

Promoting competitive and sustainable agriculture in the Americas

2010-2014 Medium-term Plan



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Foreword

At each meeting of the Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), the spirit of collaboration that led to the creation of our Institute is renewed. At its most recent meeting, held in Jamaica in October 2009, the IABA approved the Strategic Framework for IICA's actions, which outlines what the ministers of agriculture see as the future of the Institute.

"The IICA of the next decade must provide more support to its Member States and adapt its structure and operations to achieve that objective. This will require having general guidelines on how the Institute must meet hemispheric and country-level demands, and on possible approaches and potential areas for cooperation."

Each administration has four years to undertake and complete the tasks entrusted to it by the Member States. To do this, it must have a planning tool that will enable it to establish objectives and priorities and identify goals to be achieved, as well as how they will be achieved. This is the function of the 2010-2014 Medium-term Plan (MTP).

My administration took the need to develop such a tool very seriously. We prepared a draft of the MTP and submitted it to the Member States for their comments and suggestions in an attempt to ensure that it would reflect accurately not only their priorities, but also their shared vision of and hopes regarding what agriculture in the hemisphere should be and the role IICA should play in that vision. The present publication is a summary of the Plan, approved by the IICA Executive Committee at the 30th Regular Meeting.

I want to thank the IICA and external specialists from throughout the Hemisphere who contributed to the development of the Plan, the government officials who, with their comments, helped to fine tune the document, and the members of our Executive Committee, who approved it. It is my hope that this Plan will serve as a compass for IICA's actions and as a point of reference for the countries of the Americas as they pursue the goal of agricultural development and rural well-being.



Victor M. Villalobos
Director General

Mission

IICA is the institution of the Inter-American System that provides technical cooperation, innovation and specialized knowledge to contribute to the competitive and sustainable development of agriculture in the Americas and to improve the lives of rural dwellers in the member countries.

Vision

To be a leading and innovative institution in the provision of technical cooperation for agriculture, known for its contributions to making the agrifood sector competitive, achieving the sustainable development of agriculture, promoting food security, reducing poverty and improving living conditions in the rural territories of the Americas, based on its strong technical expertise and capacity to provide solutions to the new challenges facing the member countries in these areas.

The Institute's principles

- Leadership through excellence
- Innovation
- Interdisciplinary approaches and teamwork
- Excellence in performance
- Partnerships to boost impact
- Social responsibility
- Environmental responsibility
- Focus on results and accountability
- Efficiency, transparency and financial prudence
- Adherence to rules and regulations
- Equality and equity
- Respect for diversity



What is IICA?

We are the specialized agency of the Inter-American System for the promotion of agriculture and rural well-being, and our efforts are fully focused on making **agriculture competitive and sustainable in the Americas**.

We have a modern vision of the challenges facing agriculture, which range from the effects of climate change on agricultural production to the urgent need to feed a growing world population; while at the same time creating opportunities and jobs for the men and women of the rural areas of our member countries.

Faced with such extraordinary challenges, we propose a **new paradigm for agriculture**: one in which the sector will improve national revenues and individual incomes, play a key role in making food security a reality, and is a line of defense in mitigating the impacts of climate change. We are committed to making agriculture **more productive, more inclusive and more sustainable**.

Since our founding, in 1942, we have acquired a wealth of experience in the provision of technical cooperation in the areas of technology and innovation for agriculture, agricultural health and food safety, agribusiness, agricultural trade, rural development and training.

More recently, the Institute has become involved in the relationship between agriculture and the environment, natural resources and climate change. It has also helped the countries to meet new challenges in areas such as biotechnology and biosafety, agroenergy, agrotourism, organic agriculture, agricultural insurance, rural agroindustry and rural development from a territorial approach.

In our **34 Member States**, we work very closely with the ministries of agriculture. Our governing body is the **Inter-American Board of Agriculture** (IABA), comprising the ministers of agriculture of the hemisphere. In addition, we serve as the secretariat of the **Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture** in the Context of the Summit of the Americas Process.



THE CONTEXT

Taking advantage of opportunities for agriculture

In a context characterized by crises and dynamic changes that is having an impact on agriculture, increasing the levels of both poverty and hunger, making markets more volatile and exacerbating problems related to food security, the countries of the hemisphere are in a better position to attract private investment in agriculture and agroindustry than others.

