

V. Gender mainstreaming as an instrument and condition for the promotion of a systemic approach to institutional policy and modus operandi

FORMUJER Costa Rica

Introduction

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Introduction

The National Training Institute (INA) of Costa Rica was one of the nine Latin American institutions to participate fully –i.e., making an institutional diagnosis, attending a training course for executive staff in the Turin Training Centre and implementing a first action plan to diversify female participation in its enrolment– in the ILO Programme to Promote the Participation of Women in Technical-Vocational Training in Latin America, which was taken up again and gone into in further depth by the FORMUJER Programme. In the framework of this first plan of action, in 1992, INA created a specific organ, the Women’s Vocational Training Advisory Service (hereafter Advisory Service), to boost national and international policies addressing women, establish co-ordinations at the internal level to incorporate the gender perspective in promotion, information and publicising programmes, as well as in documents, materials, regulations, etc., foster female participation, mainly in non-traditional areas, and promote strategic alliances within and between institutions to guaranty gender equity and equal opportunities for women and men in vocational training. The existence of the Advisory Service, the prestige and importance of INA in the vocational training universe in Latin America and its influence in the Central American sub-region, added to the political interest and willingness at the national and institutional level to promote policies aimed at attending to women, were the decisive reasons which led to the selection of INA as one of its co-executing entities when in 1994 design began on the FORMUJER Programme.

1. The national and institutional scenario in which the FORMUJER Programme is inscribed

1.1. The socio-economic context

From the point of view of its extension, Costa Rica is a small country, 55,000 km², but has a population of 3,943,204¹ inhabitants with low percentages of illiteracy for the region (5% for men and 4% for women), a schooling ratio of .68 and a gross enrolment rate (primary, secondary and tertiary levels combined) very similar for each of the sexes (66% men and 65% women). Thus access to formal education in Costa Rica shows no significant differences between men and women, although performance of women is slightly higher than that of men.

According to the UNDP Human Development Index, in 1998 when FORMUJER began, Costa Rica was number 48 among 174 countries. However, according to the National Institute of Statistics (INEC) of Costa Rica, 20.6% of all households was in a situation of poverty, keeping in mind that there are more family members in poor families than in non-poor families. What stands out is that almost a quarter of the population of the country lives in precarious or needy conditions. In the segment of households headed up by women, the effect of poverty was decisively larger, affecting 26% of households, of which 20% are indigent compared to 14% and 4% respectively when the head of the household is a man.

The rate of economic activity was 36.3%. The female labour force was half the male labour force but had a tendency to grow in a sustained manner. Thus, in the five-year period between 1994 and 1999, the population of employed women increased by 25% compared to 9.8% in the case of men, and was gradually reducing the gap between men and women in the labour market. Regarding employment rates, approximately one out of every three active women had a job (31.5%), involving almost 40 points less than men. Likewise, wage differences in 1997 were 13 points on average in favour of men, female wages being lower than male wages in all economic classifications. Distribution by occupational groups in 1999 showed that, among the vocational and technical groups women double the figures for men, and in administrative jobs they were almost triple. Among general

¹ Year 2000.

directors the relationship was almost at a par, there being a radical inversion in agricultural groups and in industrial work. As is also true for the region, in the service sector men represented 9% of jobs while in the case of women it was 30.2%.

When FORMUJER began, underemployment affected 6.6% of the female economically active population compared to 2% for men. The majority of jobs for women generated in commercial groups and saleswomen, directors, managers, administrators and services, and the reduction in public employment also affected women more than men.

In the year 2000, female unemployment was 6.9% compared to 4.4% in men. However, it is necessary to point out that the total under-utilisation rate doubled this figure. Without reaching the high indices of the rest of the continent, the quality of employment in Costa Rica is tending to decline.

Regarding the Gender-related Development Index, in 1998 Costa Rica held position 46 and 24 according to the Gender Empowerment Measure, which reiterates a better position with regard to other FORMUJER countries.

1.2 The executing entity

INA is a public autonomous institution, created by Law 3.506 of 21 May 1965 and amended by Organic Law 6.868 of 6 May 1983. Its main task is to promote and develop vocational training of men and women in all sectors of production to boost economic development and contribute to the improvement of living and working conditions in the population by means of training actions, skills development, certification and accreditation for productive, sustainable, equitable, high quality and competitive work.

The Board of Directors, a tripartite entity, is in charge of its management and administration, as is the Executive Chairman, appointed directly by the Executive Government. There is also a Leadership and Liaison Committee (Comité de Cúpula y Enlace) to set policies and the dialogue between the entrepreneurial organisations and workers and the Institution. Its priority financing comes from the obligatory entrepreneurial contribution on payrolls. Its coverage is national and very large, both in terms of staff –more than 1,200 employees on the payroll that reaches 3,000 when hired personnel is included–, and of pupils.

It is characterised by a tradition of supply that establishes relations with the entrepreneurs through the Training and Technological Services Cores and the Committees mentioned above, great experience in the training field, and a very significant and wide network of areas and services that respond to highly formalised and institutionalised procedures.

The Technological Cores possess a sectorial focus and their objective is to strengthen sectors that produce goods and services, providing enterprises with, inter alia, training services, technology transfer, technical assistance, technological information, prototypes and project development. They involve non-concentrated technical units, the mandate of which is to promote the convergence of the different players and resources by facilitating dialogue and co-operation and to accumulate in-depth and systematic knowledge of the reality upon which there is an intention to act.

Additionally, INA has Public Workshops located in the main in poor areas where vocational training is provided, principally in traditional areas (mechanics, electricity, beauty, crafts, etc.) in a flexible and open mode of training that has made it possible to reach thousands of Costa Ricans.

As can be seen in Table 1, enrolment is growing steadily and, during the last five years, this growth is explained by the increase in female participation that went from 40% in 1996 to close to parity in the year 2000 and to slightly exceed male participation in 2001, reaching 51.6% of a total of 139,291 pupils. This participation is clearly segmented and concentrated in “traditionally” female areas and in a Complementation mode addressed to active or unemployed workers to update knowledge or improve basic training. This mode includes shorter courses and tends to include lower academic and less demanding levels. Enrolment in Learning and Qualification modes –designed for long-term vocational training to exercise a satisfactory productive activity– does not reach 20%, whereby courses include an average of thirty individuals and are in great demand which, in many cases, implies waiting lists of several years to be able to enter them after rigorous selection tests. In this segment where supply is of higher quality and the potential for insertion and vocational development are higher, female participation reached 40% in 2001 and, in the initial Learning mode, –where the young people undertake their technical careers– it was only 4.5% (386 women and 8,464 men).

