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INTER SECTOR COLLABORATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT. URUGUAY

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Background

1. Uruguay is a country situated in the Southern Cone of America with an area of 176 thousand km² and a population of 3,340,000 people, 90% living in the urban area and less than 10% in the rural area.
2. The production and socioeconomic indicators have suffered a severe negative impact, from the crisis in 2002, causing a significant social disarray.
3. GDP for 1998 was \$u 299,311, in 2002 declined to 246,351 and recovered to 252,506 in 2003, but with no improvement in equity.
4. The human development index which grew gradually from 1975 to 2001 from 0,759 to 0,828 ranking Uruguay in place 37 among the countries of the world, took a downward turn in 2004 to the 46 place in the worldwide ranking and fourth in Latin America. Within this framework, social differences have increased to an estimated 20 percent of the population receiving a 4.8% income while the richest 20 percent receive 50.1%
5. Although Uruguay is still placed within the group of countries with a high human development index, its progress in health, education and income has been decreasing compared to countries positioned in similar levels.
6. The expenditure in health by person is 35% higher than for the rest of Latin American countries, although life expectancy adjusted by disability is lower than Chile and Costa Rica. This is one sign of inequity to the access to benefits from the health system showing an important disadvantage for Uruguay.
7. In a regional context, although the population of Uruguay registers high levels of enrollment in schools, the crisis of the last years has altered the traditional access and sustainability in primary and secondary education for the Uruguayan society.
8. The gap between the country's economic growth and income and that of the developed countries has been increasing since the 1950's.
9. One of the more troubling phenomena in the country is social polarization, which is excluding whole sectors of people or geographical areas because of the crisis brought upon by its own policies or as a consequence of global markets.
10. In this context and situation of Uruguay 2005, that we propose a strategic development of an inter sector collaboration for the promotion of agriculture and livestock

production in order to achieve a human development based on a local and community dimension.

Component of the Productive Option Program: Productive and Healthy Districts as part of the local development. Family production- rural and/or suburban areas

Initiative of Health-Agriculture Joint Activities and Local Communities sponsored by PAHO/WHO, through the Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Health and Agriculture

11. PAHO/WHO has been promoting for decades the coordination and synergy among the sectors of Health and Agriculture, as well as with other related sectors (environment, occupational health, education, among others).

12. In this case, the Health-Agriculture interaction and related sectors, intends to being implementation through the strategy of Productive and Healthy Districts (PHD), in rural areas of small livestock producers, and in some cases this initiative includes urban and suburban areas, where people have difficulties to access food .

13. This lay-out is developed through an articulating approach to agriculture/health and local development, trying to bring a new meaning “to the way of life” in the rural and suburban communities. All this, without forgetting the productive-economic scope, which will include activities related to livestock, such as the diversification of agricultural activities, locality of the products and generation of employment and income. It would be a way to have a better income which in turn would lead to better health for the people.

Initiative to promote local development in areas of small farmers

14. Developing countries recognize that one of the social alternatives which have greater potential to reduce hunger and poverty resides in improving the livestock production of the small farmers. The Health-Agriculture Inter sector Joint Action, sponsored by PAHO/WHO, is implemented through the strategy of “Productive and Healthy Districts as a part of the Local Development”, in areas of small family producers.”

Presentation of the Initiative for Health-Agriculture Joint Activities

Notion of the Strategy of Productive and Healthy Districts (PHD) as part of the local development:

- PHD is where the producers, rural workers, public and private organizations, local authorities and members of the community at large, devote constant efforts to

