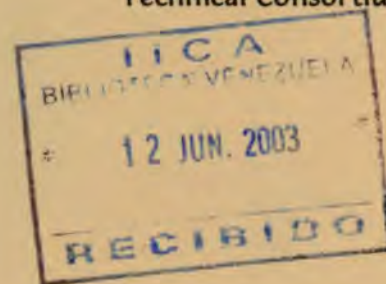


Directorate for Education and Training (CECAP)

Technical Consortium



**Education and Training
for competitive and
sustainable agriculture**

Manual for orienting technical cooperation



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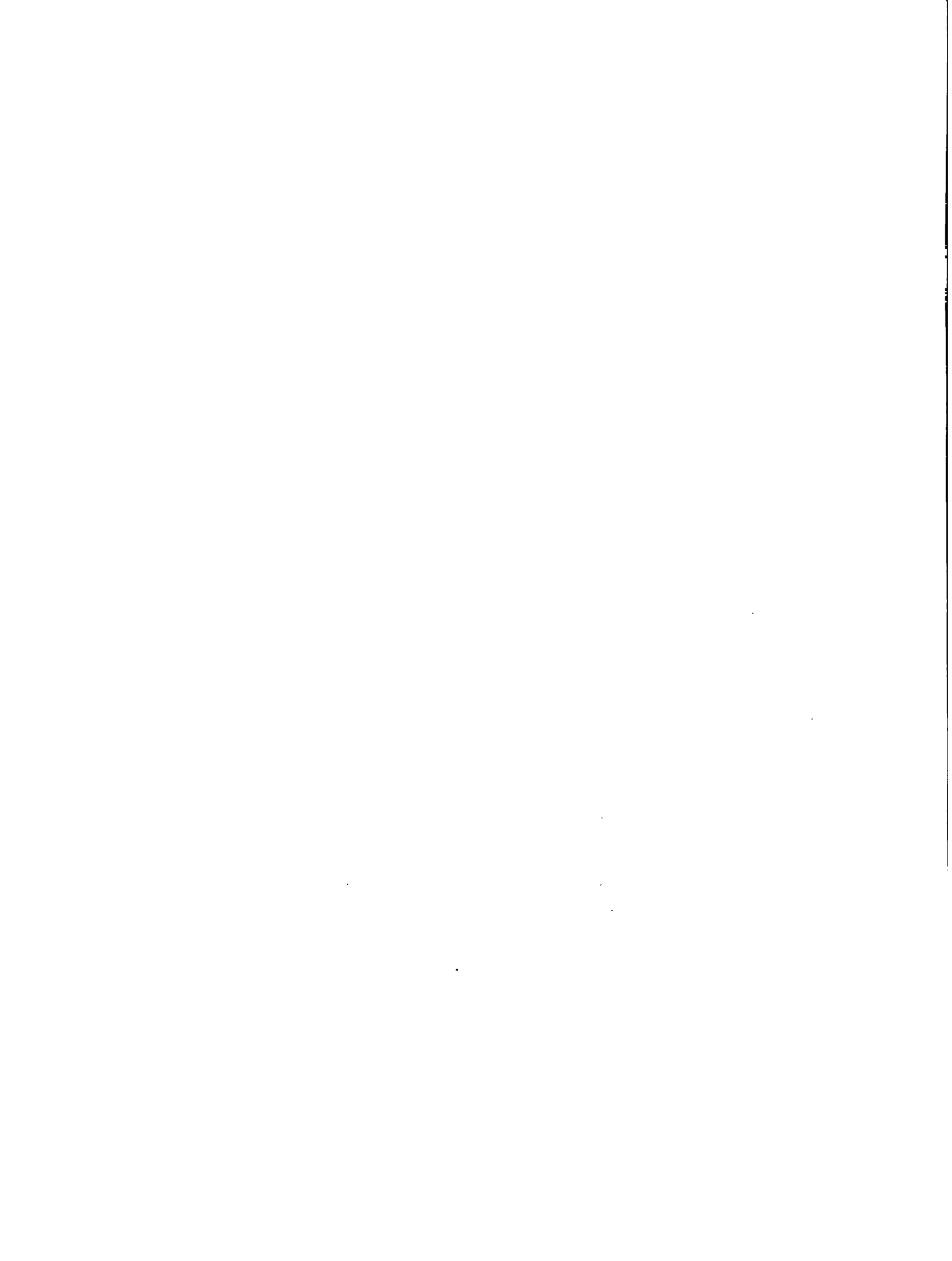
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"We are convinced that Education is essential to the future of the Americas. It should be the foundation of our efforts to overcome poverty and increase the capabilities, intelligence and knowledge of our peoples."