Compared with other regions, in Latin America and the Caribbean, there is greater balance in terms of population, less extreme poverty and an abundance of natural resources and biodiversity of reasonable quality. Therefore, the region will be able to participate in globalization from a position of advantage if it makes all the necessary changes.

Instability is the one constant today

- Demand for commodities on the part of China and other emerging countries is rising rapidly at a time when worldwide reserves are at historically low levels.
- The serious problems related to the fossil fuels market are creating the urgent need to develop alternative sources of and ways to save energy.
- Climate change and volatility in the prices of the inputs required for production are affecting food production.

Given the uncertainty created by instability in the global context, it is necessary to look ahead and take measures based on making effective use of all available information.

A look at agricultural markets

Dynamic growth of demand

- The world population continues to grow and incomes are on the rise worldwide
- The faster economic recovery taking place in the Asian countries, especially China, has led to a recovery in regional exports.
- The population is becoming more urban and consumption habits are changing.
- Consumers are demanding more products with value added
- There is a growing demand for agricultural products for uses other than as food for humans or animal feed.
- Countries are entering into, and expanding existing, integration and free trade agreements

By 2050, it will be necessary to produce twice as much food as is produced today, and agriculture will have to meet the growing demand for agricultural inputs for non-food uses.

The most important challenges

The Americas as a region is a net exporter of food and still has room to expand the agricultural frontier in some countries. However, it is necessary to increase yields, which today are below the worldwide average.

Consequently, there is an important opportunity for the countries of the Hemisphere to adopt proactive policies aimed at tackling the principal challenge, which is **“To make agriculture competitive and sustainable.”**

Competitive agriculture

The agricultural sector of countries must **be competitive** if they are to tap the opportunities presented by larger markets, contribute to food security, create jobs and generate income, so that those who live and work in rural territories can live their lives with dignity.

Slow growth of supply

- The rate of growth in terms of yields and productivity has slowed.
- Less land is available due to the expansion of urban areas and other economic activities and to soil degradation and desertification.
- Water, which agriculture consumes more of than any other sector, is becoming increasingly scarce.
- Climate variability and change are having a growing impact.
- Tariff and non-tariff barriers continue to discourage trade

The imbalances in agricultural markets will continue in the medium term due to pressures created by rapidly growing demand and slower growth in terms of supply

- If agriculture is to be competitive, the countryside must be more productive.
- The Green Revolution has run its course because of the effects it has had, including the decline in the rate of increase in yields and its heavy dependence on agrochemicals, which have contributed greatly to environmental contamination and degradation.
- What is needed is a **new technological paradigm for agriculture**, one that will increase yields, make efficient use natural resources without doing damage to the environment and will be within reach of all relevant actors.

It is necessary to develop competitive agribusinesses in order to take advantage of opportunities created as a result of increased demand for agricultural products.

Given the growing scarcity of water, **productivity should be measured not in terms of tons per hectare**, but rather tons per cubic meter of water.

- To be competitive, agriculture must comply with quality and safety standards, making it necessary to **reinforce the national agricultural health and food safety systems.**
- It is necessary to increase **private investment in agricultural and rural development** and make it more efficient, as the basis for increasing production and reducing poverty.

Sustainable and inclusive agriculture

Agriculture that is sustainable requires the sound use and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity.

- The new technological paradigm must better enable the countries to make efficient use of their natural resources, with a view to increasing food production **without doing damage to the environment.**
- The development of clean technologies and more environmentally friendly products, **good agricultural practices and the agro-biotechnologies constitute an opportunity** for agriculture in the region to meet the challenges of the future more efficiently.
- It is necessary to create incentives to transfer technologies designed to increase production and productivity from the countries that have them to those that need them, while respecting intellectual property rights.

- Genetic engineering could play a very important role once the corresponding biosafety measures have been established and access to genetic diversity can be assured.
- Agriculture's relationship with natural resources and the environment is a two-way street. Agriculture depends on both natural resources and the environment, but also has an impact on the quality and availability of natural resources.
- To contribute to conserving natural resources, improving environmental conditions and reducing the damage caused by climate is one of the most important challenges for the sector, making it necessary to take into consideration the specific needs of each country.
- The growing demand for energy creates an opportunity to develop alternative technologies which could have an impact on rural communities.
- Agriculture that is inclusive requires the inclusion of small agribusinesses and those involved in small-scale and family agriculture, the creation of employment that will have a multiplier effect in rural economies, and the reduction of rural poverty.
- There must be more equitable participation on the part of all those who make up the social fabric of the rural territories in the benefits of increased production and in decisions related to problems and opportunities that affect them.

