-à-vis institutional change and design institutional models for agricultural health.

- Cooperate in the area of agricultural health and food safety, focusing on training and information exchange with both the public and the private sectors.

Topic: Emerging Issues

- Support preventive actions and fight specific diseases of significant impact.

► Sustainable Rural Development**Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development**

- Conduct studies and formulate territorially targeted sustainable rural development strategies, involving institutions and sectors of civil society in studies, and in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable rural development strategies.

Topic: Institutional Modernization

- Formulate specific training programs for institutions involved in sustainable rural development (MARENA, FISE and IDR, stakeholders organized in executing units at the local level, i.e., mayor's offices, cooperatives, NGOs, etc.).

► Information and Communication**Topic: Standardization and Coordination of Information Infrastructure and Systems**

- Strengthen information systems and promote linkages with national networks (i.e., RENIDA and SIA) and with

international networks, such as those promoted by IICA (through SIDAL, CRIIA and other electronic forums).

► **Education and Training**

Topic: Transformation of the Educational Supply

- Cooperate in modernizing the national agricultural education and training system.

6.3.7. Panama

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Panama, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To support the efforts of the public sector with regard to land use planning and policy-making for the development of the agricultural sector.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Prepare a conceptual and methodological proposal for zoning and land use planning.
- Identify the geographical areas excluded from land use planning and prepare a methodological and financial proposal concerning actions pending with regard to zoning and land use planning.
- Implement the proposal and gather pertinent information and documentation.
- Compile and systematize statistical and analytical information on technical, economic and social aspects of the performance

of, and outlook for, Panama's agricultural sector, to underpin decision-making and policy-making for the sector.

- Prepare and disseminate studies on the future outlook the most important agroindustrial production items for domestic consumption and export.
- Present technical-financial proposals for the preparation of studies on the feasibility and effectiveness of investment projects.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Promote private investment in the agrifood sector, through up-to-date information and analysis of the performance and potential of specific sectoral activities.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Goal: *To meet the demand for cooperation in the field of technology and innovation generated by the National Agricultural Research Institute (IDIAP).*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Implement training, information and dissemination programs on biotechnology and biosafety.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Propose and implement technology generation and transfer programs for small producers.
- Design strategies for the development and strengthening of organic production systems.

- Support the formulation of technology innovation programs for implementation on farms devoted to sustainable agriculture.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To help strengthen the National Agrarian Institute (INA) and its policy actions aimed at improving food security and living conditions of rural inhabitants.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Support the efforts of the INA authorities to redefine its situation and role in rural development policy, and seek the modernization of its institutional framework.

► Education and Training

Goal: *To support the INA's efforts with regard to education and training for its technical staff, producers and other actors in the agricultural sector.*

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Importance of Educational and Training Programs

- Promote the INA's curriculum development.
- Redesign the training program for producers and other actors in the sector.
- Promote strategies and actions for developing stronger links between the INA and its graduates.
- Strengthen horizontal cooperation mechanisms at the national and regional levels.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Promote distance learning for technical personnel and producers, incorporating new information and communication technologies.

6.4. Northern Region

6.4.1. Canada

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Canada, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Promote throughout the hemisphere Canada's experience with institutional modernization and its expertise in the area of international trade agreements.

Topic: Access to International Markets (Development of Export Platforms)

- Promote Canadian agriculture, as well as associations serving agribusiness, services and food subsector.
- Promote means for public and private organizations of Canada and the LAC countries to identify, develop and implement actions aiming to establish trade relations.
- Promote strategic alliances among agribusiness associations of Canada and LAC.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Topic: Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

- Develop mechanisms for involving IICA's member countries in the committees on sanitary measures of the WTO, CODEX, OIE and IPPC

Topic: Modernization of National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Systems

- Promote alliances between agricultural health services and research organizations in order to identify technical cooperation that will contribute to implementing the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (ASPM).
- Support training on the subjects of equivalencies, hazard analysis and emerging issues.
- Facilitate an exchange of sanitary and phytosanitary information among Canada and LAC countries.

Topic: Food Safety

- Support the executive leadership series on food safety (CERES).

Sustainable Rural Development

Topic: Strategies and Policies for Sustainable Rural Development

- Contribute to preparing joint Canada-LAC projects to address the subject of sustainable development.
- Promote the exchange of information and collaboration between Canada and the LAC countries on the subject of sustainable rural development and natural resource management.
- Contribute to identifying and formulating projects of mutual interest to Canada and LAC on sustainable rural development and natural resource management.

Education and Training

Topic: Training in strategic areas

- Provide Canadian graduates with the opportunity to gain experience with technical cooperation and with implementing

projects at IICA Headquarters and through its network of offices (internship program).

Topic: Integration of University Education

- Strengthen ties among Canadian and LAC universities, research institutes and public and private institutions.

6.4.2. Mexico

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Mexico, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: Support the SAGARPA in the formulation of policies and strategies for the successful implementation of the Law on Sustainable Rural Development and the National Agreement on the Countryside.

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Analyze and formulate proposals for promoting sectoral policies and new initiatives based on the Law on Sustainable Rural Development, providing advisory services and technical assistance to the federal government, and state institutions.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Promote the application of methodologies for diagnostic studies of value chains and value added, the organization of enterprises and monitoring-evaluation.

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To support public and private efforts in the identification, promotion and adoption of new agricultural technologies and know-how which hold promise the development of the agricultural sector and rural economies.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Implement the technical cooperation agreement signed between IICA and the INIFAP, to coordinate actions and resources of specific research, agricultural development, technical assistance and cooperation projects.
- Support the programs of INIFAP and the Produce Foundations, aimed at strengthening research and technology transfer activities carried out by sectoral agencies, with the participation of the PROCIs, FORAGRO and FONTAGRO.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To support and strengthen the development of agricultural health and food safety and quality programs, training programs, information systems development programs, in order to facilitate trade and enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products on national and international markets.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Provide the personnel at international ports of entry and at verification posts with the materials they need to improve the quality of services related to inspection, certification and institutional image.