Second Summit of the Americas, Santiago, Chile, April 1998



Introduction

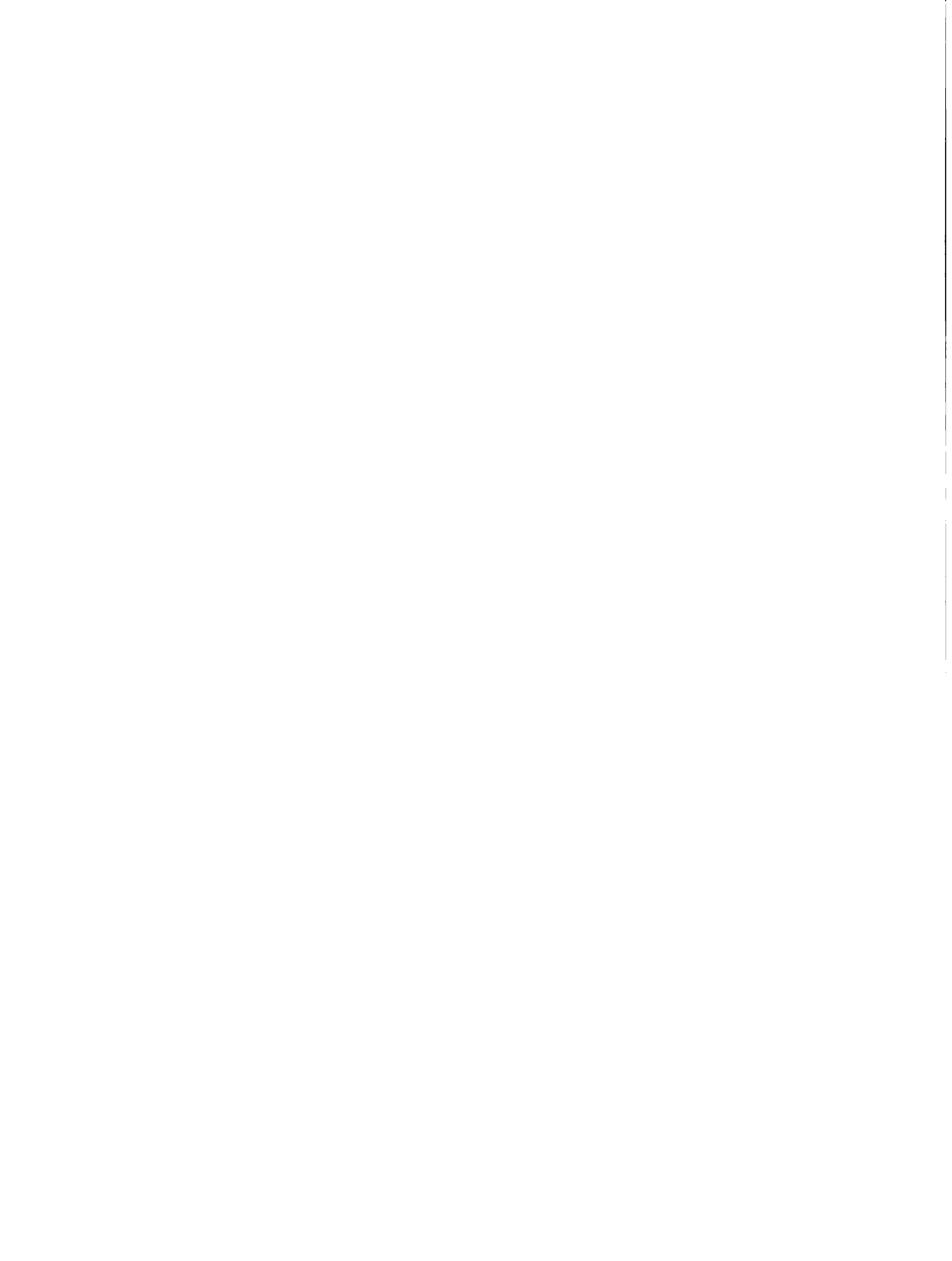
The purpose of this document, prepared by the Directorate for Education and Training (CECAP), is to present for the consideration of the Institute's technical and management units, in the regions and at Headquarters, IICA's policy in the area of education and training, including its political and technical mandates, objectives, lines of institutional cooperation and respective strategies.

"Education and training for competitive and sustainable agriculture" is one of IICA's six strategic areas. This document sets out the Institute's responsibility in this area, i.e., IICA's overall policy and operating framework in the field of education and training. It is promoted, supported and implemented by the institution as a whole, marking a departure from the traditional approach, under which each topic was implemented by a single, specific unit was responsible for implementing each topic.

The material presented is the result of a comprehensive process of consultations carried out both within IICA and with its partners. The process began at the internal level in April 1998, when a group of 14 IICA specialists met in Montevideo to draw up a baseline document that was then enriched and adjusted with the comments obtained via an electronic consultation of 41 officials and directors of the Institute's five Regional Centers and at Headquarters.

IICA's Convention, the resolutions of the IABA, the recommendations of the ministerial and agribusiness fora, and the text of the 1998-2002 Medium Term Plan, provided the frame of reference for the work carried out.

External contributions were obtained by systematizing the information from technical and political reports and declarations, such as the documents of the Presidential Summits, the OAS, the IDB, the



World Bank, the ministerial and agribusiness fora, and other sources quoted below.

Also taken into consideration were the contributions of agricultural educators, the results of surveys among deans and the senior management of faculties and schools of agricultural sciences, and the opinions expressed at a wide range of regional and national events held in the countries with IICA's support over the last four years.

Finally, we should like to point out that the contents of this document-both the technical aspects and the organizational considerations involved in their implementation- are flexible and subject to constant review, based on the needs of the member countries and the experience acquired in implementing them.

Jaime A. Viñas-Roman
Director

Mission of the Directorate of the Strategic Area

*"Education and training for competitive
and sustainable agriculture"*

To coordinate and provide specialized technical cooperation aimed at supporting and implementing efforts to:

- a. promote and facilitate the regional and inter-American dialogue on the integration of education; and
- b. enhance the effectiveness, quality and relevance of processes for the training of human resources for agriculture and rural development.

Education and Training for competitive and sustainable agriculture

- I. Historical background**
- II. Thematic background**
- III. International vision**
- IV. The present status of
agricultural education
and training**
- V. Bibliography**

1. Historical background

IICA has a long history of cooperation with agricultural education in LAC, which began with the implementation of Project 39 of the OAS Technical Cooperation Program entitled "Technical Education to Improve Agriculture and Rural Life" (1951-1966).

At that time, the assessment of agricultural education indicated that the curricula of Latin American universities did not include topics and specialties that were of key importance for the economic and social development of the countries.

Based on the findings of the assessment, Project 39 focused its action on promoting the development of formal education institutions and direct training through national and international courses and in-service training. (Over 10,000 Latin American professionals were trained over the fifteen years that the project was in operation.)

Later, in 1961, the "Regional Cooperative Program for Postgraduate Education" was set up to introduce new teaching methods, orientation for semi-specialization, the diversification of courses, education for graduate students, the integration of education with research and extension, university reform and external financial and technical assistance.

At the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Institute's Board of Directors of the Institute, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1967, there was a decisive refocusing of the IICA's work in this field. It was decided that technical cooperation for the countries should be implemented to complement the direct education that was being provided by the Education and Research Center (CEI) in Turrialba, through "Basic Program 1: Higher Agricultural

Education," whose mission consisted of efforts to strengthen national agricultural education institutions.¹

Subsequently, in the Institute's General Plan (1971-1980), a strategy was proposed for strengthening institutions and organizations in the rural sector, and a "Program to Strengthen Education Institutions" implemented, targeted at higher and vocational education institutions, and agricultural extension organizations.

Line II, "Education for Rural Development," was established in 1977 in order to support and promote the efforts to transform the education of the host of people who were, or would be, involved at every level and in every area of the agricultural sector.

This line of work consisted of two programs. One was called "Planning of Education for the Agricultural Sector," designed to establish and strengthen agricultural education research and planning mechanisms each country. The other was "Execution of the Agricultural Education Policy," which had five components: policies and programs; evaluation of the programs, institutions and needs of the sector; administration of education; coordination of agricultural education programs and plans; and continuous training for the technical personnel of organizations in the agricultural sector of the countries.

