The last decade has seen an increase in strategic partnerships and alliances among the public and private sectors. At first sight, the corporate sector and the public sector would appear to have little in common.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORPORATE SECTOR</th>
<th>PUBLIC SECTOR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>profit-driven</td>
<td>non-profit</td>
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<tr>
<td>highly competitive</td>
<td>non competitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>return on investment</td>
<td>socio-economic investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>shareholder capital</td>
<td>social and human capital</td>
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</table>

There is a common ground, however. The corporate sector increasingly acknowledges that without social infrastructure, education, health, access to clean water and arable land, no stable political and enabling environment can be guaranteed, and this, in turn, affects the corporate sector ‘bottom line’. Public-sector institutions promote an environment in which the economy thrives by fostering human development, social cohesion and good governance, i.e., factors for sustainable development. On its part, the public sector is coming to realize that the private sector is a driving force behind growth and that it should not be overlooked when poverty alleviation initiatives are being formulated.

A more lasting impact could be achieved were poverty to be addressed by building on each partner’s competencies and comparative advantages and by creating long-term relationships through the expansion of successful partnerships in both scope and geographic coverage.

“The challenge of sustainable development must evoke a wide range of strategic responses, as there is no single way forward – but also no way back. The scale of the task is so large and the challenge so urgent that all concerned – governments, aid agencies, international organizations, NGOs, academia as well as the private sector – must work together.”

CropLife International (formerly Global Crop Protection Federation)

“Corporate-sector products can be highly relevant to smallholders, as with fertilizers, seeds and other production inputs and services that could be directly supplied through appropriate channels linked to IFAD projects. In participating and investing with IFAD in rural areas, the private sector can contribute to raising rural income levels and hence, increase demand.”

IFAD
IFAD’s mission is to work with the poorest populations in the rural areas of developing countries to eliminate hunger and poverty, enhance food security, raise productivity and incomes, and improve the quality of their lives through improved access to productive resources and empowerment."

IFAD Annual Report, 2000

The International Fund for Agricultural Development – a specialized agency of the United Nations – was one of the major outcomes of the 1974 World Food Conference organized in response to the food crises of the early 1970s. The Conference resolved that “an International Fund for Agricultural Development should be established immediately to finance agricultural development projects primarily for food production in the developing countries.” Thus, IFAD was created in 1977. In fulfilling its mandate, IFAD’s core values are client satisfaction; commitment to excellence; valuing innovation; creating and sharing knowledge; working with others; and pursuing leadership for bringing an end to rural poverty. The Fund’s main objectives are to provide direct funding and to mobilize additional resources for programmes specifically designed to promote the economic advancement of the rural poor, both through empowerment and by improving the productivity of on- and off-farm activities.

IFAD’s target groups are therefore the poorest of the world’s people, particularly the small farmers and rural landless, indigenous groups and, across all groups, poor rural women. The bulk of its resources are made available to its developing Member States (low/middle-income countries) through loans provided on different terms (i.e., concessional, intermediate, ordinary), depending on each country’s macroeconomic situation.

Since its establishment, IFAD has financed 584 projects in 115 countries and independent territories, to which it has committed USD 7.0 billion in grants and loans. These projects have aimed at assisting some 44 million poor rural households, or approximately 240 million people.
The aim of IFAD is to help eradicate rural poverty in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, where the rural poor constitute a highly diverse and heterogeneous group. However, in so doing, IFAD takes care to adjust its strategy and projects to the specific circumstances of each country. Interaction and comparisons within and among regions are a key element in a learning process that seeks not only to contribute to reducing poverty in the region but also to enhance (and benefit from) the Fund’s work in other regions of the world.

During the 1990s, IFAD invested more than USD 600 million in 50 projects in 23 countries of LAC. Given the financing arrangements for IFAD projects – in which governments, other bilateral and multilateral donors, and often the beneficiary populations themselves participate – it is estimated that IFAD projects channeled close to one billion dollars into rural areas during that period.

