



**THE MARRAKESH DECISION AND FOOD SECURITY: CONTRIBUTION  
OF THE INTER-AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATION  
ON AGRICULTURE (IICA)**

**SUBMISSION BY THE IICA**

The following submission, dated 25 February 2016, is being circulated at the request of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

The purpose of this document is to inform Member countries of the World Trade Organization (WTO) about the technical cooperation activities that were carried out by the IICA in 2015 to support Latin American and Caribbean countries in the area of food and nutrition security.

One of the objectives of the IICA's 2014-2018 Medium-Term Plan (MTP) is to improve agriculture's contribution to food security. Accordingly, the Institute supports its Member States in developing policies, strategies and institutional frameworks to enhance the contribution of agriculture, and especially family farming, to this objective. The IICA provides technical cooperation through four flagship projects, which are geared towards the competitiveness and sustainability of agricultural chains for food security and economic development; inclusion in agriculture and rural areas; resilience and comprehensive risk management in agriculture; and the productivity and sustainability of family farming for food security and the rural economy. The Institute's contributions to the food security<sup>1</sup> of the Americas are based on the four dimensions of food security established by FAO: availability to food, access to food, food utilization and food stability.

## **1 MULTINATIONAL ACTION BY THE IICA**

1.1. In 2015, the Food Security Observatory of the Americas was consulted by more than 14,000 users from all over the world. This information tool is free of charge and provides relevant data - in both English and Spanish - on food security in the Americas. For further information, please visit <http://www.infoagro.net/programas/Seguridad/default.aspx>.

1.2. Family farming in the Latin American and Caribbean region is important not only due to economic and social characteristics, but because of its vulnerability to losses deriving from unfavourable production conditions. For these reasons, the IICA, in conjunction with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), prepared two information bulletins on food security in the context of family farming: "*Short food supply chain as an alternative for promoting family agriculture*" and "*Risk management for family agriculture in LAC*". These documents can be viewed at [http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37745/S1500087\\_en.pdf?sequence=1](http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/37745/S1500087_en.pdf?sequence=1) and [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287214912\\_Risk\\_Management\\_for\\_Family\\_Agriculture\\_in\\_Latin\\_America\\_and\\_the\\_Caribbean](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/287214912_Risk_Management_for_Family_Agriculture_in_Latin_America_and_the_Caribbean), respectively.

1.3. The Institute, in conjunction with the Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CARAPN) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), published "Hunger and Nutrition: from belly-full to body-fuel". This text takes a conceptual approach to world

<sup>1</sup> IICA, 2009, "IICA's Definition of Food Security". Available at:

[http://repiica.iica.int/otrosdocumentos/SeguridadAlimentarias\\_Quees\\_Eng.pdf](http://repiica.iica.int/otrosdocumentos/SeguridadAlimentarias_Quees_Eng.pdf)

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hunger, its causes, and global efforts to eliminate extreme forms of hunger, and examines the complexities of establishing a food and nutrition policy system. It can be viewed at <http://www.ica.int/sites/default/files/publications/files/2015/B3665i.pdf>.

1.4. For the last six years, the IICA has collaborated with the World Food Programme (WFP) as a member of the Technical Review Panel for the Purchase for Progress initiative. In Honduras and Guatemala, this initiative has promoted the development of family farming in the maize and bean chains, and has sought to improve food security by raising income levels among small-scale farmers, using the WFP's purchasing power.

1.5. The Institute is part of the Inter-American Task Force on Non-Communicable Diseases, which was established to help tackle the root causes of non-communicable diseases by ensuring the proper production, processing, marketing and use of food in the Americas. The Task Force is chaired by the Pan-American Health Organization, and its members include bodies such as the OAS, the IDB, the World Bank and CELAC.

1.6. The IICA seeks to promote the market integration of producers, and therefore greater **access to food**, by facilitating the strengthening of market information systems in the Americas. It does this by supporting the Market Information Organization of the Americas (MIOA), which disseminates relevant and transparent information on the markets and agricultural products of the 33 member countries of the Americas. For further information, please visit <http://www.mioa.org>.

1.7. In order to improve the biological utilization of food in the countries of the Americas, steps were taken to facilitate the effective participation of public sector professionals in meetings, forums and committees of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Codex Alimentarius, where plant and animal health and food safety standards were discussed and approved. Furthermore, all IICA member countries are working on alliances and projects at national level with the relevant entities, so as to address these issues with IICA support.

