

***Strengthening Agricultural
Research in Colombia
through
International Research
Collaborations***

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Topics for Discussion

- Colombian Challenges
- Proposed Overall Research Goals
- Strategy for Strengthening Research Capacity in Colombia
- Future Collaborations with LGUs

Colombian Challenges

- General low investment in agriculture and low crop productivity
- Rising temperatures and unpredictable rains are affecting harvests and forcing production uphill
- Overuse of pesticides is a major issue for both human and environmental health
- Deforestation is one of Colombia's greatest environmental challenges
- The agricultural sector in Colombia accounts for over 1/10 of the country's GDP and employs over one-fifth of its population
- About 57 % of farmers own only two per cent of the land and there are nearly 1 million landless rural workers
- Labor force and generational shifts

Proposed Overall Research Goals

- Increasing Yields
- Increasing Quality
- Agri-Management Research and Support
- Crop Diversification
- Reverse Environmental Degradation
- Breeding for Climate Resilient Crops
- Selected Value Chain Development
- Food Safety
- Labor Supply of Family Farms (including women and child labor issues)

Strategies for Strengthening Research Capacity in Colombia

The goal of today's sessions is to discuss:

- What? – Identify Research Priorities
- Where? – Physical Locations and Institutions
- Who? – Individual Units and Investigators
- How? – Structural Framework for the LGU-Colombia Dialog and The Individual Projects

A definition with three levels of action

“The process by which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their abilities to:

perform core functions, solve problems, define and achieve objectives;

and understand and deal with their development needs in a broad context and in a sustainable manner”

Sources: UNDP (1997); UNDP (1998); UNESCO (2005).

Individual

the process of equipping individuals with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform effectively

Organizational

the elaboration of management structures, processes and procedures, not only within organizations but also the management of relationships between the different organizations and sectors (public, private and community)

Institutional

making legal and regulatory changes to enable organizations, institutions and agencies at all levels and in all sectors to enhance their capacities

LGUs – Colombia Research Partnerships (Discussion Topics)

- Implementation by a consortium of US universities working with Colombian counterparts
 - National Agriculture Research Systems
 - International Agriculture Research Centers
 - US and Colombian Universities
 - Private Sector
- Traditional Collaborations vs Research Networks
- Integration of Graduate Education in the Research
- Structural Framework for the LGU-Colombia Dialog and The Management of Individual Projects



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Success in International Science Collaborations

- Larger and more complex collaborations are more likely to be influenced by political and cultural rules, norms, and expectations
- Governments pay for research, universities host it, but individuals decide where the best opportunities appear
- Collaborations strongly depend
 - On the motivation and skills of the individual investigators;
 - Their ability to relate to others within their field, interdisciplinary and internationally;
 - The composition of the team;
 - The relationships dynamics among team members