Although financing is important, the central principles behind IFAD’s interventions have been even more important. Based on the premise that macroeconomic development is essential but far from sufficient for the purpose of reducing poverty and stimulating development in rural areas, in agreement with governments, IFAD has focused its development efforts on specific regions within countries and clearly identified beneficiary populations. Working from this conceptual basis, IFAD has identified the causes of rural poverty and adapted its approaches to address those causes.

IFAD has thus expanded its sphere of action to provide financial support and development instruments in areas such as adult education, non-agricultural rural activities (small production and service businesses), and job training and support for rural and non-rural wage labourers. Within its traditional field of small agriculture development, IFAD has innovated with demand-driven production assistance services and support for agricultural diversification in pursuit of better markets; and it has persisted (almost single-handedly) in promoting rural financing for the poor through innovative designs and proposals. This approach has incorporated two crosscutting themes: gender equity and environmental sustainability.

The opportunities for and challenges facing IFAD in the LAC region are directly related to the extremely heterogeneous nature of rural poverty, the general reduction of governments’ direct participation in poverty eradication programmes, and the opening up of dynamic regional and global markets. Despite these shifting economic, social and political conditions, two essential elements for rural development and poverty mitigation remain consistent: continued state intervention, in a subsidiary role, to support equitable development of rural society; and, at one and the same time, strengthening of the role of organized civil-society and private-sector development.
cropLife Latin America, formerly known as the Latin American Crop Protection Association (LACPA), is one of six regional associations representing the plant science industry through CropLife International. The plant science industry invents, develops, manufactures and sells products and services designed to improve, in a sustainable manner, the global production of food, feed, fiber and other useful products. The challenge is to achieve all this without harming the environment and the resource base for future generations of farmers and consumers.

In this regard, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) makes an important contribution to sustainable crop protection. For farmers and pest control operators, IPM represents the best combination of cultural, biological and chemical measures and, given the circumstances under which they work, constitutes the most cost-effective, environmentally sound and socially acceptable method of managing crop disease, insects, weeds and other pests.

In this context, CropLife Latin America’s two major strategic priorities are to:

- create initiatives that support and promote the proper and responsible use of crop protection products and biotechnology; and
- increase recognition of the important role played by the plant science industry in making agriculture environmentally sound, socially responsible and economically viable.

One fundamental principle of effective IPM is to develop strategies that take account of all relevant control tactics and methods available at the local level. Thus, the final responsibility for implementing IPM rests with the farmers and others seeking to control pests, and they will only adopt and exploit IPM if it is seen to be practical and add value to their activities.
A n important part of CropLife Latin America’s resources and projects are directed to education and training in the proper use of crop protection products such as insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, and in the adequate disposal/recycling of containers. The aim is to persuade farmers and agricultural workers to use these tools in such a way that neither their health nor the environment are harmed. To that end, CropLife Latin America has developed and disseminated throughout LAC education programmes for primary and secondary school children and their teachers, and for farmers, housewives, health professionals, as well as agricultural training programmes at various levels. Apart from Spanish, the courses are also offered in local languages such as Quiché, Cackchiquel, Mam and Quekchi in Guatemala, Quechua in Peru and Guarani in Paraguay.

CropLife Latin America seeks to establish public/private collaboration and dialogue with international organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders with a view to improving the implementation of innovative, sustainable solutions in the LAC region.

STRATEGIC PILLARS OF ACTION
As do other regional affiliates of CropLife International, CropLife Latin America pursues five strategic pillars of action:

- AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY - inclusion of national and international regulatory issues related to agricultural biotechnology alongside chemical crop protection in the regional representation and issue management of the plant science industry.
- COMMUNICATIONS - development of stronger orientation towards internal and external communications.
- SOCIETY - more in-depth attention to the impact of societal issues on the plant science industry and to the role of corporate responsibility.
- AGROCHEMICALS - recognition of the plant science industry’s expertise in regional and national regulatory issues related to agrochemicals.
- SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE - programmes on safer use, IPM and support for sustainable agriculture to be stepped up.
Over a period of several years, CropLife Latin America’s member association in Guatemala – the Agriculture Chemicals Industry Association (AGREQUIMA) – carried forward a successful programme aimed at promoting the safer use of crop protection chemicals, while, at the same time, IFAD was implementing a development project in the Cuchumatanes Highlands. The project area, parts of which are at 3 000 m above sea level, encompasses a population of approximately 37 000 families, 80% of which are located in the rural areas.
The Cuchumatanes Highlands Rural Development Project constituted our first joint venture