Table 1: Evolution and sector composition of INA enrolment

Sector	1996			2000		
	Sex		Total	Sex		Total
	M	W		M	W	
Agricultural sector	77%	23%	23,963	71%	29%	14,551
Industrial sector	60%	40%	32,486	64%	36%	38,918
Graphic arts	85%	15%	691	75%	25%	1,940
Electricity	97%	3%	5,325	97%	3%	4,347
Food industry	31%	69%	6,918	36%	64%	4,780
Vehicle mechanics	98%	2%	3,517	96%	4%	4,817
Metalmechanics	98%	2%	3,070	98%	2%	6,133
Crafts	15%	85%	4,917	10%	90%	6,118
Materials tech,	93%	7%	2,798	92%	8%	4,054
Textiles and text manuf,	34%	66%	5,259	38%	62%	6,729
Trade and services sector	49%	51%	35,866	41%	59%	50,370
Trade and services	50%	50%	30,792	39%	61%	42,429
Tourism	43%	57%	5,074	52%	48%	7,941
TOTAL (%)	60%	40%	100%	52%	48%	100%
TOTAL (Abs.)	55,629	36,689	92,318	56,011	51,911	107,922

Students 1990: 33,113,

2. Rationale of the model adopted

In this context, INA decided to execute the FORMUJER Programme in order to enhance and diversify female participation and technically and pedagogically go into greater depth and strengthen the experience carried out from the Women's Advisory Service.

The INA/IDB Co-operation Agreement was signed in February 1998 as one of the last measures of the Executive Presidency that had arranged it. Therefore the formal initiation of its execution, in August 1998, coincided with the change of government and, therefore, of the highest institutional authorities.

The Programme began with the establishment of a National Executing Unit (NEU) that, in keeping with the budgets established in the Technical Co-operation Agreement, is made up of individuals who do not belong to the stable

staff of the entity. This point of departure, added to the complexity in terms of structure and dimensions of the executing entity, and to the need to recover and strengthen the modus operandi of the Women's Advisory Service, *posed as its first and fundamental challenge an institutional immersion operation.*

It turned out to be a complex process that extended for more time than planned. Although during 1999 there was progress in terms of the diagnosis of the different areas with which it was necessary to interact to define the intervention strategies, it was not until the reformulation of the role of the NEU, in mid-2000, that it was possible to lay down the axes and emphases of the methodological proposal of the intervention, and that actual implementation began together with its advancements in terms of visibility and recognition.

As it was mentioned in Chapter II, one of the characteristics of the Programme intervention methodology was the adoption of a logic of process to gradually build up the conceptual and methodological proposal among the co-executing teams –through feedback and cumulatively–, and to process adjustments and revisions on the basis of confrontation with the experimentation and with the conditions of the context. *In the case of Costa Rica, the logic of process was a decisive feature: the FORMUJER Programme gradually grew and reinvented itself, testing methodologies and strategies to address and pay systemic attention to the process while the four components were advancing in their modus operandi, which translated into validation and an in-depth approach to the initial conceptualisation.* On this path, the technical guidance and accompaniment by the regional co-ordination, as well as the exchange with Argentina and Bolivia were fundamental.

One of the first and clear examples of this modus operandi from the point of view of process logic is expressed, precisely, in the revision and adaptation of the specific objectives of the Regional Programme to the reality of INA.

In view of the institutional characterisation worked out in the immersion phase –that is presented in greater detail in the following section–, of the valuation of the profile of modus operandi of the Women's Advisory Service and of the conceptual and methodological approaches adopted by the Programme at the regional level, it was understood that *the most important and sound contribution that FORMUJER could make to INA was to promote and strengthen a systemic and comprehensive approach to institutional policy and practice that had a gen-*

der perspective as a cross-cutting dimension. For this purpose, it was necessary to act from and with the diverse strata of the institutional structure and later advance towards a systemic interrelationship between the diverse dimensions and components.

The Women's Advisory Service had made various efforts in terms of gender sensitisation and training and of attention to specific female problems, in coordination with the actions promoted by the Presidential Office. This line of action gradually acquired increasing importance starting with the assumption on the part of INA –coinciding with the beginning of FORMUJER– of the delivery of the training component of the “Growing Together” Programme (designed for adult women in a situation of vulnerability) and “Building Opportunities” (for adolescent mothers and pregnant adolescents). These actions gradually generated within the Institution, a strong association between the talk about gender equity and an assistance-type of intervention, exclusively referred to women in a situation of poverty that had to be reverted.

The challenge that FORMUJER posed to INA was to show that the adoption of a gender focus was not only an issue of social justice and, therefore, a tool with which to face inequity and poverty, but that, through a systemic vision and the mainstreaming of the gender perspective the following could be done:

- ◆ increase the comprehensiveness, quality and relevance of training policy;
- ◆ diminish the segmentation of female participation in enrolment;
- ◆ enhance employability of women and men;
- ◆ unfavourable conditions and, especially, of women with meagre resources.

If this technical and conceptual hierarchy was attained and the gender perspective was institutionalised, then the experience and methodologies could be transferred to the Advisory Service and strengthen it to ensure its continuity and sustainability.

On the basis of these considerations, FORMUJER Costa Rica defined, in a first instance, as a priority objective of its intervention “Institutional strengthening for the design and implementation of vocational training policies with a gender perspective, that favour the equality of opportunities and expand the possibilities of labour insertion of women with meagre resources”.

To achieve its objectives, *it identified three types of target population:*

- ➔ *the INA or the institutional area*
- ➔ *the productive sector*
- ➔ *the student population and, within it, low income women.*

In the last stage of execution, and as a result of achievements in terms of institutional appropriation of the conceptual and methodological proposal of the Programme, this objective was reformulated and the final goal was set forth as such: *Promote and strengthen INA capacities to increase quality, relevance and equity of training for work, and enhance employability of women and men, paying special attention to the needs of training and labour insertion of low income women*”.