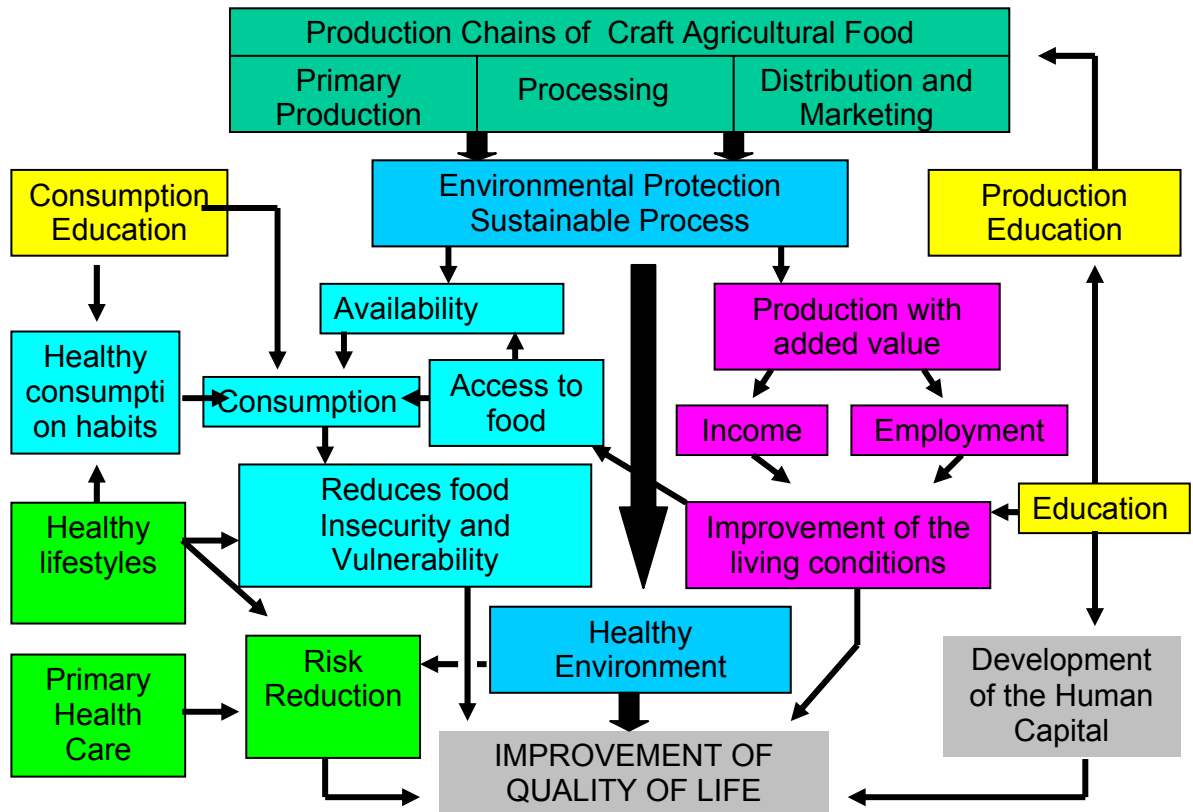
improve healthy food production. Those actions will include, whenever possible, the processing and marketing of products to guarantee:

- the nutritional value and food safety for people and families while systematizing the care, protection and promotion of health for the members of rural communities.
- Thus, the living conditions are improved, including the creation of income and employment, as well as the education of members of the community (especially children and young people) while giving legitimacy to the social identity of the rural families and to the preservation of the local culture, as well as the assessment of life in the country. All this, harmoniously related to natural resources and the environment giving attention to its preservation.
- At the same time, strengthening the communities' participation and social mobilization to improve coexistence, dialogue, cooperation, negotiation, solidarity, citizenship, co-management and social control of the processes.
- The district then becomes an economically productive, socially, historically, politically and culturally local territorial scenario, with internal social actors interacting with the outside.

Expected result

15. Production is the key to live in a worthy, healthy, participatory, cooperative and sustainable way.

Figure 1. Productive and Healthy Districts as part of Local Development Components of the initiative



Source: Astudillo, 2004 (a).

Local Development

16. The type of development, which is sought in this initiative, is not only to promote the growth of the productive-economic aspects of the livestock production in areas of small rural farmers, as a way of reducing poverty and inequalities. The aim is to attain a new form of social and economic development in small rural communities which could answer the following questions: How are we going to reduce the existing poverty in countless rural populations?, How are we to influence the formulation of public initiatives containing a strong substrate based on equity and social insertion?

17. The proposal for local development supporting this initiative is set out within the framework of the formulation of public initiatives where the importance is placed on the interactions of small communities toward social, economic, cultural, political and spiritual life of rural farmers. It should be built in the observance of the people seeking social unity in an environment pervaded of conflicts. (Akerman, 2004).

18. The strengthening of democracy in Latin America has been an important achievement, but so far it has not improved the living conditions of the most vulnerable, among them the rural communities of small farmers. It is advisable to strengthen other forms of democracy which make it possible to forge partnerships, to make pacts between government and non government actors. These pacts should lead to public commitments, through equity and social inclusion, built locally among the various social actors of these local communities assuring the rights of people and promoting the practice of citizenship (Akerman, 2004).

19. This whole process should result in an important synergy between civil society and political democracy, prioritizing the collective dimension of the needs and solidarity as the basis for the formulation of public initiatives. In this way, equity and social inclusion, become principles that lead the process of development that would be nothing more than the means for strengthening citizenship and the promotion of social rights.