- Disseminate, report on and promote plans, programs and projects related to the safety and quality of agrifood, aquiculture, fisheries and forestry products, generated by SENASICA.
- Implement and consolidate a reliable system for monitoring activities and actions inherent to AHFS services.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Train professionals from SENASICA and other public and private institutions in the application of safe systems and procedures for the production and handling of foods, such Good Agricultural and Manufacturing Practices, standard sanitation operating procedures and HACCP.
- Provide training in the proper use of agricultural health and production inputs, and in the official regulation.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues.

- Support the national campaign to combat the fruit fly, with a view to creating pest-free or low prevalence zones, in order to promote the trade and consumption of fruits.
- Improve and maintain the animal health status of production areas, by controlling the transportation of animals and conducting animal health campaigns.
- Provide support, to ensure the proper operation of technical areas and support for CENAPA and CONASA.
- Provide support in protecting and stabilizing the area of Chiapas declared free of the Mediterranean fruit fly.
- Keep to a minimum the introduction of exotic pests that affect agricultural and forestry production.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To serve as a catalyst for and provide support to the SAGARPA, in order to support the development of an institutional framework at the national and inter-state levels for the promotion of rural competitiveness based on equity and sustainable development.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Conduct analyses and put forth proposals for a new initiative based on the Law on Sustainable Rural Development, providing advisory services and technical assistance to the federal government and state institutions.
- Disseminate practical know-how and foster debates on rural development policies, with a view to developing a shared framework of coherent policies.
- Promote stronger links between those who formulate academic concepts and those develop and implement government policies.
- Monitor and analyze the implementation of the Law on Sustainable Rural Development (LDRS) and the National Agreement on the Countryside (ANC) from a territorial perspective, taking into account intersectoral relations and the concepts of territorial cohesion, subsidiarity and competitiveness.
- Provide analyses of economic and social policies or investment and advisory services, from the rural perspective.
- Serve as a filter in analyzing the possible implications of implementing projects and programs in rural spaces.
- Support the effective implementation of territorial approach intended to generate sustainable and competitive livelihoods for inhabitants of rural areas.
- Promote investment strategies for the public and private sectors aimed at developing the economies of rural areas.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development.

- Establish new institutional mechanisms for association, dialogue, trade and investment and poverty alleviation programs.
- Develop institutional relations among local organizations, territories and nations, with a view to promoting their participation in the design and implementation of national policies.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Promote the use and strengthening of new financial instruments that will provide access to credit and investment for small-farmer enterprises.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management.

- Support the management of knowledge by conducting learn-by-doing processes, empowerment and results, by the actors involved.
- Promote the Mexico node of the Knowledge Management Network, in order to facilitate inter-territorial and international cooperation, exchanges and collaboration.

► Education and Training

Goal: *To make significant progress in modernizing the curricula of institutions of higher agricultural education, in order to ensure the training received by students is more in line with the needs and challenges of global markets.*

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs.

- Support national universities with which technical-scientific collaboration agreements have been signed, in reviewing and modernizing their curricula.

- Support the doctoral degree program in higher agricultural education and the undergraduate degree program in education at the Autonomous University of Chapingo.
- Include the Autonomous University of the State of Morelos in cooperation actions in the area of education, with support from Headquarters.

► **Information and Knowledge Management**

Goal: *To continue support for the Secretariat of Agriculture in developing and implementing the SIAPA Agricultural Information System.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support the Agrifood and Fisheries Information and Statistics System (SIAP) for the SAGARPA, in accordance with the terms of the technical attachment.

6.4.3. United States of America

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of the United States of America, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Liase with USG on programmatic and administrative matters**

This includes the expansion of communications with a variety of Units within the Department of Agriculture and their vast network of offices at the international and state levels as well as more invigorating dialogue with USDA-IICA liaison officers.

► **Develop joint activities to implement strategic priorities with the US Government**

Agricultural globalization and the expected outcomes of this strategic plan require that more joint efforts be undertaken to link national priorities with hemispheric concerns as well as addressing national interests within the context of hemispheric integration. U.S. public and private institutions have tremendous capacity to promote and enrich dialogue, training and the institutional capacities of all stakeholders involved in trade, agricultural health, food safety, agricultural science and technology as well as rural development issues related to market access, opportunity for rural women and First Peoples and territorial approaches to developing rural space. Configuring programs that link capacities with prioritized demands throughout the hemisphere and that require tailor-made programs will be a central concern of the Office in the USA.

► **Disseminate knowledge and exchange expertise and technology between US and IAC**

Building on a long historic relationship between U.S. institutions and Latin America and the Caribbean in agriculture, communication and exchange mechanisms are required to continue to share scientific advancement, to develop sound databases for public policy and to provide information that informs dialogue on agricultural trade disputes. Bridging gaps in information and expertise will permit greater possibilities for consensus and nexus for better communications between professionals and policy makers.

► **Strengthen the partnership between the US and IICA in support of regional and hemispheric priorities**

IICA's representational presence in every Member State offers an institutional platform for outreach and linkage between U.S. agricultural

institutions and the hemisphere. The capacity to articulate national interests with regional priorities and international public goods provides the potential to foment dialogue, foster understanding and create international agreements in order to improve agricultural competitiveness throughout the hemisphere. The fact that market expansion for agricultural products will occur at a far greater rate outside of the United States has renewed interest of public and private enterprises to strengthen their relationships with trading partners, research associates and farmers throughout the hemisphere. The IICA Office in Washington will mobilize and prioritize its resources to effectively respond to these kinds of demands.