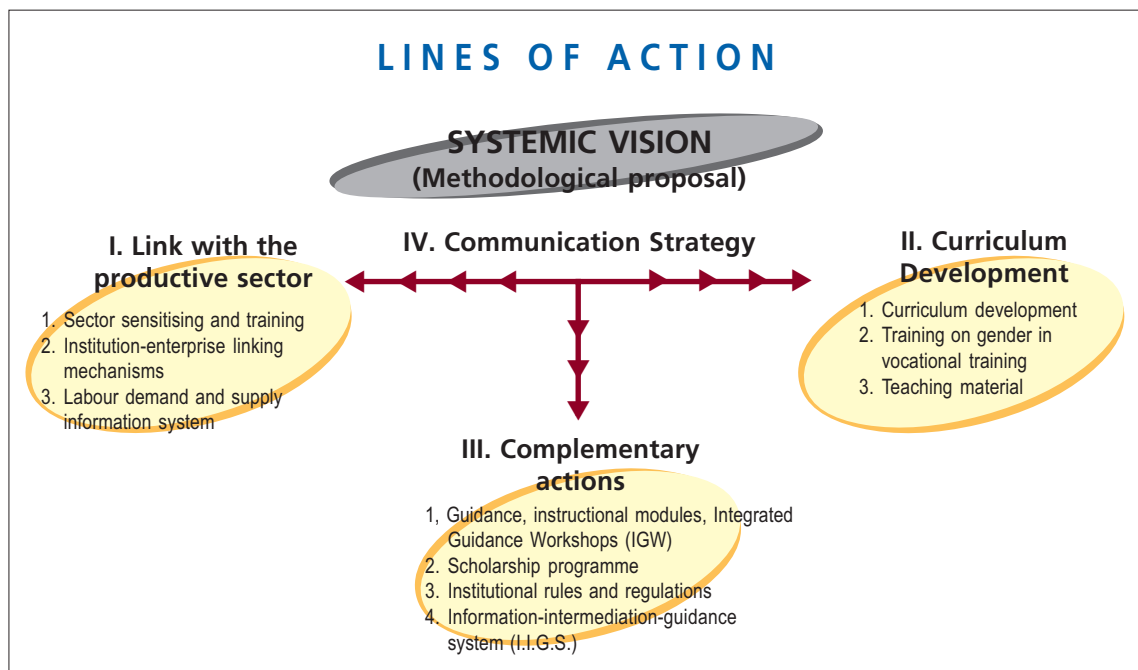
3. Design of the intervention strategy

The NEU’s first challenge was to link up with INA in order to later define possible and most adequate strategies to promote institutional transformation and systematic and cross-cutting inclusion of the gender perspective in plans and syllabuses. There was clear awareness of the need for in-depth knowledge of the Institution in order to be able to identify areas and population groups which would be worked with. In the same sense action was needed as regards the heterogeneous student universe: women who attend the Public Workshops or the Learning or Qualification Workshops do not have the same needs or characteristics, although they all share and suffer discrimination arising from gender stereotypes.

Because of this, the Communication Strategy component made a diagnosis of the institutional situation at the organisational and cultural level. By inter-

viewing more than 150 individuals, the hierarchical framework, roles, characteristics and modes of work of the possible interlocutory populations were explored, as well as their opinion and/or reactions regarding what had been achieved by the Advisory Service in terms of incorporating the gender perspective. Regarding enrolment, the information available on composition by sex was processed and analysed which enabled its concentration and segmentation to be visualised. At the same time an introspective analysis of the methodological proposal of the Programme was undertaken as well as of the form of the National Executing Unit.

As a result of this process, the technical soundness of the Programme proposal and the systemic vision that, as can be seen in the following chart, articulates and interrelates the components and lines of action, were identified as the major strengths of the Programme. It was necessary, therefore, to consolidate this systemic and comprehensive vision in the relationship with the target populations defined (student population, institutional area and productive sector).



Regarding the NEU it was established that, despite its small size, it had the technical strengths and negotiation capacity needed to influence and interact with the INA technical areas.

The result of this process was the adoption of a general strategy of implementation by phases that would prioritise, in a first instance, the mainstreaming of the gender perspective. A systemic treatment, such as was defined by FORMUJER, requires a combination of mainstreaming logic with focalising logic. The development of actions and strategies to achieve a systematic inclusion of the gender perspective in the policies, didactic-pedagogical methodologies and in the whole of the institutional modus operandi, leads to institutionalising the gender perspective. Likewise, working from the vantage point of focalising logic makes addressing needs, characteristics and specific conditions of the student population and the entrepreneurial sector possible.

The Institutional conditions of FORMUJER Costa Rica advised and imposed that they be addressed consecutively, although instances were generated during the process in which mainstreaming actions were alternated with demonstrational focalising experiences until parallel development was reached, leading, therefore, to complementation and feedback. The incorporation of the gender perspective was not a concern for the key areas of institutional modus operandi; therefore, it was first necessary to promote reflection on the theme and technically instrument individuals to apply it and only later, after these bases were consolidated, could focalising be addressed. In this way it was assumed that the student population would be reached, in particular the women, through INA.

Multiple and simultaneous strategies were implemented to address mainstreaming of the gender perspective.

The populations with which interacting was necessary (INA populations) were defined.

- ◆ This identification was obtained by attending to priority areas in terms of training policy in which intervention is indispensable if the gender perspective is to be established:
 - Authorities and Technical Leadership Units of the Technological Cores and the Regional ones
 - Planning and Teaching Staff
 - Guidance, Social Work and User Service Unit
 - Communication Advisory Service and staff assigned to Technological Core promotion activities

- Women's Advisory Service
- ◆ Together with the authorities, the areas being transformed which could be worked with to incorporate the gender perspective were identified. The purpose was not to start from zero but rather to develop strategic alliances with instances already in place in the INA that wished for or needed change.
- ◆ Key informants in the different areas that were receptive to the approach were identified in order that they might contribute to opening up spaces and/or might become multiplier agents of the FORMUJER proposal.
- ◆ Every effort was made to show technical soundness in the relationship with each interlocutor and to provide technical contents to the promotion of the gender focus in training.
- ◆ A work method by demonstrational and transferable experiences was adopted, in which the joint operation of at least two components could be developed, so as to spread and visualise the systemic and comprehensive conception of the FORMUJER proposal. The demonstrational actions were carried out in areas that resembled the four components and in which there were well defined populations, defined strategic spaces, allied individuals willing to generate specific changes and/or needs that coincided with the Programme's methodological proposal. The demonstrational actions were those where FORMUJER had the most space for action, that allowed it to exert an influence to strengthen or promote transformations, and they were characterised by their potentiality for replication in diverse instances. Among examples of this mode of work are the identification and development of the competency based profile for silk screening in the Graphics Industries Core, the revision of programmes and modules from a gender perspective, the joint production with the Metalmechanics Core of the "Manual to encourage employability in the classroom", etc.
- ◆ The institutional rules and regulations were revised and, very specially, the Scholarship Regulations, to identify and eliminate gender marks. This strategy culminated with the inclusion of gender aspects in the reformulation of the institutional Vision and Mission, where FORMUJER played a leading role.
- ◆ The Staff Training Plan was conceived with a triple objective to:

- introduce reflection on gender in training;
- promote and develop methodologies to apply the focus on the specific area of action of the previously identified interlocutor populations;
- operate as a strategy for promotion and involvement of the staff.