Withdrawal from, and reentry into, the field

In the mid-1980s, despite the outstanding success and prestige achieved through its cooperation with the countries, IICA formally abandoned its cooperation efforts in the field of education. The argument used to justify this decision was that "training cut across all the Institute' activities" and that formal education was the responsibility of CATIE. This decision, deeply regretted by the education institutions of

^{1/} At the end of the 1950s, there were 45 schools of agronomy, veterinary sciences, forestry and animal husbandry; by the end of 1969 there were 155; there are now over 500.

LAC, brought to an end nearly thirty years of uninterrupted work with the member countries.

When current Director General Carlos Aquino Gonzalez took office in 1994, he received a mandate from the member countries for IICA to once again venture into the field of education and training for agriculture, gearing it toward support for formal and nonformal, professional and technical teaching-learning processes, as a means of improving the skills of human resources in the agricultural sector of the region.

Specifically, it was proposed that IICA contribute to modernizing curricula and strengthening agricultural higher education institutions, in order to meet the new challenges for agriculture posed by the expansion and integration of markets and the need for competitiveness and sustainability.

In the area of training, the 1994-1998 Medium Term Plan called for the implementation of activities in subject areas of priority to the countries, and cooperation with national public and private organizations in designing and implementing training strategies and programs for different actors in the agricultural sectors of the countries.

It is also worth noting that, at its Eighteenth Regular Meeting, held in San Jose, Costa Rica in October 1998, the Executive Committee approved the Institute's Medium Term Plan for the period 1998-2002, which includes Education and Training as a Strategic Area and as a priority topic for cooperation.

11. Thematic background

As the twenty-first century beckons, in the Americas and, indeed, the entire world, the production of agricultural goods and services is being driven by increased demand for high-quality, safe, cheap foodstuffs. The growth of national economies and wealth depends on countries possessing and using the know-how needed to meet the demand (and having the capacity to generate it), almost as much as on capital and labor.

In the case of agriculture, there is a direct link between education and development. It is argued that no new, good businesses or enterprises will develop in the agricultural sector, nor will existing ones be able to grow, unless competent agricultural professionals and technicians are available. On the other hand, the generation of employment and the higher incomes necessary to combat rural poverty and ensure the sustainable development of natural resources depend, in large measure, on such new and competitive agricultural enterprises.

This is what makes the development of human capital so important: training citizens, technicians, producers and professionals, equipping them with pertinent, up-to-date know-how and management skills, and the capacity to access the information they need. This the key to, and the most effective means of, raising the competitiveness of agricultural production within a framework of equity and sustainability for present and future generations.

Hence the important new challenge facing formal and nonformal systems and centers of basic, vocational and professional agricultural education. They must train people to take the lead in incorporating technological advances into production, raising productivity and competitiveness, improving business management processes in the public and private sectors, participating in the modernization of the State apparatus, and facilitating the efforts to successfully meet the challenges

IV. The current status of agricultural education and training

The quality and relevance required of national vocational and higher agricultural education systems and agricultural training have changed in recent years. They must now be able to respond more rapidly and effectively to the changing thematic needs and competitiveness resulting from technological advances, market opening, the leading role increasingly being played by the private sector and the State's new role, and integration processes.

These needs are changing faster than the traditional capacity of educational centers to adapt to them. Very few centers have the institutional culture and the mechanisms required to keep pace with curricula and research and extension systems that are constantly being updated. It is for this reason that agricultural education is being overhauled at every level, and in almost all of IICA's member countries.²

a. Education

About 500 educational centers in LAC offer university-level courses in the agricultural sciences. When these are combined with the considerably larger number of vocational and training institutions, it is clear that social investment in the subject is enormous.

Analyses of the current situation have revealed that these institutions are facing a crisis in many areas, including their products, curricula, teaching systems, resources, the quality and capabilities of

^{2/} A clarification is in order. The term "training" refers to short, non-formal, teaching-learning processes through which the participants acquire new know-how and skills related to a specific field of work. The term "education," on the other hand, means formal, medium and long-term processes through which knowledge is imparted, accompanied by the shaping of attitudes, habits and values, and the acquisition of expertise and skills.

teaching staff, researchers and students, extension, the results of research, the market that they serve or should serve, funding and administrative management, and a tarnished public image.

In other words, vocational and higher agricultural education have problems vis-a-vis their relevance to society and the quality of their products, problems whose strategic impact is increasingly significant due to the speed of the globalization. To this must be added the new need for evaluation and accreditation as a result of regional integration, which calls for the standardization of academic norms and the recognition of qualifications so as to permit professionals to work freely in different countries.

The foregoing conclusions are based on information obtained from two sources. Firstly, the Institute analyzed the findings of studies published over the past fifteen years by numerous national and international institutions specializing in agricultural education in LAC, which confirm the existence of the crisis mentioned. The second source entailed direct observation, through cooperation and participation in IICA-organized technical events in 28 western hemisphere countries over the past four years.

b. Training

In broad terms, agricultural training is often characterized by an absence of national strategies and policies. As a result, it is carried out without a framework of objectives, topics, methods and a target population tailored to the needs of the countries.

In practice, training is geared more to the capabilities and interests of the supply than the needs of the actors in the agricultural production and trade chain. To this must be added the fact that the management of training is often inadequate and flawed in terms of planning, implementation and evaluation.

It is also clear that training is generally based on a traditional concept of the agricultural sector, which fails to take account of critical areas such as agricultural business management, the diversification of production, sustainability, agroindustry, the management of market and price information, international trade, the management and conservation of the environment, gender and equity, etc.

At the operating level, the efforts and initiatives of training institutions are not coordinated, thus reducing their coverage and potential impact. Many institutions focus on providing training in specific geographic areas and topics for specific target groups. On the other hand, there are no institutions that cater to other actors interested in a number of strategically important topics.

Moreover, studies in which IICA has been involved in a number of Central and South American countries reveal that the supply is dispersed and not geared to the demand, that advantage is not being taken of new technological resources, that actions are redundant and overlap, and that, to some extent, the training being provided is obsolete or not relevant.

These needs are changing faster than the traditional capacity of educational centers to adapt to them. Very few centers have the institutional culture and the mechanisms required to constantly update curricula and research and extension systems. It is for this reason that agricultural education and training units are being overhauled at every level, and in almost all of IICA's member countries.