The **new technological paradigm for agriculture** must better enable the countries to make efficient use of their natural resources, with a view to increasing yields.

Agriculture continues to be the most important activity in most of rural territories in the Americas and is the key to greater rural well-being.

Agriculture and food security

Food security will continue to be **the focus of attention of national and international policies in coming years**, simply because food production is not increasing fast enough to keep up with the growth of the world population and incomes.

Widespread poverty limits access to food. In developing countries, three of every four poor people live in rural areas; and of this number a large percentage depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.

Volatility in commodity prices and the lack of income also affect food security because they exacerbate undernutrition, generate more poverty and social instability and affect political governance.

Agriculture's contribution to food security is not limited to the stable production of more safe and more nutritional foods. It also contributes through the **generation of employment** and, as a result, better salaries for workers and incomes for producers, and more foreign exchange earnings. **Higher income levels make better nutrition possible.**

Adjusting the institutional framework

The institutional framework for agriculture and rural development must be modernized, with a view to giving the ministries of agriculture the capabilities, instruments and authority they need to coordinate intersectoral policies and reach agreements with different political and social actors, such as other ministries, local governments and producer organizations.

- Most of the current institutional framework is not up the demands of the current context and is out of line with more systemic visions in which the roles of the public and private sectors have changed.

- Today, **institutions must review and update their functions** and acquire higher caliber personnel, innovative policy instruments, follow-up and evaluation systems, information systems, and more resources.
- It is also necessary to modernize the organizations of civil society, including organizations of agricultural producers.

Agricultural policies and policies for agriculture

Policies for agriculture, as well as those related to rural development and to food security, go beyond the domain of the ministries that, historically, have been responsible for the sector.

- Today, it is necessary to seek the concurrence of a wider variety of actors.
- When formulating and implementing policies for agriculture, it is necessary to take into account policies from outside the sector. To successfully address the most important challenges and opportunities derived from the context, it is necessary to develop state policies for agriculture that consider the sector's multiple linkages to society, the environment and natural resources and foster dialogue and consensus building.

In order to support the countries in meeting this formidable challenge successfully, IICA must work within the framework of cooperation with other entities.



2 THE STRATEGIC PROPOSAL

Adapting IICA to the challenges



As a specialized agency of the Inter-American System, IICA must meet the demands of its Member States in its areas of competence. To do this, it must:

- Place emphasis on the provision of **international public goods**.
- Take into consideration the differences derived from **heterogeneity**.
- Have the **technical capacity or expertise** need to meet the demands of the countries, or the possibility of mobilizing same.
- **Be flexible** enough to address emerging critical issues for agriculture.

IICA must be an institution that provides ways to take advantage of opportunities and solve the common and individual problems of its member countries and address global problems that affect the competitiveness and sustainability of agriculture, focusing on joint action to achieve common objectives. In addition, IICA's actions and proposals must:

- be implemented at the hemispheric, regional and national levels, where they must be appropriated by each of the member countries;
- help the member countries effectively reduce existing gaps which limit their development;

IICA acknowledges the enormous complexity and scale of the **opportunities and challenges agriculture will face in the years ahead with regard to productivity and competitiveness**, rural territories, the effects of climate change, the management of natural resources and food security.

To honor the commitments, the Institute must be **focused, visionary, a leader, innovative, knowledge-based,** focused on the provision of public goods, complementary, integrated and structured to pursue its mission.

- be intended to support primarily the less developed countries and seek balanced implementation between regions and countries; and
- respect the principles of autonomy and sovereignty of peoples and nations.

Strategic objectives and priority actions

As the leading agricultural organization in the hemisphere, IICA offers technical cooperation to help the countries meet the challenges posed and take advantage of the opportunities that exist to achieve the following strategic objectives:

1. To improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector

IICA intends to promote technological, organizational and human innovation to enhance competitiveness, increase production and help improve the operation of agricultural markets in a socially and environmentally sustainable way. These efforts must **focus on small and medium-scale agricultural producers**, who have limited access modern markets.