20. Local development, tries to make viable the process of building social capabilities in a region or area designed to foster joint and participatory activities, convergent toward collective and democratically accepted purposes, directed to obtain an end result that presents a greater impact on the initial situation.

21. What generally characterizes the concept of local development is the indication of an endogenous approach to a community's problems, as determinant of the strategies of promotion to the development process

22. Local development is a construction process, through the achievement of the basic rights for people, i.e. to rescue the perception of the citizen that he is an actor in a social process, with duties and rights, as central character in a process where he is involved. (Couto Rosa, 2004).

Local development and Social Participation.

23. Collective activities of various social actors of a community (people, groups, organizations, institutions) interested in the PHD initiative can face the challenges of the specific reality. These actions reflect a process that includes taking part in the interpretations of the reality, in the interpretive deliberations, in the preparation of proposals for solutions, in the mobilization of resources, in assuming responsibilities and commitments, in evaluating processes and results, all of them are the result of the application of the Productive and Healthy Districts' initiative.

24. The participatory process involves the implementation of a series of important characteristics for the education of the participants since it is a process of dialogue, which is pertinent, consensual, synergistic, committed, collective, viable, creative and effective.

Bases that guide the participation:

- (a) It is a right and a duty for the people;
- (b) It develops critical conscience (behavioral changes and attitudes);
- (c) Its practice implies the use of process of "teaching/learning;"
- (d) It turns people and the community in leaders of their own development;
- (e) It improves self-assertion on people;
- (f) Its practice empowers people;
- (g) Develops respect "toward the other".

25. There are several instances for the members of the community to express themselves, such as forums, councils, committees, workshops, or theme groups. Furthermore, there are ways to establish the interactions among groups, institutions, organizations, and individuals such as partnerships, pacts, inter sector agreements, consortia, conventions, contracts, etc. In all cases, regardless of the strategy of expression adopted, the need to implement abilities of dialogue, negotiation and of mediation of conflicts is valid. (Astudillo, 2004(b)) .

Local development and Partnerships: inter sector agreements, strategic pacts, development of social networks

26. The potential for social problem solving, undergo the identification of new forms of articulation of the public/private social actors, be them institutions, organizations, groups or simply individuals. It requires a broad and integrated vision of the problems that affect the community, and a joint and synergistic action of the various institutions, organizations, groups and social forces that are mobilized for the development of policies or initiatives like that of Productive and Healthy Districts.

27. The partnerships correspond to any expression of formal agreement of collaboration, of cooperation, or of coordination, between two or more social groups or public or private organizations, with a view to improving some mutual benefits, to carry on certain undertakings or projects and to obtain some specific result that fulfills the common good of the community.

28. The inter sector practice among different sectors of the community and/or institutions that exist in the locality, occurs because of the need to take advantage of different competencies and experiences that have those sectors, institutions and social groups. The inter sector approach corresponds to an articulation of knowledge, practices, and experiences in the planning, execution, and evaluation of proposals to problem solving in rural communities with a view to meeting its needs and expectations synergistically and comprehensively.

29. In this way, it will be possible to undertake comprehensive solutions and to optimize the application of resources, since the complexity of the social reality requires an approach that “is not exhausted in the area of a single social policy.” Up until now, what has been done in the rural environment is to apply a specific social policy without considering the citizen as a whole, nor the process of other social policies. The inter sector approach, represents a way of effectively organizing and coordinating experiences, knowledge and moes of action in order to obtain integrated results in complex situations, as a way of overcoming the sector fragmentation of the social policies (Junqueira, 2000).

30. The social networks correspond to a social build up binding components (people groups, organizations or institutions) which make part of the network (links), turing them interdependent among themselves. Those interdependences (interactions) are in constant transformation through the time. The circulation of information, influences, resources, commitments, etc., is done through the interconnections of the network. The concept of network appraises the pattern of relationship between interdependent parts and not to the isolated parts. The links among parts of this network generate synergism, turning their actions more effective. Social networks are a managerial instrument that gives special importance to the comprehension of the complexity of the reality (variations of the interdependences), and in this way promoting adaptive responses regarding changes, due to the increase in horizontal communications. Thus, the community counts with an enormous social capital (Junqueira, 2000).

Local development and the Social Empowerment

31. Social empowerment corresponds to a participatory process, that makes it possible to strengthen the capability of the local community to become agent, manager, and beneficiary of its own development, strengthening its real and effective capability to exert pressure, to influence (to have power) the decisions that affect their well-being and the quality of life.

32. The empowerment of a community makes it possible to create and develop new undertakings, construct new social organizations, acquire synergies, change values, attitudes and behavior, increase self-esteem, mobilize in defense of the interests of the community, improve the quality of life and undertake actions that support and improve the local development.