The target group comprised 22,000 families with incomes well below the poverty line. Of this population, 17,000 families had land holdings of less than 3.5 ha and 5,000 were landless peasants. In 1999, IFAD and CropLife International’s IPM focal point concluded that their respective projects could build on each other’s results and thus be highly complementary.

A joint IFAD/CropLife Latin America mission spent three days in the project area for the purpose of identifying key issues on which collaboration could be built to give added value to IFAD’s target population and expose CropLife Latin America to a broader constituency. These issues included the problem of poor handling/application of crop protection chemicals by the beneficiaries, leading to health and environmental risks.

“Our successful experience in Guatemala has been the cornerstone for additional cooperation in the Dominican Republic and Panama.”

Anarco Garcia,
Director for Sustainable Agriculture Projects,
CropLife Latin America
PARTNERSHIP BUILDING PROCESS within the LAC REGION

IFAD Private Sector – Capital Markets Unit
- Guatemala Portfolio Manager
- Cuchumatanes Project Implementation Unit

IFAD Latin America and the Caribbean Division

CROPLIFE LATIN AMERICA
- AGREQUIMA
- Guatemala Pilot Safer use of Pesticides Project

CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL IPM-Team Leader

Additional Benefits to smallholders/
Additional Benefits to the industry

Operational links
A multiple approach to the problem was used: teaching IPM concepts and proper, safe use of crop protection products to farmers and their families, school teachers and health workers in the project area; a one-year course for school children on environmental protection, including books, visual aids, games and other didactic material; training teachers on the benefits and risks of using crop protection products; communicating to housewives the importance of washing farmers’ clothes separately so as to avoid contaminating other clothing and water sources; providing information to health workers at the medical and paramedical levels on suggested treatments in the event of accidents; and training additional trainers so as to reach the widest possible number of participants. In addition, AGREQUIMA has continued to work in the Cuchumatanes area after the programme was completed. Education efforts are still being pursued, and a programme for the collection and disposal of empty containers (for which collection centres have been established) has been implemented.

This preliminary collaboration has contributed to ensuring the safe and judicious use of crop protection products, with corresponding benefits to the communities and the environment. It also paved the way for broader collaboration, the following year, between CropLife Latin America and IFAD in the Dominican Republic.
The provinces of Bahoruco, Independencia and Elias Piña, located in the south-western part of the Dominican Republic, are among the poorest in the country. Of the 208,000 people living in the area, 138,000 are settled in the rural areas. The agricultural population is mostly made up of sharecroppers or squatters. Rainfall is inadequate, the irrigation systems are often in a state of disrepair, and much of the area under irrigation is used for subsistence farming. Approximately 86% of the rural population is below the poverty line and 42% live in conditions of extreme poverty.
In 1998, IFAD approved the second phase of its South Western Region Small Farmers Project (PROPESUR). Total project costs amounted to USD 17.6 million, of which approximately USD 12 million was provided by IFAD as a loan to the Government of the Dominican Republic. The overall aim of the six-year project is to improve the incomes and living conditions of the poor of the region, and to help alleviate the prevailing extreme poverty. The target group consists of about 22 000 people, comprising smallholders, microentrepreneurs and landless farm and off-farm labourers. From the outset, it was felt that the PROPESUR project might benefit from the insights gained through IFAD’s successful collaboration with CropLife Latin America in Guatemala, by means of which the economic, technical, natural, health and social environment of the project beneficiaries had been enhanced through intensive training and technology transfers.