1.8. With a view to improving the competitiveness of family farming, the IICA has supported various cooperation projects in the countries and subregions through joint regional programmes that promote technological innovation in the agricultural sector. The Cooperative Programme for the Technological Development of Agri-food and Agro-industries in the Southern Cone (PROCISUR), the Cooperative Programme on Agricultural Research, Development, and Innovation for the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS), and the Cooperative Research and Technology Programme for the Northern Region (PROCINORTE) focus on research, public policy, and knowledge sharing and management in relation to topics such as marketing models, genetic resources, and animal and plant health, all of which are linked to the availability and biological utilization of food.

1.9. In parallel, the Regional Agricultural Technology Fund (FONTAGRO), with the technical support of the IICA, supported the implementation of eight projects on family farming and adapting to climate change, and livestock and climate change, in countries of the Central American and Andean region, as well as other projects relating to capacity-building in the area of agricultural research.

1.10. With IICA support, the Open and Distance Learning University of Mexico was able to offer a master's degree course on food security, which brought together 290 participants from ten countries in the hemisphere.

1.11. Central America:

- a. Action against coffee rust: The IICA, in conjunction with the Regional Cooperative Programme for the Technological Development and Modernization of Coffee Production (PROMECAFÉ) and various Central American national institutions, continued to implement the regional programme for the integrated management of coffee rust. Coffee rust has had a serious impact in Central America, jeopardizing food security for small-scale coffee growers and pickers. More information is available at <http://www.promecafe.org/site>.

- b. Implementation of the Regional Programme for Research and Innovation in Agricultural Value Chains (PRIICA), a project funded by the European Union in collaboration with, and in support of, the countries of Central America. The programme seeks to increase the availability of, and access to, food through agricultural research and the marketing of tomatoes, avocados, yucca and potatoes, which form an essential part of the diet of low-income families in the Central American region. The programme is being implemented in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, to the benefit of some 5,000 producers. For more information, please visit <http://www.priica.sictanet.org>

1.12. Caribbean: The IICA plays a leading role in implementing the Agricultural Policy Programme (APP) funded by the European Union in association with CARDI and CARICOM. The programme covers the 15 CARIFORUM countries and seeks to enhance the agricultural sector's regional capacities in respect of poverty eradication. It sets out to improve the regional availability of food products such as roots and tubers (e.g. yucca and sweet potatoes), minor species, citrus fruits and spices, all of which are produced mainly in family farming. Other actions under the programme include strengthening the capacity of groups of producers in terms of business management and market link-ups.

## 2 ACTIONS IN VARIOUS LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

Listed below, by country, are some of the main activities carried out by the IICA to support its Member States. The activities are grouped according to the four dimensions of food security.

### 2.1. *Food availability*<sup>2</sup>:

- a. Antigua and Barbuda: Identification of the sweet potato chain as a priority for the country, due to its production potential and its accessibility for consumers in 70% of the country.
- b. Argentina: Institutional strengthening and technical assistance for producers in Mendoza with regard to irrigation systems for the horticultural sector (IDB project).
- c. Bahamas: Actions to strengthen productive capacities in permapiculture, benefiting 80 producers, and in small ruminant production and nutrition. The IICA joined forces with CARDI, farmers' associations and the Ministry of Education to enhance the sweet potato and manioc production capacity of more than 60 farmers.
- d. Barbados: The IICA facilitated the organization of a course given by Mexican professionals on artificial insemination in the sheep-farming sector, with a view to improving the reproductive capacity of the country's sheep flocks.
- e. Belize: In conjunction with other national and regional bodies, the IICA carried out actions to strengthen capacity and infrastructure with a view to the expansion of poultry and small ruminant production. These actions benefited 130 producers from 22 rural villages. The Institute also contributed to the strengthening of fruit and vegetable production capacity in three communities in the Belize district, and collaborated with the National Food Security and Nutrition Commission, which works to benefit vulnerable socio-economic groups and indigenous farming families in the south of the country.
- f. Bolivia: The IICA supported efforts to disseminate production technologies to 30 Andean grain-producing (quinoa and cañahua) and sheep-farming families in the Rodeo and Sunavi communities. It also supported efforts to implement the evaluation and planning tool for strengthening the National Control System for Organic Production (EPS), which is aimed at organic food production and priority sectors, i.e. those producing quinoa, cocoa, chestnuts and coffee. The IICA also helped to strengthen capacities with a view to

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<sup>2</sup> FAO, 2015. Food availability: The availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports (including food aid). See "An Introduction to the Basic Concepts of Food Security": <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf>.