FORMUJER decided to gradually generate its own demand according to institutional needs; it gradually planned to use the trial and error method, having to return to point zero often, and thus gradually defined and implemented different “roads to success” in which one or several of these strategies were placed in operation.

These advances along “critical routes” gradually became “joint achievements”, when mutual professional respect and horizontal teamwork was generated, and they were what made possible Programme acknowledgement as a technical benchmark, both in matters of gender and in training policies.

When there had been progress in institutional intervention and the four components had achievements to report in terms of adaptation and appropriation of the conceptual and methodological axes of the Programme, and with demonstrational experiences too, work was encouraged from the focalising logic involving the student population, understood as the formulation of strategies of comprehensive attention that would allow an increase in employability levels. Integration was broached both in terms of convergence of lines of action and of contents.

The greatest challenge for FORMUJER Costa Rica was to create paths, to find alternatives to influence and work with a supply planned two years in advance, with defined curriculum developments for each Core and according to the mode involved: Learning, Qualification, Complementation and Public Workshops. Moreover, with a list of participants that also obeyed pre-established and generic procedures. The conditions of this relationship with the student population, always given publicity by the INA organisational and technical structure, were decisive for structuring instances and possibilities of arrival and attention paid to women who, in turn, imposed a need to establish a typology of beneficiaries (INA/IDB women), to distinguish participants to whom the entire methodological package could be applied, from those that received only partial attention and/or application.

To work on the focalising logic, i.e., to address the attention of the student population, a range of strategies were also developed that were gradually supported and articulated with the conceptual bases and the memberships that were generated through the interventions to mainstream the gender perspective. Among them the following stand out:

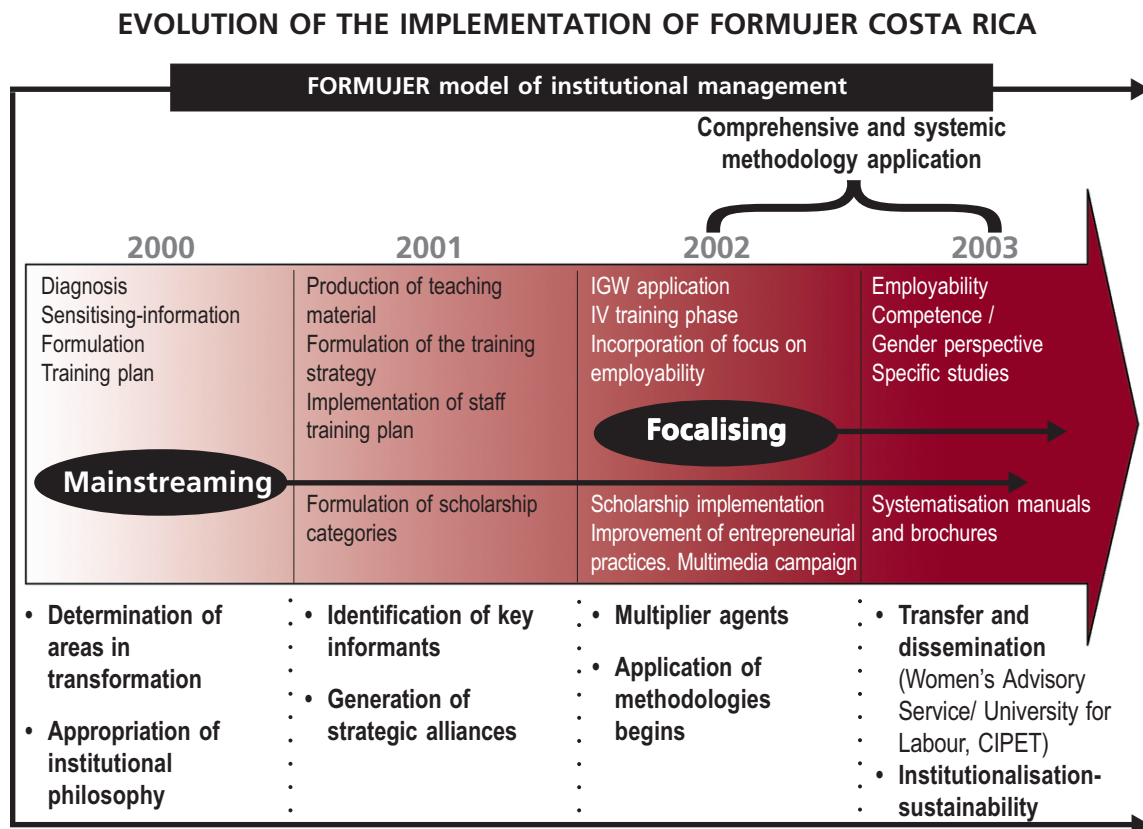
- ◆ in depth diagnoses of the Guidance and Social Work areas;
- ◆ the identification of possible women's groups with which the Programme could be linked, and of their training needs;
- ◆ the conceptual development and the promotion of the System of Information, Guidance and Intermediation of Employment with a gender perspective;
- ◆ joint work of the components of Liaison with the Productive Sector and Communication Strategy with the staff of Promotion of Cores and Training Centres, especially those of high technological content and "non-traditional" areas, to transfer to them tools and strategies to promote and increase female participation;
- ◆ drafting of criteria for assigning scholarships on the basis of gender and implementation of Transitory Regulations that allowed FORMUJER scholarships to be awarded;
- ◆ training plan and joint work with the Social Work staff for them to appropriate the approach and apply the criterion of gender condition in assigning scholarships;
- ◆ through the conceptualisation and implementation of the Integrated Guidance Workshops (IGW), employability approaches and personal projects of training and employment in training processes were included, and demonstrational experiences were generated to be applied to women beneficiaries of the Programme.