The National Dominican Agrochemical Producers Association (AFIPA), a member association of CropLife Latin America, was active in the La Vega andConstanza regions, where it promoted programmes on the use and safer handling of crop protection products and on IPM. Staff of PROPESUR, IFAD and CropLife International made a number of field visits to learn about the AFIPA programme and the school children’s training programme. These field visits included interviews with vegetable growers who had been trained in and were applying safe-use practices. The producers were familiar with the safe-use practices; the school children were generally aware of the appropriate use of crop protection products and were able to influence their parents to comply with safe-use practices.

Collaborative arrangements between the PROPESUR project and AFIPA were formalized on 31 May 2001. Prior to signature of the agreement, however, a number of joint activities were already under way in the community of Puerto Escondido, a traditional vegetable-producing area, where producers, school teachers and traders in agrochemical products were being sensitized to the safe use of pesticides and the common project to be implemented. The first training workshop for technical staff was held in August 2001, and the following month a survey was conducted among the persons involved in using pesticides in the PROPESUR area.
As a large number of applications in the project area are performed by youngsters, their training will be of particular importance as they will not only benefit from improved knowledge but will also share that knowledge with their parents and other family members. One of the distinctive features of the project is the intense involvement of many NGOs in implementing its different components. In this regard, AFIPA supports NGOs hired for the training component, and provides knowledge and expertise through its programmes on the use and safer handling of crop protection products and on IPM. Tangible and quantifiable strategies and goals, as described below, characterize the above-mentioned collaboration:

**COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES**
- Create a group of training teachers to reach a total of 150 trainers during the project cycle.
- Develop a “multiplier effect” structure that will enable trainers to train up to 2 000 people per year.
- Create the necessary structures for disposing, collecting, processing and eliminating containers.
- Increase knowledge on safer use and appropriate handling/IPM to the sales people in the PROPESUR project area, who represent businesses associated with AFIPA.
- Establish a plan for the distribution of printed material in support of safe handling.
- Establish a system for measuring progress.

**COLLABORATIVE GOALS**
- Eighty per cent of farmers will store crop protection products in their original containers, outside the home and out of the reach of children, disabled persons and animals.
- Eighty per cent of farmers will use the crop protection products in accordance with the instructions on the label (e.g., dosage, mix, period between last application and harvesting).
- Eighty per cent of farmers will revise and be able to maintain their spraying equipment.
- All farmers will rinse empty containers and application equipment three times.
- All housewives will wash clothes used when applying the products separately from other clothes.
- Eighty per cent of farmers will comply with the planting window in each season and will apply IPM principles.
- All teachers and primary school children will receive instruction and training on safe use.
- All trained technicians/agronomists will make recommendations and apply IPM to crops in the area.
- All agro-services/distributors will sell only those products that are duly sealed and labeled and are in good condition.
- All farmers will dispose of the containers properly.

Since the project is implemented by the Technical Secretariat of the Presidency and the Government’s National Planning Office, AFIPA will serve as a catalyst for government/private sector partnership.
The cooperation of IFAD with the private sector has the potential to both maximize project impact and expand the constituency of the rural poor within the private sector. Through such collaboration, private-sector efforts and initiatives may be directed to areas frequently underserved. To realize this potential, partnerships between the private sector and IFAD are invaluable and, as such, every effort should be made to secure such collaboration.

Extension services, training and technology transfer services are all essential components of rural development. Different types of extension services are required in order to address the needs of diverse rural communities. Moreover, as farmers are unlikely to internalize the information on productive practices that they receive from one source only, they need access to multiple information channels. This constitutes a strong argument in favour of the complementarity between public and private extension activities.

The partnership with CropLife Latin America has contributed to improving the management by rural poor families of crop protection products in IFAD’s projects. It has also provided IFAD with the opportunity to help build links between a private-sector entity, rural poor organizations and government.”

Raquel Ugarte de Peña Montenegro, Director, Latin American and Caribbean Division, IFAD
Cooperation between the public and private sectors enriches both sides as they learn from one another. Working together promotes better resource use as areas of common interest begin to be identified and duplication avoided while fostering coordinated work and improving mutual understanding and communications. Moreover, working together promotes the sustainability of efforts and initiatives.