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

The Institute supports national efforts aimed at devising policies and strategies that will help bring about greater articulation and coordination

of the institutions that play a leading role in rural development and well-being, in order to **strengthen the two-way relationship between agriculture and the rural territories.**

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

IICA provides expertise and advisory services to strengthen the institutional and human capabilities of the member countries, in order to **position the issue on their national agendas**; to strike the right balance between environmental management and agricultural development policies; to consolidate and intensify their efforts to find new environmentally-friendly production practices, with a view to **reducing the negative impact of traditional agriculture** on natural resources and ecosystem health; and to devise policies, strategies and institutional frameworks that will prepare the sector to adapt to climate change.

4. To improve agriculture's contribution to food security

The Institute supports the development of policies, strategies and institutional frameworks aimed at **increasing the contributions of small-scale and family agriculture to the countries' food security**, both in terms of the supply of food and small farmers' access to it.

IICA facilitates **horizontal cooperation between countries** to address issues in which other countries have more capabilities and expertise.

IICA believes **that it needs to concentrate its limited resources and efforts on contributing to the attainment of the strategic objectives** that concern areas in which the Institute possesses the greatest technical capabilities, experience and recognition

Objectives of technical cooperation

Each of the following objectives of the technical cooperation addresses a different dimension of agriculture:

Technological innovation

IICA intends to support the Member States in their efforts **to increase and extend innovation** in agriculture, in order to improve productivity, competitiveness and trade, and in this way support food security and the development of the member countries.

Agricultural Health and Food Safety

IICA will continue to assist the countries in this field, particularly **in the development of policy instruments and modern, harmonized standards**, in the modernization of national services, in the implementation of hemispheric and regional mechanisms for cooperation and information on the subject, in the adoption by the countries of international standards, and in the establishment of public-private collaboration mechanisms, as part of the collaboration with the specialized international agencies.

Agribusiness and commercialization

IICA assists the countries in developing the policies, institutional frameworks and capabilities required **to create enabling environments for agribusinesses**, as well as a new mindset and capabilities

in producers, by strengthening their individual and collective capacity to supply markets and compete successfully in them. The Institute also helps its Member States to develop public policies, strategies and institutions for the promotion and development of more transparent and efficient local markets, and to develop mechanisms and tools that will reduce risks and enable small-scale producers to establish more links with markets. Moreover, it helps to develop strategies and strengthen the institutional framework for promoting international agricultural trade as a factor in development; and assists its member countries in **developing capabilities** that will enable them to better administer the trade agreements they sign and take greater advantage of them.

Management in territories, agriculture and rural well-being

IICA helps to develop tools for assessing the true contribution that agriculture makes to rural territories, and to establish the intersectoral relationships among the public policies and tools that have an impact on territories, with a view to **optimizing agriculture's contribution to the development of rural territories** and thereby maximizing the social returns generated by agricultural activities. The Institute also helps the governments execute projects in rural territories and encourages the use of good social responsibility practices, fair trade and other elements that foster harmony between production and rural communities.

The commitment being assumed by the Institute's General Directorate is to **contribute to the overarching development goals of the countries** linked to the strategic objectives identified.

Agriculture is regarded as **an activity that is especially sensitive** because of the many and diverse risks to which it is exposed.

Food security

IICA supports the efforts of its Member States to develop policies, strategies and institutional frameworks that will **increase the contributions that agriculture - and especially the small-scale variety - makes to the food security** of the countries, in terms of both the national vision and the access of small-scale producers to the income they need to purchase foodstuffs and produce staple foods. IICA intends to contribute to the development of policies, strategies and capabilities designed to improve the production, productivity, value-added processes and market access of small farmers. It will do this by facilitating access to productive assets, risk mitigation instruments and forms of organization that allow them to enhance their negotiating capabilities in input and product markets, and to financing and agricultural insurance.

Natural resources and climate change

Agriculture is regarded as an activity that is especially sensitive because of the many and diverse risks to which it is exposed. IICA's member countries have stated in many forums and in a variety of circumstances that they need strategies and tools to manage those risks, so their farmers can take the best possible decisions related to their production with some degree of confidence.