4. Implementation of the intervention model

The development and consolidation of the FORMUJER Costa Rica intervention model was gradually built and gone into in further depth during its execution, as was also the case with the strategic vision, that tried out diverse paths until it found the most effective for advancing in the integration of gender mainstreaming into policies and the adoption of specific actions of attention paid to the female population and particularly that of meagre resources. Because of this, this critical recovery could be achieved in no other way than by visualising the development of the construction and implementation of the Programme at the overall level and of each component, since a systemic conception is none other than to make explicit the principle of mutual transformation between the parts and of the latter over the system.

4.1 The overall process of implementation

In the following chart the evolution of the FORMUJER modus operandi is shown, indicating, in a parallel manner, methodological and strategic progress.



As was stated in point 3, in the year 2000 FORMUJER focused its efforts on the implementation of mainstreaming strategies, which was done jointly with sensitising actions, both within INA and externally, through information sessions on the Programme, sensitising sessions to analyse the receptivity and willingness of the entrepreneurial sector and the social setting regarding an INA intervention in favour of the equality of opportunities.

The year 2001 began with the publication of the first teaching materials that conveyed a distinctive communicational label to FORMUJER and started up the process of institutional recognition of the technical soundness of the NEU and its role as a reference point regarding the theme of gender and training. The need to implement and promote a gender focus in vocational training was validated, with shared and homogeneous frames of reference that would lead different INA population areas to “speak the same language”. The Training Plan opened up dialogue with the interlocutor populations, from the senior management level to teaching staff, in order to generate a proposal on gender in keeping with institutional interests and philosophy.

At the same time, in the month of May the first scholarships based on gender condition were awarded, promoting a novel focus on attention paid to women and on positive discrimination to diversify vocational options, and on the very concept of subsidy that became, towards the end of 2002, compensatory strategies in keeping with the conceptualisation effected by the Argentine team. Also in the last quarter of 2001, after the III Regional Workshop, FORMUJER intensified the stimulus in INA of the focus on improvement of employability and the work based on occupational projects, achieving a qualitative leap in terms of appropriation of the comprehensive proposal driven at the regional level.

At that moment FORMUJER had key informants from related areas, strategic alliances having been generated that allowed demonstrational experiences to be carried out. The curriculum revision from a gender perspective was transferred to the Planning area and employability became a topic of conversation, despite the difficulties and resistances that had been generated by the experience in competency based training with a gender perspective promoted in the area of silk screening. Occupational instead of vocational guidance was promoted, which implied a significant conceptual transformation. Regarding the Social Work area and as an effect of the training provided, there was agreement in that there

was a need to support women in high technology areas; moreover, there were two successful experiences of work with the Liaison Committees.

In the year 2002, focalising was worked on through training of the student population in the Integrated Guidance Workshops (IGW), the assignment of scholarships and the improvement of entrepreneurial practices promoted by the Liaison with the Productive Sector component. At this time there were multiplier agents in all areas who spread and encouraged the replication of the methodological proposal. The convergence of mainstreaming and focalising went further into depth regarding the comprehensiveness of the methodological proposal: there were advances in the transformation of the institutional area and the student population was supported under the same focus. The year closed with the multimedia campaign that established the INA image as an entity that values and supports female contributions to national development and with a sound proposal that conceives gender as base discrimination on which other social variables act and adopts the crossing of competencies and gender in curriculum design and as a teaching methodology to enhance employability.

In this way 2003 arrived in which the conditions were such that they enabled an important leap in terms of dissemination and sustainability. There are successful pilot actions distributed among all INA technical areas; there is recognition in the institutional area, the coherence and potentiality of the model to strengthen and provide quality to vocational training has been demonstrated; and, furthermore, tangible products of the proposal can be exhibited: systematisation and dissemination brochures, and guides and manuals for teachers, planners and guidance staff.

The keys of the management of the FORMUJER Costa Rica model were:

- ◆ *institutional negotiation on a permanent basis;*
- ◆ *incorporation of the feedback principle and continuous improvement of its formulations;*
- ◆ *adaptability and flexibility when facing new situations and changes occurring during execution.*

4.2 Implementation by components

Because components and lines of action are presented and analysed in specific modules of this series of FORMUJER Publications, only aspects that are relevant in terms of characterisation of the intervention model shall be addressed at this time.

→ *Curriculum Design*

This was the component that opened the way for the development of the Programme with a very first awareness of gender issues and the revision of the curricula of modules and programmes of the Graphics Industry Core. Furthermore, it was the priority area responsible for the mainstreaming strategy through the Staff Training Plan. That Plan developed and promoted the demonstrational experiences of the decisive methodological innovations of the FORMUJER proposal. Among these, in articulated work with the Liaison component, the formulation of the design of the competency and gender based Vocational Profile of Silk Screening stands out.²

- ◆ Implementation of the training line began with short actions to heighten public consciousness at the request of some Cores. Later, the component generated its own proposal through a Training Plan that obtained the support of Administrative Management and the Technical Sub-management of INA. It developed a wide repertoire of materials and methodologies with plan guidelines for the incorporation of different population areas. All the methodologies and tools created and validated in the implementation of the plan were transferred to the Women's Advisory Service that multiplied the capacity of impact when it assumed complementary training as of the year 2002. Finally, employability training is formulated, articulated and reinforced by the Guidance and Social Work components.
- ◆ Curriculum revision, which required a greater degree of support alongside and mutual understanding between the NEU and INA, was gone into in greater depth as of 2002. The revision of language in the programme modules and/or certifiable graduations was initiated. Then came the turn of indirect revision on the basis of training of individuals responsible for the

² See FORMUJER, *Gender and training...*, op.cit.

curriculum development in the interested Cores and in the Women's Advisory Service, with which the methodology of the Institution was established. Finally, employability competencies were incorporated into curriculum development through joint work with the Metallic Constructions Sub-sector. This culminated with the inclusion of four socio-affective objectives, with a score for final evaluation, in the programmes of the modules "Oxy-acetylene Cutting and Welding" and "Sigma Welding and Cutting", and in 11 programmes of courses revised by the Sub-sector. With this experience dissemination began in 2003 in the Planning areas and the group of Cores.

