

**CIAT FOUNDATION**  
**To promote agricultural innovation and development in the LAC Region**

**Introduction**

To contribute more effectively and efficiently to CIAT's mission in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and to attend to the many development needs in LAC which are not necessarily directly linked to CIAT's strategic research agenda, the Management Team is proposing the creation of an independent non-profit entity: Fundación CIAT (acronym: FUNDACIAT). Organized as a foundation under Colombian laws, FUNDACIAT's purpose is to promote scientific, technological and natural resources related initiatives, training/capacity building and development programs. It aims to work in areas that will complement CIAT's international agricultural research; especially in linking research with development impact.

**Justification**

In Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 53 million people -10 percent of the region's population - suffer from malnutrition or hunger. Yet paradoxically the region is the biggest exporter of food on the planet. This illustrates that the main cause of undernutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean is not a lack of food-production capacity, but increased unemployment, lower incomes and high food prices.

The majority of poor and hungry in LAC are smallholder farmers, representing a large portion of the most vulnerable sectors of society, that require more and better development, economic and policy tools to boost their agricultural production and productivity. Over the last 15 years, the economic, social and political situation in LAC has practically erased the advance in the struggle against hunger in the region.

The upcoming challenges lie in increasing support to small scale farmers and strengthening cooperation and joint efforts. In this regard, fundamental science, crop improvement, soil fertility management continue to be significant for enhancing food security and raising agricultural incomes, but are not longer enough. To address the new challenges more effectively, Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) must truly come together.

Undoubtedly CIAT and its research partners have an impressive record of impact through crop biofortification, genetic resources management, enhancement of nutritional quality, climate change and soil fertility adaptation and pests/disease resistance. However, in LAC there is the need for more effective research delivery systems that enable smallholders to better access research results, technology transfer and innovation processes.

CIAT's new Strategic Directions aim to strengthen its work in LAC. This renewed commitment to its home region results not only necessary, but also relevant for the mitigation of hunger and poverty in this area. The Center has already structured a research agenda that responds to regional priorities and will focus its attention on inter-regional transfers of results.

In this context the creation of FUNDACIAT is both timely and appropriate. The Foundation will contribute to achieve greater impact on agricultural development concerns in LAC by supporting complementary, non-traditional activities related to Research, Development and Innovation at CIAT.

## **Contribution to CIAT's mission**

FUNDACIAT's activities will be able to greatly contribute to CIAT's mission, by:

1. Promoting technology and knowledge transfer from researchers to extension services and end users. In pursuit of this, FUNDACIAT will play a role in the development of more effective research delivery systems in LAC.
2. Strengthening relations with Colombia and LAC. FUNDACIAT will make every effort to work hand-in-hand with Colombian national authorities and research centers on agriculture related issues. As host country Colombia is expected to play a major role. However, FUNDACIAT will be open to all LAC organizations and it will reinforce partnerships in the LAC region in order to improve response to needs and demands of developing countries in this particular geographic area.
3. Forging new relations with the private sector in areas that are of common interests to all parties. FUNDACIAT will establish necessary links between the needs of small farmers and the interests of the private sector, always focusing in marginal areas that may not rank high in priority for the private sector but that require its support for more successful outcomes.
4. Intensifying the establishment of Private Public Partnerships. FUNDACIAT will seek opportunities to work with a wide array of partners (especially with those located in its home region) to better address shared agricultural development concerns through collaborative activities.
5. Extending CIAT's actions to nontraditional sectors. FUNDACIAT will support the development of solutions related to agriculture, which are not necessarily directly linked to CIAT's and CGIAR's research scope.
6. Facilitating access to nontraditional partnerships and funding sources. According to Colombian Law FUNDACIAT can do all sorts of fund-raising activities. There are no restrictions as far as collecting funding for research, development, infrastructure and services projects. FUNDACIAT will also be able to hire experts (including CIAT's staff) and organize the teams to bid for projects, consultancies and the like. This brings not only additional funding but allows CIAT to deliver research findings through development projects.
7. Reinforcing CIAT's long term financial sustainability. All balances that may be generated by FUNDACIAT will be allocated annually to activities focused on the accomplishments of CIAT's mission. Additionally, FUNDACIAT will be able to issue "certificates of donation" for tax purposes (discounts and benefits for donors). Under Colombian tax law, the donor can deduct the donation from its income tax return.

## **Institutional Structure and Management**

- FUNDACIAT will be formalized as a Colombian NGO. It will be a totally new legal structure organized as a foundation under Colombians laws. The bylaws have been reviewed by the local Chamber of Commerce prior to its registration.
- Initial support from CIAT will be minimum: as the founder of FUNDACIAT, CIAT will have to pay the registration fees. Once the foundation is set up, CIAT will be responsible for the first year salary of the Executive Director.
- The Foundation will be a member of the Agronatura Science Park, which already exists at CIAT. As such, once FUNDACIAT becomes self-sufficient it will pay all service charges (full cost) according to CIAT's policies.
- CIAT will not extend the privileges obtained by the Colombian Government to the Foundation. Diplomatic privileges and immunities granted to CIAT by Law 29/1988 are nontransferable.
- FUNDACIAT's surplus resulting from implemented projects will be allocated annually (according to Colombian laws) to activities focused on CIAT's mission.

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- It will be governed by an Executive Council, comprised of seven representatives of agricultural universities (1), the colombian government (1), the colombian private sector (1), the regional private sector (1), a regional foundation (1), the civil society (1) and CIAT (1).
- FUNDACIAT will be managed by a fulltime executive director nominated by the Executive Council, who will also act as the Foundations legal representative.
- The Executive Director will be appointed by the Executive Council.