Risk management in agriculture must focus on the different types of risk that producers or farmers face: natural risks, the risks inherent in product markets, financial risks, etc. Furthermore, the number of natural disasters around the world has increased in recent years and that trend is

What does IICA do?

To ensure that the Institute's activities focus on those fields in which they will have a greater impact, the following areas for technical cooperation have been defined:

- Design, analysis and evaluation of public policies and strategies
- Strengthening and modernization of institutions
- Creation and development of capabilities
- Knowledge management for agriculture and rural well-being
- Support for the countries on specific issues and investment projects

IICA supports the countries in designing and managing investment projects aimed at promoting institutional modernization

expected to continue in the future. There has also been an increase in the incidence and severity of diseases and epidemics that spread rapidly across the globe and cause serious human and economic losses.

IICA assists the institutions of the countries, especially the ministries of agriculture, with **the development of public policies**, the design and implementation of sectoral strategies, the use of policy tools and the provision of timely information, in order **to reduce the uncertainties** that producers face in their agricultural activities and to help them improve their productivity and competitiveness.



3 OPERATING STRATEGY

Ensuring articulation and excellence

IICA focuses its cooperation on four technical concentration programs and two programs for cross-cutting coordination.

Technical Concentration Programs

The technical cooperation programs contribute to ensuring a competitive and sustainable agricultural sector and rural well-being. These programs are:

- Innovation for productivity and competitiveness
- Agricultural health and food safety
- Agribusiness and commercialization
- Agriculture, territories and rural well-being

Programs for Cross-cutting Coordination

In addition to the technical concentration programs, two programs for cross-cutting coordination have been established for the execution of the 2010-2014 MTP, through which the priority topics of the Institute will be addressed. The two programs are:

- Agriculture, natural resource management and climate change
- Agriculture and food security

These programs are responsible for ensuring that the IICA's technical cooperation actions help the member countries achieve their overarching development objectives, and for helping the ministers of agriculture to adopt the policies required to enable agriculture to contribute effectively to achieving the national development goals

The Institute's programs address those issues in which it possesses most capabilities and experience and **which are of strategic importance for most of the hemisphere's ministries of agriculture.**

The Center works with the leaders of IICA's programs, with a technical support group with **experience in economic, trade, political and social analyses**, and high-level professionals.

Keeping a close eye on agriculture

In order to conduct strategic analyses of agricultural issues that will enable the ministries of agriculture and governments of IICA's Member States to anticipate developments, deal with emergencies and develop long-term state visions, IICA has a **Center for Strategic Analysis for Agriculture**. Its main functions are:

- To conduct prospective and strategic analyses of those agricultural issues and public policies that have the biggest impact on activities in the sector
- To support IICA's General Directorate, its governing bodies and the Institute as a whole by providing data and analyses of data and information about agriculture at the global and hemispheric levels
- To develop, validate and make available to IICA's member countries methodologies and tools for the timely analysis of agriculture's contribution and trends in the sector.
- To provide follow-up to developments in the trade negotiations, particularly those that take place within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO).
- To coordinate IICA's technical forums and ensure that they meet the established parameters of excellence and quality

The Center will attach special importance to the use of the new information and communication technologies.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	TECHNICAL CONCENTRATION PROGRAMS AND PROGRAMS FOR CROSS-CUTTING COORDINATION	OBJECTIVES OF THE TECHNICAL CONCENTRATION PROGRAMS AND PROGRAMS FOR CROSS-CUTTING COORDINATION
SO 1: To improve the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector	<i>Innovation for productivity and competitiveness</i>	1. To improve research, innovation and technology transfer/extension for competitive and sustainable agriculture
	<i>Agricultural health and food safety</i>	2. To improve the conditions for fostering international agricultural trade as a factor in development, taking into account plant and animal health measures
	<i>Agribusiness and commercialization</i>	3. To develop competitive and inclusive agribusinesses by enhancing entrepreneurial and organizational capabilities and thereby improving producers' management skills.
SO 2: To strengthen agriculture's contribution to the development of territories and to rural well-being	<i>Agriculture, territories and rural well-being</i>	4. To improve agriculture's contribution to the well-being and sustainable development of rural territories and the conditions of small-scale and family farmers, to increase their well-being and contribution to development
SO 3: To improve the adaptation of agriculture to climate change, and the use of natural resources	<i>Agriculture, natural resource management and climate change</i>	5. To improve management, risk management and the response to emergencies, to reduce the vulnerability of agriculture, including plant and animal health risks; and to promote the adaptation of agriculture to the effects climate variability and mitigate the impact of productive activities on the environment and natural resources
SO 4: To improve agriculture's contribution to food security	<i>Agriculture and food security</i>	6. To improve the quality and availability of, and access to, safe, nourishing food, and promote the modernization and strengthening of domestic agricultural markets, so they operate more efficiently, transparently and inclusively, to contribute to the food security of the countries