► **Promote the development of human talent of all Member States**

Transforming information and data into knowledge for action requires new capabilities on the part of professionals. In addition to multiple language skills, management, solid conceptual foundations to filter information, analytical skills and institutional frameworks to provide structure so that actions produce desired results and outcomes are all part of the new expertise that professionals involved in agriculture and rural development need to exercise with great precision and creativity. The development of tailor-made programs based on a firm grasp of local knowledge linked with global trends and a vast base of conceptual data also demand that professionals can articulate local, regional sub-national, national, regional supranational and global processes to create effective interventions that produce results. The U.S.A. is a storehouse of information, educational capacity and knowledge creation. Generating greater interaction between professionals and linking professionals in new paradigms of global research through public and private partnership will continue to be an important challenge for IICA in the U.S.A. and the hemisphere.

► **Co-design and jointly implement trilateral programs with Mexico and Canada**

The North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) has a series of peculiarities, challenges and potential regarding agriculture and rural development that

will demand the attention of the IICA Office in the U.S.A. The three nations have great interest in IICA's role as a facilitator of dialogue and the identification of key issues to improve competitiveness in the free trade area and to consolidate the efficiency of agricultural markets, especially in terms of labor productivity, technological innovation, food safety and coherent policy development. IICA will continue its efforts to improve trilateral efforts in this regard.

6.5. Southern Region

6.5.1. Argentina

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Argentina, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To help develop and expand the Argentine agrifood sector, by means of analytical input regarding the status and outlook of the sector, and sectoral policy proposals designed to promote agribusiness and agroindustrial exports.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Prepare, publish and distribute IICA's quarterly report on the status of the agrifood sector, occasional specific reports and regular press releases.
- Cooperate with the SAGPyA on studies, programs and selected actions, including financing and risk coverage, with a view to increment competitiveness, equity and the sustainability of the agri-food sector.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Help the SAGPyA implement the Export Promotion Program in selected areas that will get under way in 2004.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Develop projects to strengthen the infrastructure of agricultural services for agricultural activity (irrigation, infrastructure, transportation, land recovery).
- Support in the management of the seed quality certification program (INASE).

► Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To make the public agrifood research and development system more effective and efficient, supporting the modernization of its institutions and adapting them to the challenges posed by global markets.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Provide technical and administrative support for the formulation and implementation of policies and programs for research on fisheries resources.
- Collaborate with the INTA on internal and external evaluation programs and the hiring of specialists.
- Support to the SAGPyA for its participation in the UNEP-GEP global project, aimed at developing a national framework for the safety of biotechnology, in line with the requirements of the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety.

► Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To promote the knowledge, dissemination and application of the mechanisms of the Codex Alimentarius and the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Support SENASA in modernizing and decentralizing agrifood health and quality services, and making them more efficient.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius

- Support to the SAGPyA in its role as focal point and chairmanship of the Latin American and Caribbean Commission of the Codex Alimentarius.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Support in the management of the prevention and eradication program of the boll weevil and development of actions with other countries in fighting the disease.
- Development of projects to fight the codling worm, the fruit fly and siren wasp (forestry).

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues

- Provide technical cooperation to the prevention program of the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) of the SAGPyA, SENASA and INTA.

- Carry out training and communication in the field of risk assessment.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Goal: *To promote the development of “regional” economies (non-Pampas regions) and provide opportunities for integration to micro and small-scale rural or semi-rural producers*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Support to the management of the Fisheries National Division for the control of authorized species fishing.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Provide technical and administrative support for the transformation, diversification and modernization of tobacco-growing areas.
- Support to the management of small and medium agricultural enterprises in the province of Buenos Aires organized by the province’s Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food.
- Support the management of the development of micro-enterprises in semi-rural areas.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Training of advocates for rural development with a territorial focus in the province of Mendoza, with the support from the Regional Specialist in Sustainable Rural Development for the Southern Region.

► **Education and Training**

Goal: *To improve the quality of higher agricultural education, strengthen its institutions and strengthen curriculum design as regards the quality of food production and the development of agribusinesses.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Support for the training in the context of the SAGPyA programs.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs

- Support to the Faculty of Agronomy of the University of Buenos Aires in various areas.
- Support to the activities of the MERCOSUR Forum of Deans of Agronomy.
- Cooperation to the CONEAU in the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural careers.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Promote the creation of a postgraduate food quality program in the MERCOSUR countries, in collaboration with the schools of veterinary medicine of MERCOSUR.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Distance Education and Training Programs

- Promotion for the inclusion of academic and technological institutions in the Global Distance Learning Network of the World Bank (GDLN).

Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: To make more agricultural information available for political and agribusiness decision-making.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Dissemination of the Infoagro System through the IICA-Argentina Webpage.
- Operation of the Documentation and Information Centre (CDI) of the IICA-Argentina Office.
- Response to consultations and promotion of the CDI, the Infoagro System and SIDALC.
- Act as liaison of SIDALC in Argentina, promoting the inclusion information centres and libraries.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Ongoing updating of the IICA-Argentina Webpage, linking it to the institutional Webpage.

Line of Action: Publication of printed and digital materials

- Dissemination of press releases on sectoral topics and information about IICA.

