



Fortieth Regular Meeting of the Executive Committee

**Report on joint collaboration activities between IICA
and CARDI**

San Jose, Costa Rica
18 June 2020

Report on Joint Collaboration Activities between IICA and CARDI

The purpose of the report is to give an overview to the distinguished members of the 2020 Executive Committee on the actions undertaken over the period July 2019 to April 2020, within the framework of collaboration between the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI).

During the last Executive Committee meeting in July 2019, the main areas of cooperation proposed under the current General Technical Cooperation Agreement (GTCA) were:

Areas of cooperation	Topics
1. Direct technical cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved breed management and production techniques for small ruminants (APP follow-up)• Development of an Artificial Intelligence-based application for monitoring pests and diseases in sweet potato in the Caribbean
2. Internal institutional capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of spatial data infrastructure (SDI) and ICT technologies, and other advanced tools (i.e. satellite imagery) to support decision making for risk management situations• Capacity building on genetic resources as an outreach activity of the Cooperative Program in Research and Technology for the Northern Region – PROCINORTE (NORGEN) with CARDI (also APP follow-up).
3. Mobilization of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operationalization of the IICA/CARDI/CIP partnership to strengthen the contribution of sweet potato and potato (root & tubers value chain) to the regional resilience strategy

Based on these areas, in coordination and by common agreement, three initiatives were prioritized, resulting in three concept notes:

Concept notes	Summary
<p>1. Enhancing the CARICOM Regional Sweet Potato Germplasm Management Programme</p>	<p>This project will address a mandate of the Agricultural COTED, which is to advance germplasm management of, with particular reference to roots and tubers, within a value chain context. More specifically, the International Potato Centre (CIP) will be engaged, as experts in potato germplasm management. Sweet Potato will be the commodity of focus, given the Region's emphasis on it as a commodity for food and nutrition security, as well as the building of resilience and competitiveness. Current work in Sweet Potato Germplasm in select countries will be scaled up to include the wider CARICOM, in the areas of identification, characterization, viral indexing and storage. Capacity building will also be a feature of this project, with the relevant personnel and stakeholders involved in various aspects of germplasm management benefitting from training in germplasm management techniques. The budget for this proposal was US\$110,000.</p>
<p>2. Coordination of the Small Ruminant Industry towards Regional Competitiveness and Sustainability.</p>	<p>This project will bring relevant industry stakeholders together to develop an implementable Regional Small Ruminant Industry Plan, including a strategy for implementation, coordination and harmonisation of industry development actions. The plan also seeks to identify opportunities for public and private sector investment, including for women and youth. The budget for this proposal was US\$40,000.</p>
<p>3. Restoring Productive Capacity through Provision of Seeds/Seedlings, Nursery Infrastructure and Other Support Mechanisms in the</p>	<p>In the aftermath of the hurricane that devastated the region in August 2019, CARDI and IICA agreed to collaborate on a joint programme of assistance to the affected countries, within the framework of the IICA/CARDI Work Plan for 2017 and executed under the IICA-CARDI General Technical Cooperation Agreement. The Bahamas, and more specifically, the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama, have been greatly affected by Hurricane Dorian, which made landfall as a Category 5 hurricane. The devastation has been almost total, and the islands require an emergency response.</p>

Islands of Grand Bahama and Abaco	The proposal was along the lines of efforts undertaken in 2017. The budget was US\$30,000.
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Given the emergency situation in the wake of Hurricane Dorian, implementation of the third concept note started at the end of 2019, with both institutions participating in the assessment of damages and initial support. IICA's Delegation in The Bahamas procured inputs (seeds and building material), which were distributed by CARDI's Office between January and April 2020.

However, the other two concept notes have experienced delays, due to restrictions on travelling and the organization of public events imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has limited activities, such as the efforts planned under the agreement with CIP regarding sweet potato. While we expect a resumption of activities, there are also looming financial challenges. IICA and CARDI stand ready to adapt and redirect actions, in response to the new scenario and demands from the countries in the Caribbean.