Technical cooperation is the hub of the Institute's activities. Accordingly, it will bolster the Institute's capacity to support the efforts made by the member countries to make the agricultural sector more productive, competitive, sustainable and equitable.

Articulation of Technical Cooperation

The **technical cooperation projects** will be the core element used to channel and articulate technical cooperation actions by means of products and services aimed at achieving strategic objectives and results.

The technical cooperation projects will help to:

- Achieve the objectives included in the 2010-2014 MTP and the guidelines of the General Directorate;
- Implement the concepts, methodologies and tools of the technical concentration programs and programs for cross-cutting coordination established in the MTP;
- Articulate the actions of the units responsible for technical cooperation within IICA;
- Provide leadership and guide the Institute's technical teams, comprised of specialists in all the technical areas that fall within the institution's remit;
- Design and support the implementation of international public goods;
- Increase technical cooperation actions and improve the management of technical cooperation; and,

- Identify, develop and promote the strategic projects carried out jointly with the countries and the units responsible for technical cooperation.

Our tools

IICA uses technical cooperation tools to implement its technical cooperation actions. The most important tools are:

- Prospective analyses, studies and situation analyses, and impact assessments
- Training in subjects related to IICA's areas of competence
- New conceptual frameworks, methodologies, models and tools
- Knowledge management tools
- Technical intermediation and the mobilization of cooperation
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Specialized technical services
- Direct technical cooperation
- Development and administration of projects

The projects contained in the "IICA country strategy" **will be the basic unit used for programming**, the articulation with the programs, the allocation of the budget, the evaluation of the Offices, and the process of accountability in the countries.

The Institute will support the countries in their efforts to adopt **joint positions on highly important hemispheric issues**, including the channeling of international financial resources to support agriculture.

Focused on demand

The Institute carried out actions at **three levels** - national, regional and hemispheric- in order to meet the needs of the member countries effectively and make maximum use of such resources.

Hemispheric Level

Technical cooperation will be geared to the development of hemispheric public goods. These goods make it possible to: **share knowledge among countries in the region**; strengthen the countries' capabilities with regard to important topics of interest to all of them; enable the countries to participate together in **the development of important international standards**; conduct studies of the current situation and outlook for agriculture; engage in prospective analyses; and develop and distribute publications on priority topics.

Regional Level

An IICA strategy will be developed for each region that identifies the strategic objectives and priority technical concentration programs, targeting the development of international public goods related to **topics of interest to the region** as a whole, carried out through into regional projects. The Institute will continue to support the regional political forums established by the ministers of agriculture and establish links with other political forums in fields such as trade and environment, to bring about the adoption of measures that benefit agriculture in the hemisphere

National Level

An IICA technical cooperation strategy will be developed in each country (“IICA country strategy”) to guide and channel the cooperation that IICA provides to the member countries.

Adopting a broad vision, an **“IICA country strategy,” will be developed for each of IICA’s Offices in the member countries.** It will be prepared in consultation with the authorities responsible for the sector in each country, based on the national priorities that are related to, and dovetail with, the objectives for cooperation included in the 2010-2020 Strategic Plan. Therefore, it will be geared to the attainment of those strategic objectives and articulated with the technical concentration programs.

IICA may **implement projects for groups of countries that share an interest in a given topic,** even if they belong to different regions.

Thematic networks

The technical specialists will form part of institutional thematic networks for technical cooperation, which will comprise that will be **IICA's own technical teams** articulated around the technical concentration programs.

The thematic networks will be overseen by the leaders of the technical concentration programs and will comprise the specialists at Headquarters, the international specialists stationed in the regions and local specialists. The Representatives in the countries will also form part of the thematic networks.