6.5.2. Brazil

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Brazil, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: To support federal and state efforts aimed at creating new business and export opportunities for family farms, small-scale enterprises and agricultural cooperatives.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Consolidate IICA's participation in support of trade negotiations between regional blocs and between Member States. Gather and disseminate information on the progress of, and difficulties encountered in, trade negotiations.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Implement and coordinate the Program for the Promotion of Exports from Family Farms (including the formulation of the strategy, promotion and dissemination, and training and sensitization), together with the Special Agency for Export Promotion (APEX), the IDB, and the Ministry of Agrarian Development.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Create more marketing opportunities for family farms, through the use of innovative financing systems, equipment, marketing instruments, projects to build settlements for families in rural areas, agro-tourism and production project.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Create new business and income-generating opportunities for small-scale rural enterprises, transforming them into competitive businesses linked to the regional economy, based on the development of agricultural production chains.

- Generate new trade opportunities for Brazilian cooperatives, with information on exportation opportunities, projects to set up agroindustries, actions by rural producer organizations, etc.

► **Technology and Innovation**

Goal: *To link public and private agricultural research institutions and encourage them to make technologies available to the agricultural sector, with a view to promoting the sustainable and equitable development of the sector.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Create and implement a model for the participatory management of environmentally friendly technologies, with a view to ensuring access to and the transfer of such technologies to IBAMA/MMA, other government agencies and society in general.
- Contribute to the development of competitive irrigated agriculture, and its strategic positioning within the framework of government policy.
- Foster the adoption of appropriate technologies for the sound use of water resources in river basins, promoting the sustainability of agricultural farms.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation Policies

- Promote the preparation and adoption of land management schemes that take into account both ecological and economic considerations, aimed at improving living conditions in rural areas and reducing regional inequalities.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Continue and expand the alliance with EMBRAPA aimed at generating and transferring technologies to the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Promote the articulation of the PROCITROPICOS and PROCISUR research networks, for the purpose of benefiting the agricultural sector with scientific research projects under way and appropriating their results.
- Contribute to creating technical capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean in the areas of agricultural research, poverty alleviation in rural areas, and sustainable development.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Goal: *To support federal and state efforts aimed at improving the agricultural health and food safety systems and controlling pests and diseases that affect the agricultural sector in Brazil.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Support national and state AHFS programs, and continue participating in the monthly meetings of the National Forum of Agricultural Health Agencies (FONESA).

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety.

- Develop sensitization and training programs in HACCP, for technical and management personnel responsible for quality control in firms that use the HACCP system, including a

proposal for improving registration systems in SIF/Dipoa/DAS/MAPA.

- Provide cooperation in discussions and negotiations on AHFS.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues.

- Provide the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply with instruments for planning the control and eradication of the principal pests and diseases, through support in the preparation and implementation of strategic control and eradication programs.

D Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To promote the reduction of regional inequalities, by strengthening the capabilities of the Ministry of Regional Integration to formulate policies, design mechanisms and instruments for regional development, and implement integral development programs that will alleviate poverty and improve food security among rural inhabitants.*

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development.

- Increase the capabilities of government agencies to assess the impacts of sustainable rural development projects, especially those related to combating poverty and hunger.
- Strengthen the technical and institutional capabilities of specialized organizations in Brazil, Argentina, Bolivia and Chile to find solutions to the socioeconomic and environmental problems generated by desertification.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories.

- Support the commercial-scale management of natural forests in eastern Amazonia, through the identification, validation and

dissemination of the most important experiences in agroforestry, as well as the factors that influence the adoption of sustainable agroforestry practices.

- Promote the sustainable development of the rural communities which are beneficiaries of a project related to land tenure loans and poverty alleviation in the State of Pernambuco. Support the creation of rural enterprises in community-based sub-projects, in areas acquired with the funds of the project.
- Promote the sound use of water resources in an integrated, participatory and decentralized manner, contributing to an improved quality of life for the population, and to the sustainable development of the State of Ceara.
- Contribute to the adoption of a new agricultural development model in the communities affected by desertification, through the use of appropriate technologies and training, to improve living conditions in rural areas.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Support the Bank of Northeast Brazil in consolidating the strategy for local economic development in northeast Brazil, including the establishment of a new paradigm for irrigation and the consolidation of 12 centers of development.
- Provide support to two of the rural development programs of the Regional Marketing Agencies (ARCOS). Provide the Secretariat of Agrarian Reform with instruments for enabling producers who have benefited from agrarian reform to enter the market.
- Support the management of the National Program to Strengthen Family Agriculture (PRONAF), improving its performance through the greater involvement of its social and human capital, and the establishment of monitoring and control system.

- Provide CODESAF with support in developing irrigated agriculture in its service area, through mechanisms and instruments that will enable it to implement its priority programs and establish the bases for transferring the irrigated areas to users.
- Support the Ministry of National Integration in actions intended to increase efficiency in fruit production, especially in irrigated areas.
- Provide cooperation to the Secretariat of National Defense of the Ministry of National Integration in the preparation of actions aimed at reducing the negative impact of natural and man-made disasters.
- Develop and systematize processes for the consolidation of agrarian reform settlements, with a view to their integration into the family economy of the municipality and the region.
- Contribute to reducing rural poverty in the states of northeastern, southeastern and southern Brazil, facilitating access to land through non-refundable financing for associations of landless workers and smallholders.
- Support actions aimed at the development of the agricultural sector of Rio Grande do Norte, including the review and reformulation of policies, the preparation of studies and pilot projects, the establishment of food supply and security mechanisms, the restoration of indigenous areas, etc.
- Provide support in implementing the project to combat poverty in the states of Ceara, Bahia, Pernambuco, Rio Grande do Norte, Halagoas, Sergipe, Piaui, Maranhao and Rio Grande do Sul.
- Support efforts aimed at the harmonious and equitable development of family agriculture, through the promotion of alternative forms of credit for production and investment.
- Increase the access of rural communities to income- and profit-generating activities (minimum profit program), basic social services (social security) and social and production infrastructure.

