



PART 1: Description and all information of the outcome/impact reported

TYPE

OICR: Outcome Impact Case Report

TITLE

The Central American Integration System (SICA) region launches Rural Youth Strategy focusing on Climate Smart Agriculture based on the Alliance work

STATUS

New

YEAR

2022

OUTCOME IMPACT CASE REPORT

Study #4720

Stage of Maturity of change reported: stage 2

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE: REGIONAL



COUNTRY: SICA Region (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Dominican Republic.

OUTCOME STORY/IMPACT STATEMENT

The Central American region has a large number of young people facing low labor participation, social inequalities, and educational deficits. The Central American Agricultural Council initiated a participatory process to update rural youth policies, resulting in the launch of the SICA Regional Rural Youth Strategy 2022-2030. The Alliance played a critical role in developing the strategy, which highlighted the challenges of COVID-19 and gender differences. The Alliance also connected Rural Youth policies with Climate-Smart Agriculture, furthering the approach in the region.



Contributing external partners:

- Central American Agricultural Council (CAC)
- FLACSO-Argentina Department of Gender, Society and Policies
- Rural Youth Networks in the SICA Region

CGIAR INNOVATION(S) OR FINDINGS THAT HAVE RESULTED IN THIS OUTCOME OR IMPACT

- Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy for the SICA Region [4]
- Rural youth in the SICA region: a gender-based analysis of the impacts of covid-19 [3]

GENDER, YOUTH, CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- **CapDev relevance:** 1 - Significant. Within its general objective, the strategy proposes to articulate the sectoral organizations of SICA for knowledge management and coordination of actions focused on youth, including spaces for territorial governance and capacity building of rural youth and their organizations to influence and mobilize resources. [2]
- **Youth relevance:** 2 - Principal. The strategy focuses on rural youth in SICA countries, offering guidelines, objectives, and actions to enhance their integration into agricultural and rural development policies. It serves as a pivotal, cross-cutting goal, aligning with sector policies and programs. This approach ensures synergy across sectors, stakeholders, and thematic organizations at regional, national, and territorial tiers. [1, 2]
- **Climate Change relevance:** 1 - Significant. The youth strategy builds on other policy instruments such as the Climate-Smart Agriculture Strategy of the SICA region, whose main objective is to guide the actions of the agricultural sector to make it more resilient in a context of climate change and variability. This can be seen in action line "b" of the youth strategy, whose purpose is to incorporate the climate-smart agriculture approach in policies and initiatives aimed at rural youth. [2]
- **Gender relevance:** 1 - Significant. In section 4 on Strategic Orientations, the strategy includes a section on the gender approach, which is integrated throughout the strategy in a cross-cutting manner as indicated on page 34. This can also be seen in measures such as: Generating public policies for rural employability and ensuring a base of quality working conditions for youth, including gender gaps and the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the labor market. [2]



ELABORATION OF OUTCOME/IMPACT STATEMENT

Thirty-five percent of the population in the Central American region is under 35 years old and lives in a context of low labor participation rates, significant social inequalities, and educational deficits. This population faces unique opportunities and challenges that are often overlooked by policymakers and research and development programs, particularly for rural youth who must navigate between the declining opportunities offered by the agricultural sector and a growing desire to participate and access the global consumer market. They face a constant tension between "staying or leaving" rural areas [1].

Therefore, the Executive Secretary of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC) launched a participatory process with the aim of updating its rural youth policy to expand and strengthen the transformative role of rural youth. This involves providing effective access to resources, opportunities, and investments, while engaging in dialogue with regional, national, and territorial rural development policies and plans. As a result of this process, the SICA Regional Rural Youth Strategy 2022-2030 was launched in November 2022 [2].

The Alliance played a key technical and financial role in the development of the strategy, as evidenced by the results of a study analyzing gender, opinions, values, expectations, experiences, and life projects [3]. The study was conducted in collaboration with the Gender, Society and Policies Area of FLACSO-Argentina, the Executive Secretariat of CAC of the Central American Integration System (SICA), and the Rural Youth Networks in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. This study was fundamental in contextualizing the challenges faced by youth in the region after the COVID-19 pandemic. It emphasizes how these challenges can affect men and women differently, which allowed for the development of a strategy tailored to the realities of rural youth in SICA [3]. The Alliance played a pivotal role in providing essential technical guidance to align the Rural Youth policy with the Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) approach detailed in the regional CSA strategy (EASAC in Spanish) [4]. The seamless integration of the climate-smart agriculture approach into the youth strategy serves as compelling proof of SECAC's application of the profound knowledge acquired from our enduring 5+ year partnership centered around CSA. Stemming from CCAFS, our CSA initiatives were intricately woven into our collaborative framework through the CSA strategy for the SICA region in 2018. Now, half a decade later, this approach seamlessly integrates into their youth strategy under action line "b" [4, page 22], bolstered by the new strategy outlined in the CSA strategy [4, page 33]. These linkages are vital for shaping integrated policy processes firmly grounded in the substantial groundwork laid since 2018. Consequently, the Rural Youth Strategy not only emphasizes but also magnifies the CSA approach in the SICA region.

PART 2: Mapping to Alliance strategy and structure

KEY CONTRIBUTORS



Lever 3 - Climate Action

SDG TARGETS



- **13.2** - Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

REFERENCES

1. Alliance Bioversity International - CIAT (2022). Defining a research agenda on rural youth for Central America.
2. Executive Secretary of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC)(2022). SICA Regional Rural Youth Strategy 2022-2030.
3. Bonder G, Benedetti A, López A. 2021. Present and future of rural youth in the SICA region in the face of the COVID-19 scenario: Analysis of gender, opinions, values, expectations, experiences, and life projects. CCAFS Working Paper no. 379. Wageningen, Países Bajos: Programa de investigación del CGIAR sobre Cambio Climático, Agricultura y Seguridad Alimentaria (CAAFS).
4. Executive Secretary of the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC)(2018). Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy for SICA Region 2018-2030.

CONTACT PERSON

Andrea Castellanos

Senior Research Associate, Climate Action LAC | Alliance of Bioversity & CIAT | CGIAR

✉ a.e.castellanos@cgiar.org



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