In short, the quality and relevance required of national vocational and higher agricultural and rural education systems and agricultural training have become greater and more complex in recent years. They must now be able to respond more rapidly and effectively to the changing thematic needs and competitiveness resulting from technological advances, market opening, the leading role increasingly being played by the private sector and the State's new role, and integration processes.

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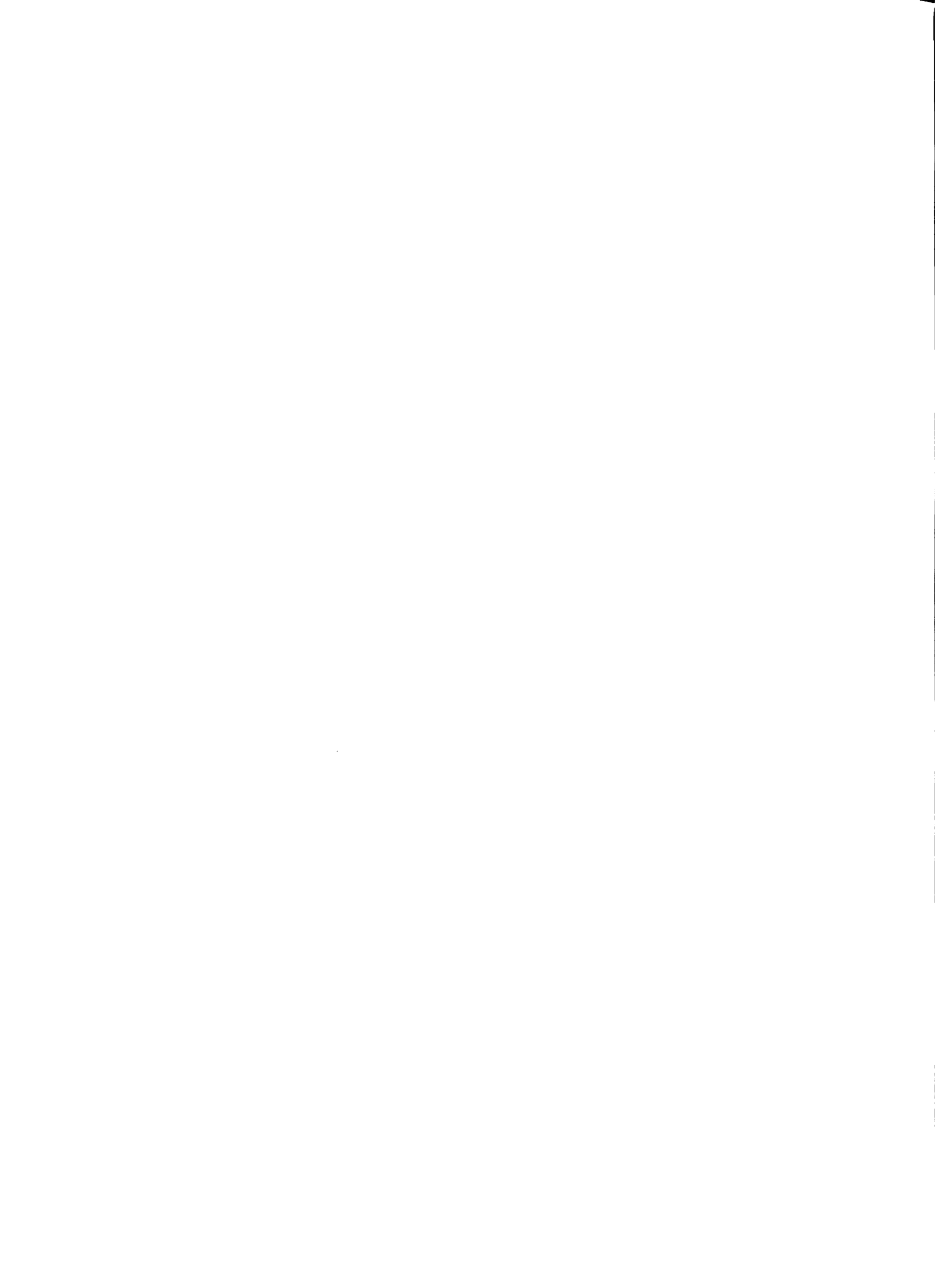
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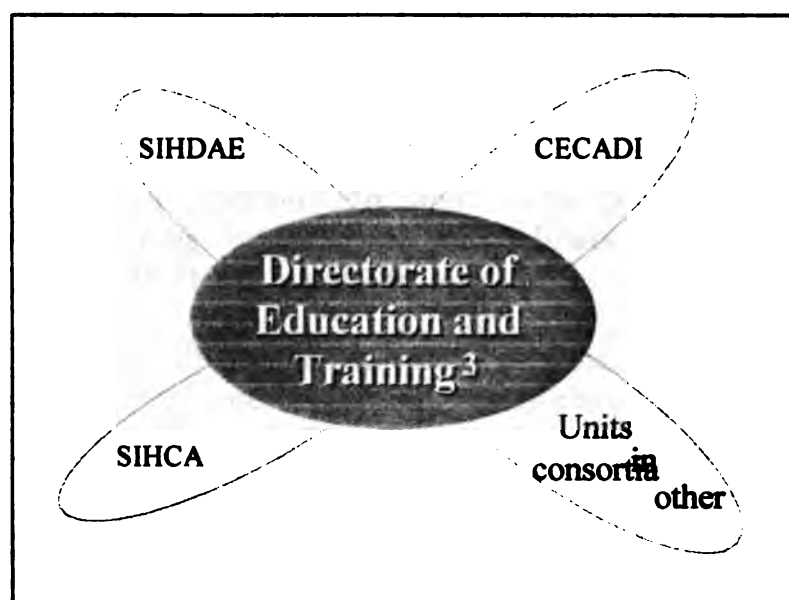
Education and Training for competitive and sustainable agriculture

- I. Specialized technical units**
- II. Objectives of cooperation**
- III. Lines of action**
- IV. Types of cooperation activities carried out by the specialized units**