The PARTNERS’ POINTS OF VIEW...

“CropLife Latin America has developed productive partnerships with public-sector organizations involved in efforts to increase food production while protecting the farmer’s health and the environment. Our successful work with IFAD is a good example of how positive this cooperation can be.”

ALFREDO RUÍZ,
President, CropLife Latin America

...from CROPLIFE LATIN AMERICA

Cooperation between the public and private sectors enriches both sides as they learn from one another. Working together promotes better resource use as areas of common interest begin to be identified and duplication avoided while fostering coordinated work and improving mutual understanding and communications. Moreover, working together promotes the sustainability of efforts and initiatives.

Working with IFAD will give the plant science industry more credibility as commercial interests do not play a part in such joint projects. Moreover, IFAD designs well-structured, medium- to long-term projects, which will allow CropLife Latin America to reach out to a greater number of people with its message. CropLife Latin America contributes to IFAD's projects through the training of farmers and their families in the proper use of crop protection products – an indispensable tool for efficient crop production and poverty alleviation.
Due to the successful incorporation of “Safe Use of Pesticides/IPM” training modules within IFAD-financed projects in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic, CropLife Latin America, CropLife International and IFAD are exploring ways of expanding their collaboration both within LAC and to other regions.

**PARTNERSHIP PROCESS REPLICATION/EXTENSION WITHIN THE LAC REGION**

1. Cuchumatanes Project Implementation Unit, Guatemala
   - ADREQUIMA

2. PROPESUR Project Implementation Unit, Dominican Republic
   - AFIPA

3. PRODERNOR Project Implementation Unit, El Salvador
   - APA

4. Regional Technical Assistance Collaboration Programme [CATIE]
   - CROPLIFE LATIN AMERICA

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Current partnerships
Under active consideration
CropLife Latin America and IFAD have agreed that such modules should be considered within the framework of the IFAD-supported Sustainable Rural Development Project in the Provinces of Colé, Colon and Panama in the Republic of Panama. The six-year project aims at reducing rural poverty by helping the small farmers increase their productivity and thus their incomes, and fostering the promotion of rural microenterprises. The project is expected to benefit 7,500 poor rural households in the central area of the country, on the western side of the Panama Canal, where the main income-generating activity is agriculture. In July 2001, the heads of CropLife Latin America and its Panamanian affiliate, the National Association of Agrochemical Inputs and Machinery Distributors (ANDIA), reached agreement with the project management unit that CropLife Latin America would provide an IPM trainer to train the project’s 22 extension workers. As a second step, a multi-year framework agreement between the project and ANDIA on the provision of technical services is now under preparation.

A regional assessment of IPM-related needs and of CropLife Latin America’s participation in providing technical support services is now being conducted within the framework of an IFAD Technical Assistance Grant for the Programme for Improving the Technical Capacity of Local Organizations to Support Rural Investment Projects in Central America, Mexico and Panama. The grant is to be provided to the Tropical Agricultural Research and Training Centre (CATIE) in Costa Rica for the provision, over a period of three years, of training and technical backstopping to professionals in private rural-development organizations that provide services to more than 15 IFAD-financed projects in Central America. By strengthening the capacity of service providers to promote the use of improved technologies and participatory methodologies, CATIE in turn supports their widespread use by small farmers. It is expected that the assessment will confirm the need for CropLife Latin America’s expertise.

Beyond the LAC region, discussions have been held between IFAD and various regional affiliates of CropLife International with a view to sharing information on existing collaboration between IFAD and CropLife Latin America and exploring the possibility of further initiatives in Asia and the Pacific, Near East and Africa regions.

Collaboration between the private and public sectors has found a solid foothold in the areas of training and technology transfer. In the future, even more alliances will need to be forged to improve working relations among all the local parties involved. This will not only lead to improved knowledge, but also create the awareness that allows change to come about. Through dialogue and collaboration at all levels, innovative and sustainable solutions can – and must – be found in order to attain the goals of both alleviating poverty and protecting the environment in all areas of the world.