▮ **Information and Knowledge Management**

Goal: *To generate, systematize and make available to interested partners and persons information on the performance of and outlook for the agricultural sector, as a contribution to decision making and improved use of available resources.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Support the use of computers in the management of federations involved in the CAN system.
- Make available a data base on specialists, studies and assessments of topics of importance for agricultural cooperatives.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Conduct and disseminate studies, data and information on requirements for exporting agricultural products.
- Prepare a newsletter dealing with current conditions in the agribusiness sector in Brazil.
- Prepare the agricultural newsletter for the Southern Cone.

6.5.3. Chile

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Chile, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

▮ **Trade and Agribusiness Development**

Goal: *To support the implementation of the sectoral policies framed by the national authorities and promote the improvement of business management.*

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Monitor and disseminate Chile's agricultural negotiations and trade agreements under the aegis of the WTO, the FTAA and ALADI, in collaboration with the Agricultural Policy Unit (ODEPA) and specific governments in the region.

Line of Action: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Contribute to the organization of the Seminar on the "Economic Feasibility for the Development of an Agricultural Commodity Exchange in Chile"
- Exercise in the operation of an Agricultural Commodity Exchange, through an electronic simulation system, with the Sub-Ministry of Agriculture and INDAP.
- Strengthen the concept of Commodity Exchange in the Faculties of Agronomy of the Universities of Chile, the Americas, and the Universidad Tecnológica Metropolitana.
- Impart a course on financial accounting to small producers, users of the INDAP in the VI Region.
- Promote the use of agricultural insurance, jointly with the Ministry of Agriculture and related private, academic and producers' organizations.
- Support to the SEREMI of Agriculture VI Region, in accounting the costs of the sheep produced in the coastal dry barren land of the VI Region.
- Contribution to the development of the document "Risk management in the agriculture of the XXI Century".
- Preparation of the document "Competitive advantages of the ovine industry in the VI Region".
- Conduct studies and provide advisory services to the agricultural public sector and producers' organizations, on new agricultural marketing and coverage instruments.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management

- Organize working sessions with representatives of the small, medium and large of the country's milk producers to take advantage of the competitive advantages and insertion in the international markets, in coordination with private and public organizations, as an instrument of pre-investment.

▮ Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To promote the development of hard and soft technologies and the expertise of human resources, supporting production and trade-related innovations that are sustainable, within a framework of greater equity and the rational management of natural resources.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Provide assistance to the research and innovation processes in the dairy sector, in the Universities and Research Centres, counting on the support of international consultancies.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Contribute to the analysis of the management mechanisms of FONTAGRO.
- Promote the discussion with PROCISUR and the NARI on technology's contribution to agricultural exports in Chile.

▮ Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To promote policies for the modernization of agricultural health and food safety systems that encompass the entire agrifood chain, seeking the active participation of the private sector and academic institutions.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Support the efforts of the Agricultural and Livestock Service (SAG) to improve the regulatory mechanisms and expertise of the officials in charge.
- Promote a program to improve the application of regulatory, certification and quality standards in border controls.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius

- Organize human resource training technical sessions for higher education, in the application of the sanitary measures and food safety, according to international norms.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Support the efforts of qualified agricultural institutions to develop leadership skills and capabilities with regard to food quality and safety.
- Support the formulation of a Program for the Training of Leaders in Food Quality and Safety.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues

- Support the SAG, to facilitate horizontal cooperation with the AHFS services of other member countries, so that they can act together to respond to threats to animal, plant and human health.

- Help the SAG formulate a Training Program for Government Veterinary Professionals on emerging AHFS issues.
- Participate in studies for the SAG on the monitoring of diseases and pests, through satellite tracking and remote sensing.
- Give continuity to the international program to combat threats to plant health.
- Continue to support the Chile-Peru SAG/SENASA Program to combat the fruit fly.

Sustainable Rural Development

***Goal:** To make small and medium-sized farms more competitive and facilitate their incorporation into global markets, to improve the quality of life in the rural milieu.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments

- Support the construction of a sustainable rural development strategy and policy in a territory of VI Region, in collaboration with public and private institutions and NGOs.
- Collaborate with public institutions, universities, NGOs, and social organizations in organizing technical forums, providing conceptual and methodological guidance on aspects of management by social actors.
- Coordinate the “Convento Viejo” Technical Group, an interagency body that coordinates agricultural development in Chile’s VI Region.
- Participate in training events for agricultural-sector public officials from the central and regional levels, on conceptual and methodological aspects of sustainable rural development using a territorial approach.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Create and coordinate a national, interagency coordination body that will be in charge of supporting sustainable rural development using a territorial approach that involves the public and private actors, academics, producers and NGOs.

Line of Action: Natural Resource Management in Rural Territories

- Support initiatives for the development and sustainable management of water resources.
- Identification of the environmentally sustainable use of forestry agriculture areas (in the VI Region) in fragile ecosystems.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Promote the development of rural social actors (women, children and young people).
- Contribute to the creation and consolidation of productive and commercial activities of rural microenterprises.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management

- Preparation of a study on Rural Childhood in the VI Region.
- Systemization of the Programa PRORURAL of Chile.
- Elaboration of the Cadaster of social instruments and productive development.
- Elaboration of the Statistical antecedents of the rural sector in Chile, according to the 2002 Census.