Local development and Social Capital

33. Social capital is the accumulation of a sizable number of participatory and organizational experiences that occur in a community, creating a vast number of local interactions.

34. It then strengthens the ties of cooperation, solidarity, confidence, and initiative between people, social groups, and community organizations, facilitating the joint effort in favor of common development objectives.

35. The larger the availability of social resources (associations, councils, groups, mobilization), the greater the capability of association and therefore, the bigger the availability of social capital. All of this together turns the community more competent to advance toward local development.

Local development and local governance

36. Governance is the interaction between the government and civil society, regarding the democratic dynamic in the local area; especially when it concerns the management of conflicts in the local government, requiring social participation in the socioeconomic development of the community. Local governance is not synonymous of Local Official Government (as a conventional governmental institution). Local governance is a democratic process at a local level. (PNUD, 2004)

37. Local governance refers to a decision-making behavior directed toward activities supported in common objectives that may or may not derive from legal and formally established responsibilities.

38. The public functions of the official sector where the government is the only interested party are in the process of transformation. The meaning of governability is undergoing a great change, hence the use of the term governance which constitutes a new form of governability. By such, it is to be understood, the capacity of the entire society to exert significant influence in the decision processes of political, social, and economic nature in a given territory.

39. All this based on a system of social networks, made up of a multiplicity of social actors provided with varied resources (technical, legal, material, financial, etc.). Governance implies the management of the interactions and the interdependences of government and the official administration with the sociopolitical environment of a community. Under this perspective, the axis of the analysis dislocates from the capacity of the government to manage the relation of cooperation and conflict between various categories of social actors, taking into account the management of local development. In this way the notion of governance suggests that the capability to govern is not only related to the official institutional apparatus, but to the construction of partnerships among the social actors forged in relation to various factors as the interaction of interests, etc.

40. A new public social fabric is under construction clearing the way to new political development actions development policies and to a new role of the public sector. In this new fabric new forms of governability are strengthened as governance and the participation of the citizens in public life of the local communities. This new process requires changes of mentality and of behavior of the public and private social actors (Couto Rosa, 2004).

Components of Technical Cooperation to the Operation of Health-Agriculture Joint Activities

- (a) Diagnosis of the rural areas, suburban and ultimately urban that can receive this type of actions. Selection of productive options by:
- acceptability
 - feasibility
 - local capacity
 - social, economic, and cultural context
 - eventual profitability

Establishment of the area's and population's health profile for the implementation of a Primary Health Care (PHC) comprehensive and sustainable project

- (b) Diagnosis of the institutional actors (nationals, departmental and of organized civil society) and community who share in the stages of diagnosis, planning, organization, execution, supervision, and evaluation of the plan.

Local actors (institutional and community) contributing to the development of the project.

- (c) Planning and organization of the actions in agriculture and health, with reference to each participating community.
- (d) Development of pilot actions.
- (e) General implementation of the defined activities.
- (f) Activity execution and supervision:
- agricultural productive
 - of consumption and marketing
 - of primary health care
 - of primary environmental care (PEC)
 - technical and community supervision of what is carried out and acted upon
- (g) Performance audit by means of process and product indicators established in the planning, with the technical level and the incorporated community.
- (h) Extension of the experience, with technical and community components toward other populations and communities.

PAHO/WHO Technical Cooperation to the Implementation and Operation of Health-Agriculture Joint Activities within the Framework of Productive Districts

Mobilization of resources

Special attention to human, material and financial resources, to catalyze management processes, for the execution of actions in agriculture, primary environmental care and primary health care.

Dissemination of information

Contribute necessary information to the proposed plan.

Generate own information on the projects, to publish and print it afterwards, under the form of manuals, guides, reports, and texts.

Develop plan of social communication and information to the community and to the population.

Training

- in management of healthy Districts
- in management of productive Districts
- in management of PEC and PHC in local systems
- in operation of productive Districts
- in concrete actions of the plan of development and production that the community had selected

The training will take the form of foreign training of future replicators of knowledge and of courses, workshops, and local seminars with national or local educators.

Development of plans and regulations

Attention should be given to the development of plans and regulations, in order to outline comprehensive and assessable processes of production, attention to the environment and health, at the local level.

Research promotion

Promotion will be given to applied research projects in the development of actions leading to:

- implement better actions
- create new types of evaluation and supervision
- define the national processes of productive districts in favor of improving the processes

Direct technical assistance

Contribute with human resources expertise in the implied matters.

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