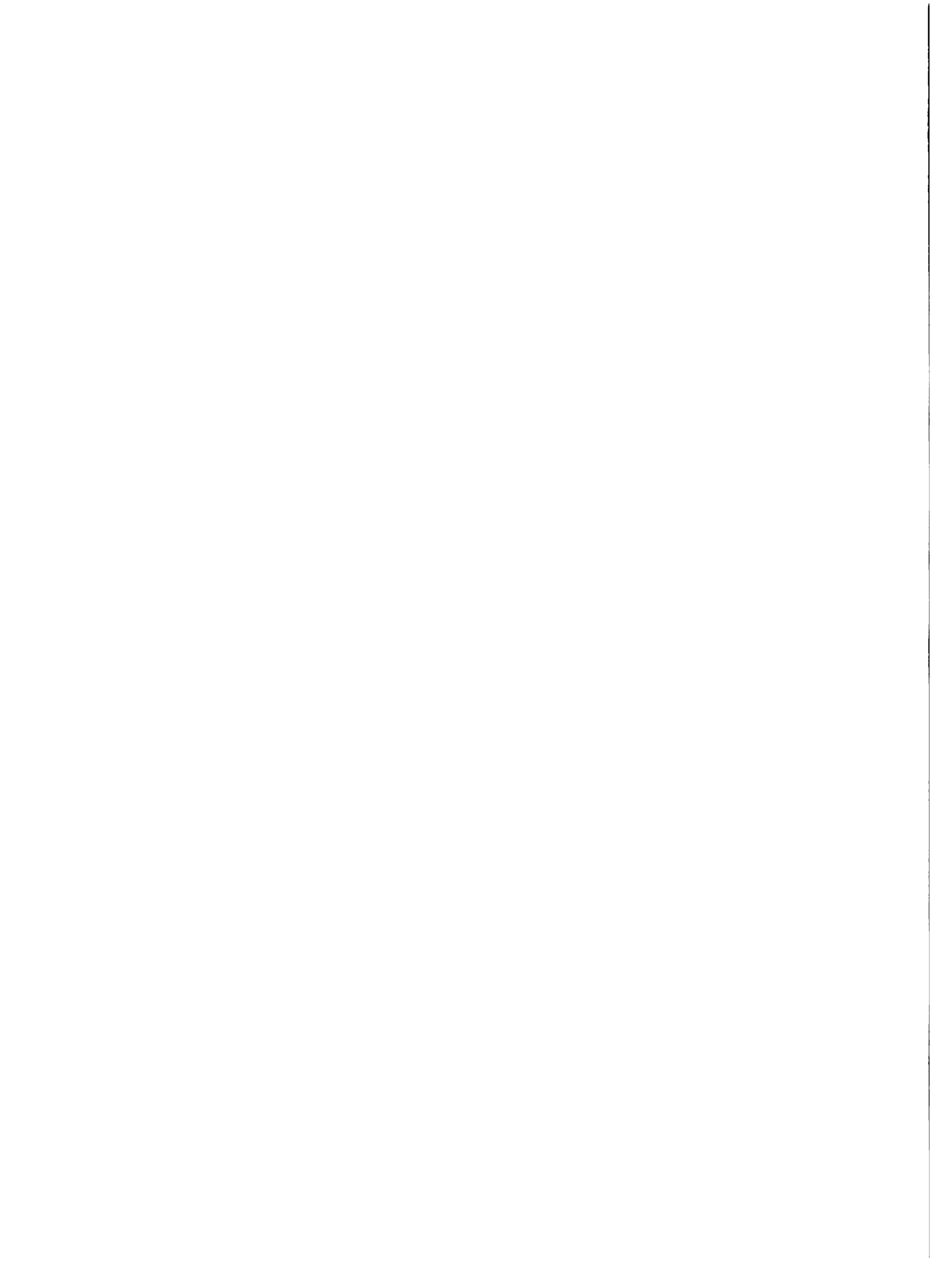
1. Technical units specializing in education and training

- Center for Education and Training (CECAP)
- Center for Distance Training (CECADI)
- Hemispheric Training System for Agricultural Development (SIHCA)
- Hemispheric System for the Development of Higher Agricultural Education (SIHDEA)

Diagram 1



^{3/} The Center for Education and Training, CECAP, exercises the Directorate of the Strategic Area "Education and Training for competitive and sustainable agriculture."



Mission of the Directorate of Education and Training (CECAP)

To coordinate and provide specialized institutional technical cooperation to support and implement efforts aimed at: a) promoting and facilitating the regional and inter-American dialogue for education and integration; and b) enhancing the effectiveness, quality and relevance of the training of human resources for agriculture and rural development.

Mission of CECADI

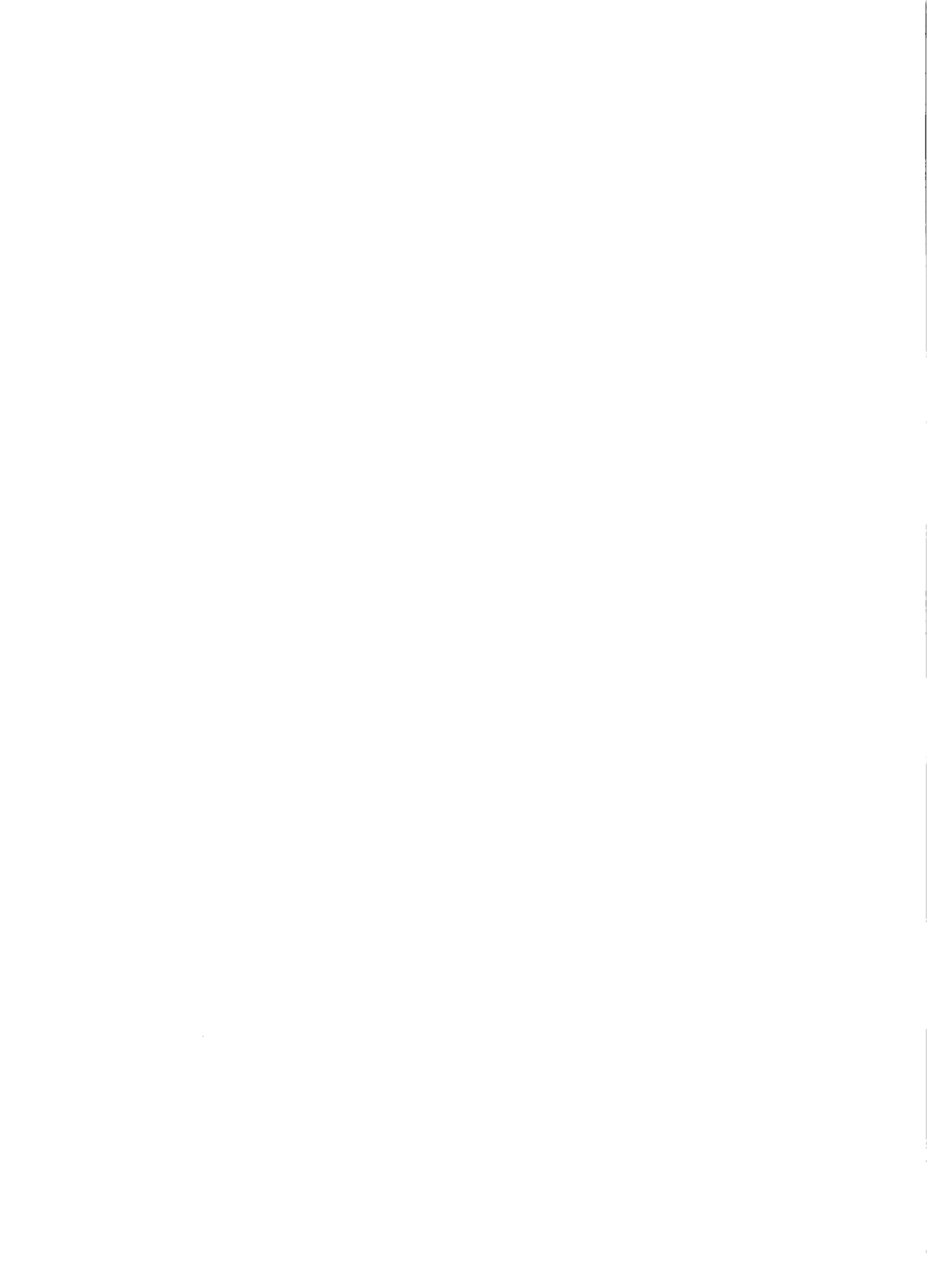
To provide pertinent and high-quality distance education and training in IICA's strategic areas of cooperation, using multimedia and telecommunications technology.