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the *in situ* conservation of genetic resources for food and agriculture; this activity focused on native species and benefited 150 people.

- g. Dominica: The IICA promoted and supported the establishment of rabbit farms, this animal being a source of dietary protein for people in rural areas, and composting facilities for vegetable production in the north-eastern basin. It also participated in the rapid value chain assessment for the development of banana and malanga. These activities benefited around 285 farmers in rural areas, including groups of women.
- h. Grenada; Antigua and Barbuda: The IICA joined forces with FAO and other organizations to support capacity-building for young people in relation to the setting up of fruit and vegetable gardens in primary schools as part of FAO's Zero Hunger initiative. In Grenada, 56 students from the 4-H programme participated in this activity.
- i. Guatemala: Support was provided for the formulation of policies and instruments to promote fruit-farming. This project, aimed at eight priority fruit-growing chains, covers the formulation of a targeted policy and includes an investment programme.
- j. Guyana: The IICA helped to develop agri-business microenterprises in order to improve efficiency in the production of manioc and other vegetables and ensure the quality control of agro-industrial products. It worked with the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO to strengthen the capacities of experts, with a view to reducing fruit and vegetable crop losses.
- k. Haiti: The IICA supported the distribution of banana plants, manioc root shoots for propagation, and fruit tree seeds - an activity which benefited 322 families in four different areas of the country. It also helped to establish a collection of germplasm of endangered yam varieties, for the purposes of conservation, reproduction and distribution to producers.
- l. Jamaica: Technical capacity-building activities were organized with a view to developing alternative types of nutrient-rich fodder for small ruminants. These activities benefited 50 participants from the public and production sectors.
- m. Mexico: Within the framework of the IICA-SAGARPA agreement, the Institute contributed to the development and strengthening of capacities for the propagation of tropical plants such as pineapple, potato, cocoa, coconut, avocado, soursop and cascarilla, with a view to boosting the agri-food sector in the Caribbean region. Activities included courses on the clonal propagation of the above-mentioned tropical plants.
- n. Panama: The IICA worked with the National Food Security Programme to develop and implement projects focusing on the production of staple foods in the indigenous community of Ngäbe Buglé. These projects promoted production in family and community plots in exchange for vouchers during the sowing and growing period, benefiting 12 communities in six districts of the comarca. Other forms of support included providing seeds and facilitating economic resources for growing staple grains, garden vegetables, roots, tubers and inputs within the framework of support for the production of staple foods in the district of Mariato. This activity benefited 226 people.
- o. St. Kitts and Nevis: The Institute collaborated on projects to promote the sustainable management of water and greenhouses for the production of vegetables, tubers, paprika and tomatoes. These projects benefited 90 stakeholders. It also supported the strengthening of the production capacity of some 1,800 stakeholders in the breadfruit, nut, small ruminant (lamb and goat meat), swine and cattle chains.
- p. St. Vincent and the Grenadines: The IICA helped the Ministry of Agriculture to analyse the swine and sweet potato production chains and to develop its priorities with a view to strengthening priority chains. More than 100 stakeholders benefited from this activity.
- q. St Lucia: 45 beekeepers benefited from projects to develop more sustainable and higher value-added production systems.

- r. Venezuela: A capacity-building programme focusing on good practices and farm management improvement was implemented for 300 producers from Nestlé's dairy development scheme. A project was also undertaken to benefit some 90 companies producing balanced feedstuffs, poultry and eggs.