They will have the following responsibilities:

- To support the execution of technical cooperation projects.
- To manage knowledge related to their areas of competence.
- To create innovative models and tools for technical cooperation.
- To assist governments with the implementation of public policies.
- To contribute to the creation of international public goods.
- To provide assistance with follow-up and the evaluation of the results of technical cooperation.
- To design and implement processes for sharing experiences and promoting the mobilization of capabilities and resources between countries and regions.

These networks will benefit from the participation of specialists from the member countries via **horizontal cooperation**.

- To work together to enhance the efficiency of technical cooperation and make the participation of Institute personnel more effective.
- To incorporate external specialists selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience in the respective areas.
- To engage with external networks created by institutions similar to IICA.

21st century institutions are required to meet 21st century challenges.

Management of external relations

IICA places emphasis on the creation and management of partnerships among the Member States to foster horizontal cooperation and the sharing of experiences.

- It recognizes the importance of strengthening links between IICA and universities, research and technological centers and other civil society organizations.
- It spurs the development of relations with multilateral and bilateral international cooperation agencies, as well as international financial institutions.
- It promotes relations with organizations that work in other areas to establish a wide-ranging agenda for agriculture.

4 MANAGEMENT OF CORPORATE SERVICES



Facilitating and bolstering technical cooperation

To ensure pertinent, quality implementation in support of the technical cooperation programs and projects and their institutional management, and of the processes of planning, evaluation and external relations, it is essential that the following institutional management objective be borne in mind:

Facilitate and strengthen the provision of technical cooperation services in an opportune, effective and integrated manner, pursuant to the Institute's rules and adopting an approach based on continuous improvement, rationality, accountability and transparency.

The economic conditions that have existed from 2007 to 2010 have affected both international financial markets (leading to, among other things, limited access to credit), and trade markets. However, globalization and technological advances have created enormous advantages that constitute great opportunities for creating new management models designed to make the processes in the production chain more competitive, based on the generation of knowledge, innovation and the efficient management of the limited resources available.

IICA is not immune to these trends and urgently needs to adapt its organizational processes and anticipate, as far as possible, situations that could have a major impact on the technical cooperation activities planned for the period 2010-2014.

Globalization and technological advances have created enormous advantages that constitute great opportunities for creating **new management models.**

IICA must manage its corporate activities in such a way as to **integrate and coordinate efforts** with its substantive areas and strive for continuous improvement.

Therefore, IICA has to manage its corporate activities in such a way as to integrate and coordinate efforts with its substantive areas and strive for continuous improvement.

In an innovative model, the administration must become a unit that provides comprehensive corporate services that **facilitate and support the technical cooperation activities** and their contributions, adhering strictly to the Institute's policies and rules and making rational use of its resources, thereby achieving more and better results.

To achieve this, the processes involved in **managing the Institute's human talent, financial and programming-budgetary matters and corporate services** must be conducted in a coordinated, pertinent and committed way, to ensure that technical cooperation activities receive timely support of a high quality.

Evaluation of the quality of technical cooperation

IICA takes very seriously its responsibility **to monitor and evaluate** the effectiveness of the 2010-2014 MTP, in order to provide timely feedback to the General Directorate about the execution of technical cooperation actions and the quality of the services and products that the Institute delivers, providing information and **recommendations for improvement** for effective decision making by management.

- Evaluation of technical performance is a systematic activity and the principal tool used to review and verify the attainment of the Institute's strategic objectives at the internal level.

- This responsibility is assumed in a coordinated and continuous manner with the technical areas, in order to increase the efficiency and quality of IICA's technical cooperation services.
- The system includes a consistent, periodic, systemic and comprehensive process of planning, monitoring and evaluation of the projects, the technical concentration programs and MTP, to ensure that IICA achieves its strategic objectives at the corresponding level.
- An Integrated Management System has been established that promotes medium-term planning; simplify the annual planning and individual evaluation processes; bring the work of staff members into line with the Institute's objectives; **strengthen the culture of evaluation to ensure continual improvement**; and encourage feedback.

IICA takes very seriously its responsibility to **monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the 2010-2014 MTP**, in order to provide timely feedback to the General Directorate about the execution of technical cooperation actions.

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