- ◆ The production of teaching materials was articulated with the Communication Strategy. It began with the "Collection of brochures on gender in training" with subjects of technical interest written in accessible language. Later an "Equity Bulletin" was drafted, which included INA activities on gender to provide an integrated image of FORMUJER, INA and the Women's Advisory Service. At the same time, the "Guides and checklists for the incorporation of the gender focus in INA planning phases" were drafted, a long job which involved the use of feedback and was incorporated at the regional level.³ Finally, the "Manual with activities to stimulate employability in the classroom" was produced, which was supplemented by the "Guide for the revision of programmes of modules with a gender perspective". With these documents the process of conceptual maturing and joint construction of the FORMUJER proposal with INA was consolidated.

➔ *Link with the productive and social setting*

The conceptual evolution of this component is well expressed in the name change processed at the regional level: it went from visualising it as being responsible for incorporating the knowledge of the demand and for promoting articulation with the entrepreneurial sector, to redefining it as a promoter of diverse labour insertion strategies and of training actions identified on the basis of co-ordination and articulation with the multiple players of productive development: entrepreneurs, local development projects, municipal governments, community organisations, etc.

³ Included in Chapter I – Materiales de trabajo en FORMUJER, *Género y formación...* op.cit.

- ◆ In Costa Rica the first thing done was to address, in a broad and generalised manner, the heightening of awareness of the representatives of the entrepreneurial sector. The sessions became spaces of information on the Programme and of communication between INA and some productive sectors. Then came the qualification of spaces and the promotion of methodologies, together with Curriculum Development, for the definition and identification of vocational profiles and their competencies. In this line work was done on two axes: profile definition as a specific task and the opening up of spaces for discussion between INA and the sector in question that, in the demonstrational experience developed with the silk screening sub-sector, culminated with its incorporation into the Liaison Committee. Finally, these spaces became platforms to present the results of the studies carried out and as a way to link INA with the enterprises.
- ◆ Regarding markets studies, beginning with global and labour market trend (year 2000) analyses, specific studies and methodology formulations were made, for example, to measure the success of female micro-enterprises and identify their explanatory factors. At the same time, the forums, seminars and talks were specialised until they became reflection instances on technical aspects of the articulation between the productive sector and training.
- ◆ Lastly, a methodology of improvement of entrepreneurial practices was formulated which promoted the payment of systemic and personalised attention to micro-entrepreneurs: their capacity to understand the market was strengthened, as well as to identify and manage their training project; through the Guidance Workshops access to the technical and specific training they need is managed and organised and scholarships are awarded. In this way the potentiality of the articulating role the component must assume is also visualised.
- ◆ The intervention together with the Liaison Committees was also gradually specialised as experiences progressed. First they were used as platforms to identify vocational profiles with female insertion potentiality. Then, they were technically involved in determining sectorial and local training needs which allowed them to demonstrate the possibilities of redefining their role in INA operations. The strategy adopted was that of a personalised relationship of the Liaison entity with entrepreneurial representatives.

→ *Complementary actions*

As is shown in chart 1, this title includes the Guidance and Scholarship System components.

◆ *Vocational and Occupational Guidance*

The leadership of this component was particularly forcible in focalising on the student population and systemically consolidating the model. The proposal that the work should be carried out based on occupational projects was the driving axis of the comprehensiveness of the intervention. Articulation with the Curriculum Development component to work on employability and project matters was basic to integrate into that component the focalising logic. Work began with the conceptualisation and promotion of the System of Information, Guidance and Intermediation of Employment (SIOIE), strengthening the systemic vision of the different processes that make up this system in INA, including in them Guidance and mainstreaming the gender perspective. In the year 2000 a multidisciplinary committee was set up with the participation of the different areas involved, which formulated a model of adequate functioning for INA institutionality. The intervention of FORMUJER was decisive both in conceptual terms and in terms of drive and promotion. On the basis of this work it was possible to visualise the need to reformulate the INA Guidance area, strengthening the vocational and occupational focus and, especially, so that it would fulfil its function to promote the diversification of female occupations and the removal of gender marks from the training supply. Work was done with the User Service Unit and, in a joint effort with General Management, USU, the Spanish Co-operation Agency and the ILO MATAAC Project, Guidance Manuals for Searching for Employment that adopted a gender perspective and the occupational project methodologies of FORMUJER were produced.

Later, the formulation of a proposal to comprehensively attend to the INA student population was addressed, especially regarding women and those with meagre resources. In this area, work started in the participative workshops, to promote vocational choice unbiased by stereotypes; then it included the incorporation of the work based on occupational projects and the production and implementation of IGWs. This process was consolidated

on the basis of FORMUJER Exchange and Systematisation Thematic Workshops held in November 2002 in Costa Rica. Training for its application and methodological transfer included the Women's Advisory Service, the staff of Planning and the workers of the Interinstitutional Programmes ("Growing together" and "Building opportunities").

◆ *Scholarship System*

Conversations were held with the interlocutory population of INA Social Work staff.

It began with the revision of the rules and regulations and, particularly, with the Regulations on Scholarships to Students of the National Training Institute and nine institutional regulations, which made possible the adoption of important changes from a gender point of view. It continued with the production of categories of scholarships by gender condition which would be financed by FORMUJER, by head of household, by performance and by non-traditional or high technological content areas. Although this was a positive focalising and discriminating strategy, when it was used for training Social Work staff and for the development of cross-cutting competencies by involving in IGWs women who were awarded scholarships, it became a tool for mainstreaming the gender perspective.

➔ *Communication Strategy*

This is the line of action that opens up a space for FORMUJER's institutional immersion and generates the first technical and articulating recognitions, through the relationship with and the contributions to Communication Advisory Services and Women's Advisory Services. This point of departure, together with outlines for regional work, promotes the cross-cutting condition of the component, its articulating role and technical support role for the activities of the other components.

- ◆ It gets strongly and decisively involved with the Skills Development Plan and, especially, with the actions addressed to INA male population and the productive sector.
- ◆ The first FORMUJER documents drafted jointly with Curriculum Development with careful and attractive diagrams, create the identity of and a novel seal for the Programme.

- ◆ During the second year, the production of documents was essential to distinguish the actions of the Programme both internally and externally, to which is added the concretion of the first phase of the public campaign with the production of a series of radio spots. The production of communicational pieces was, at the same time, an element of methodological transfer and of strengthening of the Communication Advisory Service to institutionalise the gender perspective in the entire communicational policy of INA.
- ◆ In the year 2002, the public campaign was publicly launched, after long administrative proceedings. Campaign publicising was assumed by INA and contributed to modifying the institutional image, positioning it as an educational entity that promotes and is committed to gender equity.