## 2.2. *Access to food*<sup>3</sup>:

- a. Ecuador: The IICA helped to design the new wholesale market in Ambato, which is aimed at production chains in the Sierra region (potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, onions, corn cobs, grains, and other vegetables). In doing so, it facilitated market access for 160 traders and 2,000 producers.
- b. Colombia: Through the "New Territories of Peace" programme, the IICA, in conjunction with the European Union and FAO, improved market links for 1,450 families in the vegetable, corn, bean, rice, melon and pineapple production chains in the departments of Guaviare, Bolívar and Atlántico.
- c. Grenada: Workshops were held to improve the organizational development and competitiveness of small ruminant producers, particularly in relation to financing and the marketing of goat meat.
- d. Honduras: More than 100 people participated in capacity-building activities with a view to adding value to the potato and coffee sectors through agri-tourism.
- e. Peru: The Institute collaborated on a study on quinoa production and the quinoa market, which will serve to promote the production and marketing of this Andean grain. The study may be viewed in Spanish at <http://www.iica.int/es/content/el-mercado-y-la-producci%C3%B3n-de-quinua-en-el-per%C3%BA>.
- f. St. Kitts and Nevis: Support was provided to implement projects aimed at modernizing swine, sheep, cattle and goat slaughterhouses. Other projects to receive support were those seeking to establish school gardens, and those concerning training programmes on adding value to agricultural products through vegetable, fruit and meat packing, and the processing of dried fruits, beverages, jams and flour.
- g. St. Vincent and the Grenadines: The IICA collaborated on a comprehensive evaluation of the National Agricultural Trade Information System, under which a database system was developed listing all existing products and value chains.
- h. St. Lucia: Technical assistance was provided to 25 female producers with a view to adding value to food products such as breadfruit, plantains, bananas, manioc and various local fruits, thereby increasing market opportunities for these products.
- i. Trinidad and Tobago: Entrepreneurship training was provided to various State agencies, institutions, the private sector and 40 members of community groups, with a view to enhancing their ability to access markets.

## 2.3. *Food stability*<sup>4</sup>:

- a. Argentina: The IICA, in conjunction with the European Union, MERCOSUR and the Econormas project, participated in physical demonstrative interventions to facilitate access to water for consumption and irrigation in isolated communities in Argentina's semi-arid regions, thus benefiting some 180 families.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 2. Access to food: Access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which they live (including traditional rights such as access to common resources).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 2. Stability: To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (e.g. an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access dimensions of food security.

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- b. Costa Rica: The Institute supported bodies such as the National Seeds Office (OFINASE) and the Grain and Seed Research Centre at the University of Costa Rica (CIGRAS-UCR), in formulating the Costa Rican National Seed Policy.
  - c. Ecuador: The IICA helped to formulate a territorial strategy for including family farmers in the food and nutrition security and sovereignty framework for the Esmeraldas province. This action focused on the vegetable, banana, rice and maize sectors.
  - d. Jamaica: An early warning system was developed for coffee rust in the coffee sector. This system benefits 120 families whose income has been affected by this disease.
  - e. Nicaragua: Support was provided for capacity-building in relation to risks posed by climate change in the production of staple grains and vegetables, and the production technologies that may be used to address these risks in family farming and the agricultural sector. This activity benefited 870 people from the private and public sectors.
  - f. Paraguay: The IICA collaborated on a project to collect rainwater for household and agricultural irrigation use in the Chaco region. This project benefits some 500 families, including the indigenous population.
  - g. Uruguay: Capacity-building activities were organized for 44 stakeholders on strategies to manage entrepreneurial risk in meat sector and farming cooperatives. The Institute also presented a background study for the development of a national native seed conservation strategy.
  - h. Venezuela: The Institute helped to develop a methodology to increase rice production using technology that allows for adaptation to climate change. This activity benefited 200 producers. Also, participation in capacity-building activities for 40 cocoa and coffee producers, with a view to ensuring the adaptation of family farming to climate change.

#### 2.4. *Utilization*<sup>5</sup> of food:

- a. Brazil: Support was provided for an analytical paper on the environment and food security in rural communities, and for the formulation of a methodology for the implementation of the Environmental Education and Family Agriculture Programme.
- b. Guatemala: The IICA collaborated with the Rafael University and McGill University on the development of a systemic and territorial model for explaining the factors that cause chronic child malnutrition in the country. The publication may be viewed in Spanish at [http://www.infoiarna.org.gt/dmdocuments/1\\_pu\\_com\\_An-sist-terrSAN.pdf](http://www.infoiarna.org.gt/dmdocuments/1_pu_com_An-sist-terrSAN.pdf).
- c. Guyana: Some 250 people benefited from activities that provided support and joint technical assistance for designing nutritional labels for processed agricultural foods, and for food handling and processing establishment certification.
- d. Venezuela: The IICA collaborated in capacity-building activities on water management, use and conservation, for women in rural communities, and on safe fruit and vegetable production, in conjunction with Nestlé's supplier development programme. These activities benefited 1,300 people.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 2. Utilization: Utilization of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. This brings out the importance of non-food inputs in food security.

2.5. For further details on IICA activities in this area, please contact:

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2.6. For further information, please visit the IICA website: <http://www.iica.int>.

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