D Education and Training

Goal: *To contribute to the training of the human resources of the agricultural public sector, to equip them with the skills they need to help make the agricultural sector more competitive, through support for agricultural education and training systems.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Support of the Sub-Ministry of Agriculture in the coordination of the “Working Group on rural training and education”.
- Organization of two Regional Seminars on the “Quality and certification of products” and on “Requirements of labour training” with universities, associations of national and regional producers and training organizations.
- Organization of Workshops on Health and Food Safety and International Norms, with universities.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs

- Help organize national events and regional forums for the modernization of basic, secondary, vocational and university agricultural education.
- Support the formulation of studies and proposals for modernizing curricula, based on the new requirements imposed for the development of agriculture and agrifood markets, in three universities and seven faculties of higher education in the agricultural sector.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Support for the development of actions to gradually link agricultural education with the other training sectors and the

productive sector, included in the “Program for Permanent Education and Training” of the IDB and the Government of Chile 2002/2007, in Permanent Education Networks.

D Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To disseminate information about IICA’s cooperation actions and offer specialized information services in the areas of interest for the development of agriculture and agricultural trade.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Operate the electronic system of news and information about different agricultural subjects.
- Support the operation of the SIDALC and its extension to other institutions.

Line of Action: Consolidation of INFOAGRO System

- Coordinate IICA’s specialized information systems and networks at the country and regional levels and at Headquarters.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Align the website of IICA’s Office in Chile with the Institute’s website, providing relevant information on strategic issues and matters of interest to the national authorities.
- Support the linking of information systems of IICA’s networks, to share information with strategic partners.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Continue producing the Southern Cone Electronic News Bulletin and involve in its preparation public, private, academic

and producers’ institutions of the national agricultural sector and of MERCOSUR.

- Produce and sell publications.

6.5.4. Paraguay

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Paraguay, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

D Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goal: *To develop and implement initiatives designed to re-engineer and modernize the public agricultural sector; and to create conditions conducive to developing and strengthening agribusinesses.*

Line of Action: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies.

- Provide technical cooperation in implementing the project “Paraguay on the Competitive Map of the World. The Agricultural and Agroindustrial Sector: the Challenge of Growing Together.”
- Support the creation of an interinstitutional commission to reach agreement on policy instruments and strategies, and to monitor application of the competitiveness agendas.

Line of Action: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Provide technical cooperation to the Special Commission on International Trade and Integration (CECII), in order to enhance its technical capabilities.

Line of Action: Market Access

- Provide technical cooperation to the Catholic University of Asuncion, with a view to further developing the area of training in innovation and strategies for competitiveness, with emphasis on agribusiness.

Line of Action: Strengthening and Modernization of Business Management.

- Strengthen the technical and administrative capabilities of the MAG to execute the program Modernization and Diversification of Small-farm Production.
- Provide technical cooperation in adopting techniques for the production, post-harvest handling and marketing of fruits and vegetables, in keeping with the demands of global markets, with the framework of the program Modernization and Diversification of Small-farm Production.

▮ Technology and Innovation

Goal: *To strengthen, technically and administratively, public and private entities involved in research and the development and transfer of agricultural and agroindustrial technology.*

Line of Action: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Provide technical and administrative cooperation to the Paraguayan Association of Grain and Oilseed Exporters (CAPECO) in formulating, seeking funding for, and executing an investment project aimed at making grains and oilseeds for export more competitive.
- Provide technical support to public and private institutions, the Under Secretariat of Livestock, the SENACSA and private-sector

trade associations in formulating and executing a program to improve livestock production.

Line of Action: Design and Implementation of Technology Innovation policies

- Provide technical cooperation to the MAG in preparing a draft law to regulate organic production.

Line of Action: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Support the Seed Producers Association of Paraguay (APROSEMP), and the Seed Directorate (DISE) of the MAG, in organizing and holding the Pan American Seed Congress.

▮ Agricultural Health and Food Safety

Goal: *To enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products, by adopting and complying with rules and procedures for controlling animal and plant health conditions and the quality and safety of agricultural products.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities, and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures.

- Provide technical cooperation to the Livestock Health and Food Safety System, the Under Secretariat of Livestock and SENACSA, aimed at helping them offer efficient services, respond rapidly to livestock health emergencies and improve compliance with legal, institutional and technical regulations.
- Provide technical cooperation to the Vegetable Defense Division, DDV, the Division of Agricultural Research, DIA, the

Division of Seeds, DISE of the Sub-Ministry of Agriculture of the MAG, so that it may provide efficient services, respond in a timely fashion to agricultural health emergencies, and improve the control for the compliance of juridical, institutional and technical norms.

Line of Action: Application of WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius.

- Support the creation and operation of the National Commission on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.
- Provide technical cooperation to support the dissemination and application of rules and standards adopted by the SPSC of the WTO.

Line of Action: Recognition and Management of Emerging Issues.

- Provide technical cooperation in executing the foot-and-mouth eradication program, with support from the Regional Specialist.

► Sustainable Rural Development

Goal: *To improve food security and living conditions for the rural population, through the execution of joint public and private actions based on sustainable development from a territorial perspective, and on more effective use of the capabilities of actors in the rural milieu.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies and Investments.

- Provide technical and administrative support to the DINCAP/MAG in the execution of PRODESAL, by defining the technical outlines of Technical Assistance Enterprises, increasing the quantity and quality of the technical assistance.

- Provide technical cooperation to the MAG in formulating and implementing the project Sustainable Rural Development with a Territorial Approach, to combat rural poverty in the area served by the Centro Agrorural Norte.
- Provide technical cooperation to the Rural Welfare Institute (IBR) in formulating and implementing a system to monitor and evaluate the Bansocial Rural pilot project, and in preparing a Bansocial Rural strategic project at the national level.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development.