5. Principal results attained

FORMUJER Costa Rica concluded its direct execution in September 2003, having devoted the last months to supporting and monitoring the institutional adoption of its proposal. The aim of the preceding paragraphs was to describe the conceptual, methodological and strategic construction of the intervention model. In this chapter, the focus is on the results obtained. It has been organised on the basis of Programme objectives, which are expressed in terms of goals achieved and/or capacities installed, and the boxes show the most significant qualitative and/or quantitative indicators for the attainment of those goals. In the other documents of this series there is a more detailed and accurate description of the specific results regarding the execution of each component.

- ➔ Gender equity and promotion of equality of opportunities have been considered as criteria guiding institutional policy and the design of the national policy of employment intermediation.

Institutionalisation of the gender perspective in the training process

- ◆ In the reformulation of institutional policies, carried out at the end of the year 2002 with the participation of FORMUJER, the following INA Mission was established:

“To foster economic and social growth through the opening up of training and skills development opportunities for the Costa Rican population, particularly the most disadvantaged population, developing for such purposes, continuous vocational training programmes, which not only prepare workers for productive work but also to continue higher education; propitiating the development of the different productive sectors in the country, in a sustainable manner and with high quality and competitiveness, thus guaranteeing to people their personal and vocational development with equity and social justice”.⁴

- ◆ The “National Policy of Information, Guidance and Intermediation for Employment”, approved by the Ministry of Labour and drawn up by an inter-institutional committee where FORMUJER participated representing INA, adopts equality of opportunities and equity as cross-cutting axes and incorporates developments of the Programme on this matter in its conceptualisation and implementation.

- ➔ The formulation of a comprehensive methodological and strategic proposal for the improvement of the quality, relevance and gender equity of the vocational training process, which is further transferable to other vulnerable populations.
- ➔ The strengthening of the technical capacity of the Women’s Advisory Service through methodological transfer, training of its team and joint development of activities.

⁴ National Training Institute (INA), *Revista Técnica*, Volume 9, year 3, Unit of User Service, San José, Costa Rica, 2002.

Institutional appropriation and national dissemination of approaches and methodologies

- ◆ The Executive Presidency of INA ordered the full adoption of the methodological and strategic proposal by the Women's Advisory Service which shall be responsible for its application and continuity.
- ◆ The Executive Presidency is promoting the dissemination and consideration of the methodological developments and of the experience of the intervention model of FORMUJER within the framework of the University for Work Programme, a governmental initiative for a rational and more efficient use of human, logistic and material resources with a view to consolidating a national ongoing training system:
 - Has requested FORMUJER and the Advisory Service to implement a pilot programme aimed at poor populations in three INA Regional Areas to fully apply the Programme intervention model.
 - Has supported the instrumentation of an agreement with the Research and Improvement Centre for Technical Education (CIPET) for the transfer of the material prepared by the Program and for the delivery of an intensive course to 25 trainers to incorporate gender, employability and occupational project in the training methodologies. The intervening teachers shall multiply the proposals towards the inside of CIPET and INA thus expanding the institutional parameters and the training of future Costa Rican technical teachers shall be permeated with the approaches developed.
- ◆ INA has assumed, as unplanned counterpart, the resources to transmit the advertisement prepared by FORMUJER and the commitment to broadcast them in all the radio and television channels in the year 2003. The radio spots are still being transmitted.
- ◆ The Guides to Orient and Search for Employment of the MATAAC Project (*Proyecto de Modernización de las Administraciones del Trabajo de América Central, Belice, Panamá y República Dominicana*), have included the gender perspective and the concept of guidance and occupational project and, through the same, the proposal of FORMUJER shall be applied in the guidance actions of the Ministry of Public Education, disseminated in the sub-region and thus, it shall be strengthening the actions taken by the ILO regarding such aspect.

- ➔ The demonstration of the viability and effectiveness of a systemic vision of institutional policy and practices, in an organisation with as complex and large a structure as INA, and of its benefits in terms of quality improvement, relevance and equity of training supply.
- ➔ The generation and formulation of an institutional management strategy based on negotiation, promotion of dialogue, and the opening up of instances and spaces for interaction and joint work among the different institutional populations and areas, promoted a systemic vision and had very beneficial effects in terms of staff motivation and innovation in the organisational culture.
- ➔ The development of a process and of implementation strategies which are compatible and functional as regards the organisational and administrative characteristics, conditions, times and practices of INA, which was one of the keys to the success and appropriation of the FORMUJER proposal.
- ➔ The development of methodologies, instruments, human and technical capacities and the sufficient and necessary demonstrational experiences for the institutional adoption of the objectives and approaches of the Programme.

Construction of the conceptual and instrumental bases and implementation of demonstrational experiences for the transferability of the employability and gender approaches and methodologies to the institutional setting

- ◆ Promotion and strengthening of the Information, Guidance and Employment Intermediation System of INA which includes, as does the national policy on the matter, the gender perspective and the reformulation of occupational guidance, making operational joint and articulated work between populations (Statistics, Guidance, Social Work, USU, etc. areas).
- ◆ Implementation of a Communication Strategy which mobilised and articulated the different populations of INA for the institutionalisation of the gender perspective in the preparation of material, in the delivery of activities and in the construction of the institutional image. 26,500 publicising materials were distributed.

- Establishment of homogeneous and shared reference frameworks in all INA population areas:
 - 437 persons received gender awareness inputs
 - 357 persons received training with more than 8 hours of lectures on gender and the methodologies developed
 - The distribution of the trained persons shows that all the selected population areas were covered: technical and administrative heads (37), Planning (24), Women's Advisory Service (5), Social Work (28), Guidance (14), Promotion (18), User Service Unit (19), Public Workshops (22), Teachers (190).
 - Staff from the Ministry of Education and from the National Programmes was included, thus expanding the sphere of incidence of the FORMUJER proposals.
- ◆ 58 different teaching and publicising materials with a circulation of more than 12,000 copies to strengthen appropriation and application of methodologies and strategies prepared and distributed as a result of the complementation among components. By way of example the following may be highlighted:
- "Comparison lists for the incorporation of the gender approach in curriculum development"
 - "Guide for programme revision from the gender approach"
 - "Guide for the detection of the handling of the hidden curriculum"
 - "Collection of brochures on Gender in Vocational Training"
 - Training Equity Bulletin with 3 different editions
 - "Occupational orientation guide – Comprehensive Vocational-Occupation Guidance Workshops (IGWs)"
 - "Manual to stimulate employability in the classroom"
 - Information brochures on "Productive setting linking strategies", "Gender perspective mainstreaming and sustainability strategies" and "Strategies for scholarship awards under gender conditions".
- ◆ Curriculum revision from the gender approach, directly or indirectly, of 96 course modules and 19 certifiable graduates.