Mission of SIHCA

To establish coordination and exchange mechanisms among training institutions; to coordinate the supply of training with the demand through a hemispheric network of training institutions; to coordinate and promote training activities and studies, and the creation and operation of an information system on the subject.

Mission of SIHDEA

To promote the creation of a hemispheric network of higher agricultural education institutions and contribute to the coordination of their development efforts, and of their supply of training and technical assistance services with the new demands for the transformation of agriculture.



11. Objectives of IICA's cooperation

To promote the establishment of, and support:

National, regional and hemispheric programs to train human resources for agriculture

Targeted at agribusiness personnel and public and private officials, on strategic topics.

Programs for the modernization of curricula and the organizational development of agricultural training and (higher, vocational and rural basic) education centers.

(Institutional models; modernization of curricula; organizational strengthening for change; study programs and professional profiles; strategic planning; teacher training).

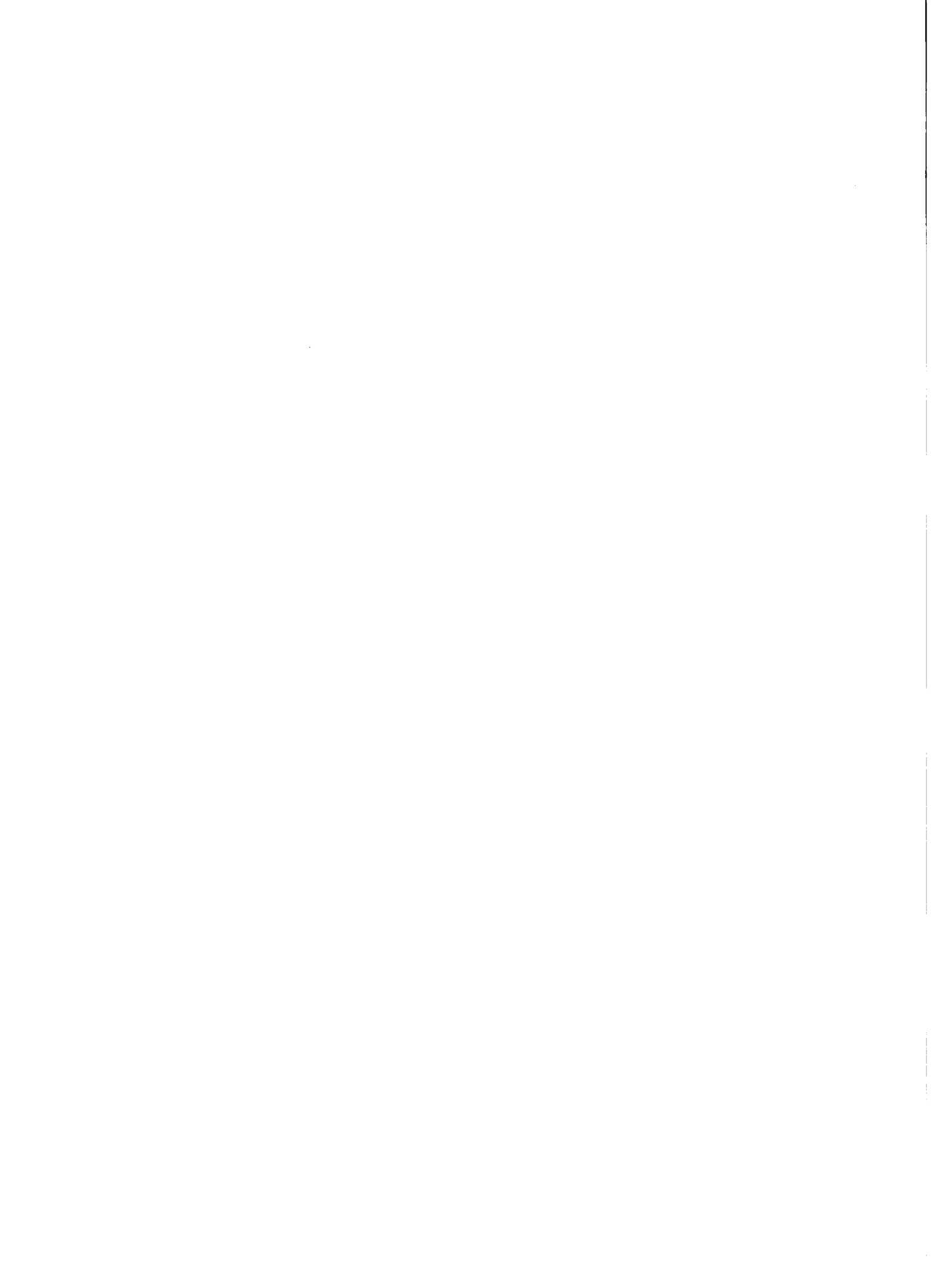
National and regional programs for the evaluation and accreditation of agricultural education

(Promotion of dialogue and facilitation; self-evaluation and accreditation models and systems; working methods; training).