- Provide Technical Cooperation in formulating an institutional strengthening program for INCOOP, in keeping with its status as a decentralized institution, and in accordance with guidelines from the government.
- Determine the objective and possible scope of technical cooperation from IICA, to implement a program for the institutional strengthening of INDI.
- Support the Secretariat for Women's Affairs in drafting and applying policies aimed at improving living conditions for rural women.
- Provide technical and administrative cooperation to the MAG in formulating and implementing a re-engineering and human resources training program, given the priority being attached to combating poverty and supporting sustainable rural development.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors.

- Foster the sound use of natural resources and improve incomes and living conditions for the beneficiary small-farm families, within the framework of the PRODESAL program.

- Strengthen the technical and administrative capabilities of the MAG to provide specialized technical assistance related to the sustainability of production and productivity, agribusiness, and strengthening producer organizations.
- Strengthen the capabilities of consulting firms and specialized and professional institutions to provide technical assistance to small farmers, and to consolidate the process of outsourced technical assistance.
- Train trainers in the management of rural micro-enterprises.
- Design and execute activities intended to improve the situation of rural women, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Secretariat for Women's Affairs and the Directorate of Gender and Youth of the MAG.
- Review the technical cooperation IICA provides to the Livestock Fund.

Line of Action: Knowledge Management.

- Systematize experiences in the outsourcing of technical assistance to small-scale farmers, under the program Support for the Development of Small Cotton Plantations (PRODESAL).

▶ Education and Training

Goal: *Improve public and private capabilities to educate and train human resources for agriculture and rural development.*

Line of Action: Training in Strategic Topics

- Provide technical assistance in the search for financing and implementation of the Project to strengthen the Training and Professional Centre for Rural Development "Colonias Unidas", in cooperation with institutions from the agricultural private sector.

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs.

- Provide technical cooperation to the School of Veterinary Sciences in the areas of training, teaching-learning processes, academic reorganization and updating technical skills.
- Provide technical cooperation to organize training sessions on the Processes of Elaboration and Orientation of Theses, Invisible Curriculum and Distance Education, in support of the Council of Deans and Directors of the Faculties of Agricultural Sciences and Engineering.
- Cooperate with the Directorate of Agricultural Education (DEAG) of the MAG in implementing the new curriculum for undergraduate studies in agriculture.

▶ Information and Knowledge Management

Goal: *To make available to public and private institutions information on the agricultural sector, with a view to enhancing knowledge of the sector and providing inputs for decision making in the public and private sectors.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Move forward in the design and operation of an information system related to agriculture and rural development.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Prepare and publish the bi-annual report on the status of the agrifood sector.
- Prepare the Paraguay Chapter and disseminate the Agrifood Electronic Bulletin, for public and private institutions in the agricultural and rural sector.

6.5.5. Uruguay

The National Technical Cooperation Agenda of Uruguay, which was submitted for consideration and approval to national authorities, is the following:

► Trade and Agribusiness Development

Goals: *To strengthen Uruguay's negotiating capabilities in the different negotiations and in the various disciplines of the agricultural sector; help increase agricultural exports, by diversifying exports and penetrating new markets; make the services provided by public institutions in Uruguay's agricultural sector more effective; and help modernize internal marketing services.*

Topic: Analysis of Agricultural and Sectoral Policies

- Hold one-day events to discuss strategic agricultural issues, based on successful experiences from Latin America.

Topic: Trade Negotiations and Integration

- Hold national and/or regional seminars on the agricultural policies of the leading developed countries vis-à-vis the WTO.
- Provide technical/administrative support to help strengthen the Secretariat of the Agricultural Council of the Ministers of Agriculture of the Southern Cone (CAS), and the regional projects linked to this ministerial forum.

Topic: Strengthening of Domestic Markets

- Disseminate innovative instruments for financing the agricultural sector.

- Support the development and implementation of the Agrifood Hub of the Model Market in Montevideo.

Topic: Incorporation into Foreign Markets

- Provide technical assistance to consortia of producers interested in accessing export markets, in order to improve the country's export capacity.

► Technology and Innovation

Goals: *To promote the modernization of public and private institutions involved in research, agricultural extension and the technological development of agribusinesses; to promote technological change as a means of improving productivity, reducing poverty and accessing demanding markets; and to support the consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System.*

Topic: Strengthening of National Capacities for Technology Innovation

- Train the human resources of the national technology innovation system.

Topic: Consolidation of the Regional Technology Innovation System

- Support the management of PROCISUR.
- Set up technological platforms and regional innovation networks, with the full participation of national institutions.

Topic: Development and Management of an Agricultural Science and Technology Information System

- Help strengthen the INIA information and dissemination system.

► **Agricultural Health and Food Safety**

Goals: *To assist the country with its agricultural health programs and systems, improving its ability to meet the new requirements of international agricultural trade; and make progress in developing mechanisms for harmonizing sanitary and phytosanitary measures in international trade, promoting dialogue between Uruguay and the other countries in the region.*

Line of Action: Development of Regulatory Mechanisms, Science-based Technical Capacities and Sustainable Institutional Infrastructures

- Disseminate and hold training seminars and workshops on the new technologies that are available and the requirements of international markets related agricultural health and food safety.

Line of Action: Application of the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures and of Measures adopted by the OIE, IPPC and Codex Alimentarius

- Identify potential reciprocal support with other countries in the region and IICA members, with regard to health and safety issues.

Line of Action: Development of Standards and Rules, Leadership Capabilities and Technical Competence in the Field of Food Safety

- Provide technical/administrative support to COSAVE and the Veterinary Standing Committee of the MERCOSUR+Chile and Bolivia.

- Support for Uruguay's participation in the education and training activities of the Hemispheric and Regional Food Safety and Agricultural Health Agenda.