III. Lines of action

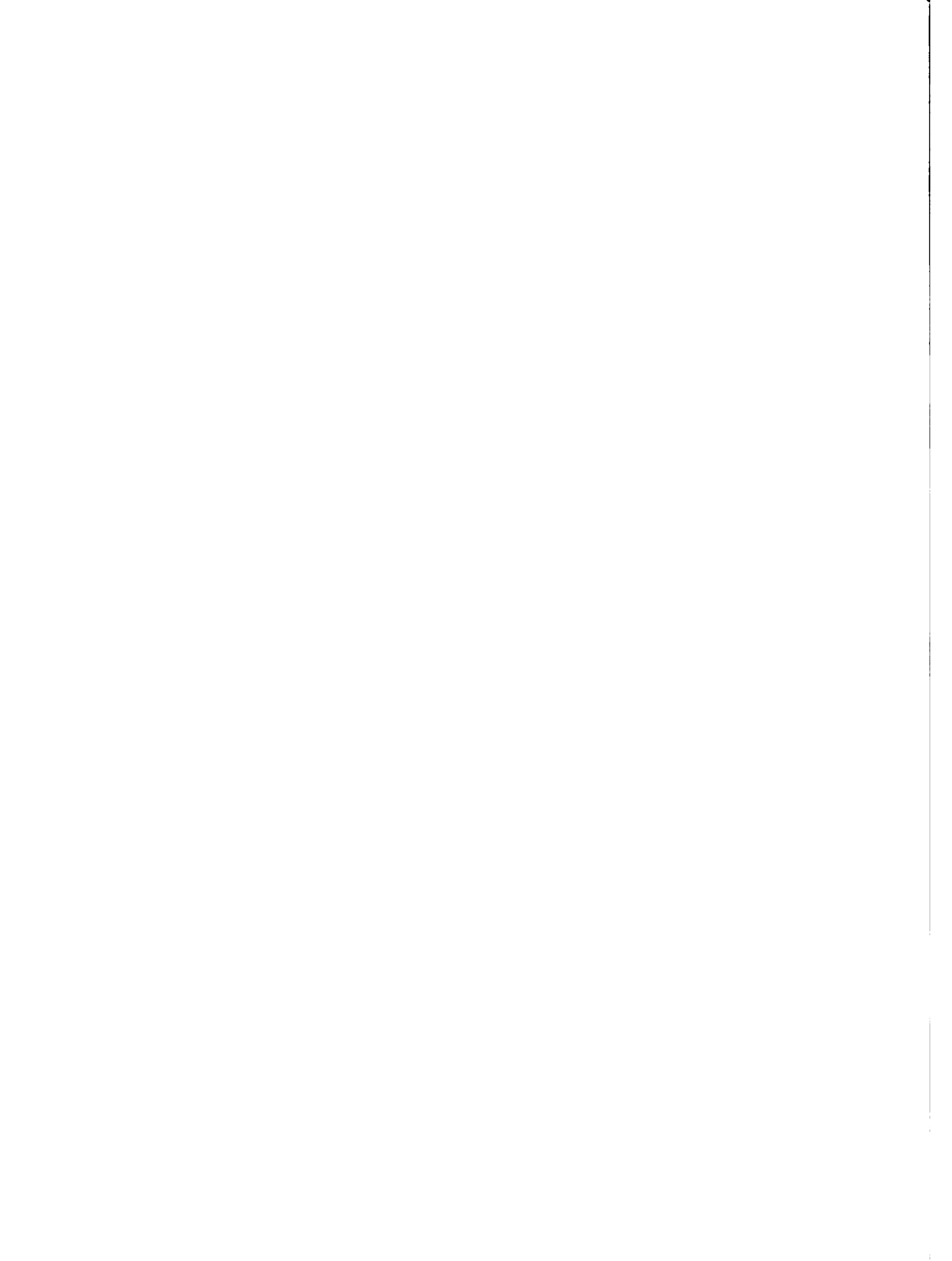
The Institute has three lines of action in this field: training in strategic topics; the modernization of agricultural education; and dialogue, studies and information. The following tables detail the objectives, strategies, activities and cooperation mechanisms used.

1. Training in Strategic Topics			
Objective	Strategic aims	Cooperation activities	Mechanisms
<p>To support training programs for agribusiness operators and the staff of public and private enterprises.</p> <p>Possible topics:</p> <p>International trade; integration processes; technology innovation and transfer systems; training; agricultural health; management of agricultural and agroindustrial microenterprises, gender and rural youth; modernization of the institutional framework; rural agricultural extension; others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To establish a distance training network to provide services to the Institute's member countries. ▪ To obtain and transfer distance training technology and electronic media in general. ▪ To articulate the supply of training with the demand, through a hemispheric network of training institutions. ▪ To systematize and keep track of IICA's supply of training, and its implementation. ▪ To use the local resources available. ▪ To design courses and workshops tailored to the needs of the clientele. ▪ To enter into <i>ad hoc</i> agreements with agribusiness organizations and institutions in the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design of training programs, support for their organization and advisory assistance for their implementation. ▪ Design of and advisory assistance with refresher training programs for agricultural professionals and teachers of basic and technical agricultural and rural education. ▪ Organize and facilitate services for distance training programs and events and teleconferences. ▪ Design and implementation of, and advisory assistance for, teacher training programs and events for agricultural schools and universities. ▪ Design of, and advisory assistance for, training programs for rural extension agents. 	<p>Courses</p> <p>Workshops</p> <p>Seminars</p> <p>Teaching materials</p> <p>Advisory assistance</p> <p>Alliances with other organizations</p>



2. Modernization of agricultural education

Objective	Strategic aims	Cooperation activities	Mechanisms
<p>To contribute to the modernization of agricultural education in order to improve the relevance and quality of its products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To facilitate scenarios for horizontal exchanges and cooperation among educational centers. ▪ To promote and support mechanisms for evaluation, accreditation and recognition of qualifications. ▪ To facilitate links among educational institutions, regional integration processes and agribusiness associations. ▪ To promote and support networks, fora, cooperative programs, consortia, etc. ▪ To support refresher training programs for agricultural professionals and teachers from the agricultural and rural basic and technical education system. ▪ To strengthen agricultural training mechanisms, systems and institutions (technical and educational aspects, advisory assistance, improvement of technical and administrative processes, links and networks). ▪ To establish alliances with other organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Studies and advisory assistance for the development of national and regional systems for the accreditation of agricultural education institutions. ▪ Design and implementation of training programs and events for academics to initiate and lead processes for the modernization of their institutions. * ▪ Advisory assistance for agricultural education centers for activities related to the modernization of curricula. <p>* (Strategic planning; methods for the modernization of curricula; development of teams and methods for managing institutional change; creativity; impact evaluation; leadership; studies of the organizational climate).</p>	<p>Workshops</p> <p>Conferences</p> <p>Teleconferences</p> <p>Seminars</p> <p>Fora</p> <p>Advisory assistance</p> <p>Exchanges (students and teachers)</p> <p>Alliances with other organizations</p>