► **Sustainable Rural Development**

Goals: *To collaborate with the government in implementing a rural development strategy that promotes poverty reduction and the creation of social wealth; contribute to further decentralization, seeking territorial integration and social unity; promote the strengthening of provincial governments by generating innovative experiences that lead to modernization projects; and support the development of human and social capital by developing the capabilities of grassroots organizations.*

Line of Action: Strategies, Policies, and Investments

- Design strategic plans and formulate local development projects.
- Systematize sustainable rural development experiences in Uruguay.

Line of Action: Institutional Modernization and Development

- Implement training activities on local development and to improve the management capabilities of the provincial governments and grassroots organizations.
- Participate actively in the implementation of the Development Agency of the Municipal Government of Paysandu.
- Support the MAG through the program Uruguay Rural, to improve the performance of the rural development discussion groups at the departmental level.

Line of Action: Management of Rural Development with Social Actors

- Hold workshops and seminars on conceptual and operational aspects of SRD.

- Participate actively in the Management Council and Technical Secretariat of the Consortium for the Development of the Eastern Region.

▮ **Education and Training**

Goals: *To help make the sector more competitive and improve living conditions in rural areas, promoting the development of human resources at all levels, in line with the ongoing modernization of agriculture.*

Line of Action: Improvement of Quality and Relevance of Educational and Training Programs

- Convene the National Agricultural Education Forum, to discuss and monitor the project's policy framework, strategic lines of action and operating strategy.
- Exercise the Executive Secretariat of the National Executive Forum, to implement the strategic guidelines of the National Forum.

Line of Action: Integration of Agricultural and Rural Education

- Support the implementation of regional actions, mainly those promoted by the Forum of Deans of Agronomy of MERCOSUR, with respect to postgraduate courses in policies and trade, and the accreditation of qualifications.

▮ **Information and Knowledge Management**

Goals: *To facilitate access to agricultural information from Latin America and the Caribbean, to contribute to the different development strategies; provide the key actors and institutions of Uruguay's agricultural sector with timely, quality information; and disseminate the Institute's message precisely and clearly at the national level, integrated with the regional and hemispheric levels.*

Line of Action: Standardization of Infrastructure and Information Systems

- Serve as the Technical Coordinator of the SIDALC.
- Support the production of the chapter on Uruguay and MERCOSUR Integration of the Southern Cone Agrifood Electronic Bulletin.
- Support Uruguay's Network of Agricultural Libraries, with respect to the number of members, training and the adoption of technology.

Line of Action: Development of IICA website

- Administer the Office's new web page, pursuant to the new instructions, and continually update the information it contains.

Line of Action: Publication of Printed and Digital Materials

- Strengthen the provision and dissemination service of technical information, by preparing a series of publications on topics that are important to the country's agricultural and agroindustrial sector.
- Technical support for the Uruguayan Association of Agricultural Journalists (AUDEPA).

VII. Conclusions

For the first time in its 61 years of history, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) has presented to the consideration of its Member States, strategic partners and the stakeholders in agriculture and rural life, a group of aligned, consistent and consolidated policy proposals and proposals for cooperation, collected into the Technical Cooperation Agenda. It is of national, regional and hemispheric scope and represents the Institute's primary strategy for technical cooperation.

Of the approximately 846.8 million inhabitants in our hemisphere, about 23.2% live in rural areas. The Latin American and Caribbean economy is closely linked to an agriculture that is facing growing challenges and difficulties. This has led IICA to reformulate its strategy and approach to cooperation so as to increase the effectiveness and relevance of its work and enable it to respond fully to the demands and priorities of its Member States.

By late 2006, the Institute hopes to have contributed significantly to bringing about progress and prosperity for the farmers and rural dwellers of the hemisphere, through the development of new conceptual and practical approaches, the adoption of effective cooperation instruments, the creation and strengthening of partnerships with the public and private sectors and with our strategic partners, and the development of projects and programs that aim to promote the sustainable development of agriculture, food security and rural prosperity.

IICA trusts that the strategy, objectives and actions proposed in the Technical Cooperation Agendas will contribute solidly to strengthening and extending the alliance between the Institute and the agricultural and rural sector of the hemisphere.

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

VIII. Acronyms

ADLTC	Agricultural Distance Learning and Training Centre	IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
AHFS	Agricultural Health and Food Safety	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council	IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
CACHE	Caribbean Council for Higher Education in Agriculture	LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
CAN / ACN	Andean Community of Nations	MERCOSUR	Common Market of South America
CARAPHIN	Caribbean Animal and Plant Health Information Network	NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute	PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market	PROCIANDINO	Andean Cooperative Program for Agricultural Technological Innovation
CLAWRENET	Caribbean Land and Water Resources Network	PROCICARIBE	Caribbean Agricultural Science and Technology Network System
CORECA	Central American Regional Council	PROCISUR	Cooperative Program for Agro-industrial and Technological Agrifood Development
CRIIA	Inter-American Information Referential Centre for Agriculture	PROCITROPICOS	Research and Technological Transference Cooperative Program for the South American Tropics
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	SICA	Central American Integration System
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations	SICTA	Central American Integration System of Agricultural Technology
FONTAGRO	Regional Fund for Agricultural Technology	SIDALC	Agricultural Information and Documentation System for Latin America and the Caribbean
FORAGRO	Forum for the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development	SIHCA	Hemispheric System for Agricultural Training
FTAA	Free Trade Area of the Americas	SPSMA	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Agreement / WTO
GAPs	Good Agricultural Practices	UWI	University of the West Indies
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms	WOAH	World Organization for Animal Health
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points	WTO	World Trade Organization