3. Dialogue, studies and information

Objective	Strategic aims	Cooperation activities	Mechanisms
<p>To help promote and facilitate regional processes for dialogue and the integration of education. (Information, studies, events)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To encourage horizontal cooperation among national and regional agricultural education and training institutions. ▪ To systematize and disseminate experiences regarding modernization of agricultural education ▪ To strengthen networks for exchanges using electronic and conventional methods. ▪ To publish and distribute educational textbooks and technical articles. ▪ To maintain and make available to users up-to-date data and information on agricultural education and training. ▪ To disseminate strategic information among agricultural entrepreneurs in the hemisphere. ▪ To establish alliances with other organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To organize and facilitate teleconferencing services. ▪ To support the publication and distribution of educational textbooks and technical articles. ▪ Design and carrying out of case studies of processes for the modernization of agricultural education institutions. ▪ To support the conducting of prospective studies on strategic topics for the development of human resources. ▪ To promote, organize and facilitate national, regional and hemispheric conferences, seminars and meetings. 	<p>Internet</p> <p>Publications</p> <p>Events</p> <p>Alliances with other organizations</p>

IV. Types of cooperation activities carried out by the units specializing in education and training

<p>1. Studies and advisory assistance for the development of national and regional systems for the evaluation and accreditation of higher and vocational agricultural education institutions. (CECAP)</p>
<p>2. Design, implementation, and advisory assistance for the implementation, of teacher training programs and events for agricultural schools and universities. (CECAP)</p>
<p>3. Design and implementation of training programs and events for the management staff and academics of agricultural education institutions, in order for them to initiate and lead processes for the modernization of their institutions. (CECAP)</p>
<p>4. Advisory assistance for agricultural education centers with activities for the updating of curricula and management of modernization processes. (CECAP)</p>
<p>5. Design of (in situ and distance) training programs on strategic topics, support for their organization and advisory assistance for their implementation. Targeted at agribusiness operators and the staff of public and private enterprises. (CECAP/SIHCA)</p>
<p>6. Design and advisory assistance for the implementation of refresher training programs for agricultural professionals and teachers of agricultural and rural, basic and technical education. (CECAP/SIHCA/SIHDEA)</p>

7. Design of, and advisory assistance in carrying out, case studies on processes for the modernization of agricultural education institutions. (CECAP)
8. Design of, and advisory assistance in carrying out, national studies on the supply and demand for agricultural training. (SIHCA)
9. Design of, and advisory assistance in establishing, national training systems for actors in the agricultural and rural sector. (SIHCA)
10. To organize and facilitate services for distance training programs and events. (CECADI)
11. To organize and facilitate teleconferencing services. (CECADI)
12. To promote, support and facilitate regional and hemispheric processes for dialogue and the integration of education. (information, studies, events) (CECAP/SIHDEA)
13. To support the publication and distribution of educational textbooks and technical articles. (CECAP/CECADI/SIHCA/SIHDEA)
14. To design and provide advisory assistance for the implementation of training programs for rural extension agents. (CECAP/SIHCA)

Education and Training for competitive and sustainable agriculture

I. Policy Framework for Cooperation

II. General Strategy

a. Hemispheric level

b. Regional level

1. Policy framework for cooperation

Ten criteria were established to serve as the policy framework for the Institute's action in this area.

One. Despite institutional, national and regional specificities, the problem of agricultural education and training is one aspect of the general problem faced by formal and non-formal educational systems in the countries and their social function as a whole. Therefore, initiatives and efforts must be articulated between the ministries of agriculture and education, as well as with them, and with non-governmental organizations and university authorities.

Two. In order to provide sustained support to efforts to modernize education and training, it is necessary to concentrate on how to make the necessary changes and generate socially feasible processes within the educational systems and centers themselves, as well as to overcome resistance and involve actors and interest groups from the surrounding milieu.

Three. Efforts under way to ensure relevance and quality in agricultural education and training are scattered and generally do not have reciprocal linkages with similar undertakings. This, combined with the limited resources available for the task, means that it is of strategic importance to foster the creation of standing forums, cooperative programs and other means of cooperation that facilitate exchanges and joint undertakings and focus the demands for support received by IICA.

Four. In general, educational and training centers are isolated from the environment in which they operate. Thus, it is necessary to improve communication and exchanges between them and with other actors of the agricultural system, including agribusiness associations, representatives of the banking system, legislators and the public sector.

This would facilitate the incorporation of external viewpoints and contribute to overcoming narrow corporate approaches.

Five. In addition to its action in this specific thematic area (support for the modernization of agricultural education and training), IICA will focus efforts on training programs that address strategic issues in high demand in the countries (training --both distance and *in-situ*-- as an instrument of cooperation).

Six. The supply of institutional training (training as an instrument of cooperation) will be provided through a system-wide organization or through networks, taking into account the action of part or parts of IICA's thematic and geographic units, in coordination with the Directorate of the Strategic Area "Education and Training for Competitive and Sustainable Agriculture" (Diagram 3).

Seven. This organization of networks will be governed by a single institutional policy for the area and the procedures for the programming and allocation of approved resources. It will operate in the form of Consortia-related projects (with resources provided by the Institute's thematic and geographic units in accordance with their differentiated but complementary roles). (Diagram 2)

Eight. Since IICA does not have education and training specialists stationed in the countries but does have a subsystem of specialized units (Diagram 1), funds will be earmarked for "Education and training for competitive and sustainable agriculture." The thematic and geographic units will be able to access these resources in accordance with their differentiated roles and subject to approval of the Consortia-related projects in which they participate.

Nine. Advisory groups will be established at the hemispheric and regional levels, composed of agribusiness operators, legislators, specialists, staff from integration systems and others (associations of higher and vocational agricultural education, professional associations,