- ◆ Incorporation of the contents of gender and employability training in curriculum development through the preparation of the “Manual” with 40 exercises for classroom use.
- ◆ Incorporation of socio-affective contents in the Occupational Profile of Welding and Cutting with Protected Steel Arch and in 11 programmes of courses of the curriculum proposal of the Metallic Constructions Sub-sector.

Formulation and validation of methodologies and strategies for articulation with the productive and social setting

- ◆ Validation of methodologies and joint work practices with the productive sector for the detection of training needs and for the preparation of occupational profiles according to labour competency and with a gender perspective. The demonstrational experience developed was the “Technical person’s competency profile in Manual and Semi-automated Silk Screen Printing”.
- ◆ Formulation and implementation of the methodology of “improvement of entrepreneurial practices”. Significant improvement was attained in several of the management indicators of the productive units: reorganisation of the management systems, identification of potential clients, improvement of internal communication channels and with external interlocutors, etc. This simultaneously configures a demonstrational experience of the articulating and promoting role of the function of linkage with the setting, of methodology aimed at the micro-entrepreneurial sector from a gender perspective, of systemic intervention (joint work with Guidance for applying IGWs, with Scholarships, and with INA for the development of the technical training courses) and of focalisation in the beneficiary population.
- ◆ Conduction of 4 market studies which substantially and methodologically strengthened the institutional policies due to the information contributed by such research, the development of methodologies of labour market analysis with a gender perspective and, for case studies and sector specific studies, the definition of indicators of micro-entrepreneurial activity success, etc. Simultaneously, they become concrete demonstrational experiences to be disseminated.

- ◆ Acceptance and publicising of the specific studies within INA, both, as regards supply (micro-entrepreneurial supply from the textile sector) and demand, (research to define quantitative and qualitative needs of representatives of the entrepreneurial sector of the Sector Committee of the Atlantic Region) which positioned FORMUJER as a technical referent for this kind of research and for articulation work with the Regional Entities.
- ◆ Novel approach to the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the analysis of demand for Public Workshop courses by the population and the productive sector which substantively contributed to the reformulation of the INA courses.
- ◆ Promotion of the technical role of the Liaison Committees and development of three demonstrational experiences of the benefits and potentialities of the co-ordination and joint work between INA and the productive sector (Graphics Industries, Electronics and Atlantic Region).
- ◆ Consolidation of a range of awareness and articulation innovative strategies which resulted in:
 - 379 sensitised entrepreneurial representatives who are aware of the FORMUJER proposal
 - 202 contacted enterprises
 - 38 publicising actions carried out
 - 3 “Link with the entrepreneurial sector” brochures prepared in articulation with the Component of Communication Strategy.
- ◆ Delivery of the “Employment Management Course”, an INA, ILO, AECI inter-institutional activity, which complemented the effort of the preparation of the MATAAC Guides with promotion and strengthening for their application and for the incorporation of a systemic vision in the work of the User Service Unit.

➔ The formulation and implementation of a systemic strategy which includes the approaches of the FORMUJER model for focalising on the beneficiary population and, simultaneously, in agreement and feasible with regard to the characteristics of the INA regular training supply, in terms of specialisation, available modalities and organisational and administrative procedures.

- ➔ The adaptation to Costa Rica of the training proposals for employability and occupational project through the design of the Integrated Guidance Workshops (IGWs) and the manuals and Guide for their application. By means of this line of work, it was possible to establish, in articulation with the Training Plan, the platform for its dissemination in INA. Such spreading will depend on the Guidance Area's willingness to introduce changes. Its transfer has been more intense outside than inside the Institution, insofar as this conceptual development has permeated the MATAC Project and the Ministry of Education.
- ➔ The institutional appropriation of the criteria for awarding scholarships according to gender condition as a complementary and broad strategy which fosters occupational diversification, addresses specifically poor women or women affected by discriminations and gender-excessive demands. Likewise, it becomes a teaching tool, in articulation with the IGWs, to support the removal of gender marks, strengthen employability competencies and the entrepreneurial capacity of the beneficiary men and women.
- ➔ The realisation of demonstrational experiences involving the application of the methodologies in the two specific aspects of the focalising strategy, which at the same time are complementary to the objectives of employability enhancement and the increase in the quality and relevance of training: the diversification of participation in institutional enrolment and access, permanence and broadening of opportunities for poor women.
- ➔ The definition of criteria to categorise the population covered by FORMUJER by totally or partially applying the methodologies: Women and INA/IDB Courses.

Construction of the conceptual and instrumental bases
and demonstrational experiences for the transferability of approaches and
methodologies aimed at the student population

- ◆ Promotion of occupational project based work as an articulating axis of training and labour insertion, incorporation of gender and training on competencies for employability, and integration among components (Guidance, Curriculum Development, Scholarships and Liaison) through the formulation and application of the Comprehensive Guidance Workshops and the opening up and involvement of the Planning staff from the exchange instances with representatives of FORMUJER Argentina.
- ◆ Design, publication and dissemination of the Orientation Guide which contains 4 Manuals for practice work to be used with the students in the classroom:
 - 72 persons trained to be multiplying agents in the application of IGWs, 33 of which belong to INA (Guidance and Women's Advisory Service) and 39 belong to other institutions (MEP and suppliers of the inter-institutional Programmes "Growing Together" and "Building Opportunities")
 - 217 women from the modalities of Learning, Qualification, Complementation and Public Workshops were trained with 130 hours of direct IGW application by FORMUJER, through joint work of the Guidance, Scholarship and Liaison components
 - 18 workshops delivered.
- ◆ Institutional formulation, instrumentation and dissemination of the Scholarship System according to gender condition:
 - Revision of institutional standards and drafting of the Scholarship Provisional Regulations
 - 22 trained social workers with effective experience in granting scholarships
 - 339 female scholarship holders, with multiple cases of coincidences in two categories (e.g. high technological content and head of household)
 - 75 female scholarship holders receive training in Integrated Guidance Workshops.

- ◆ Relevant proportional increase of female participation in areas where the methodologies worked out were applied:
 - 30% in Electronics, Graphics Industries and Crafts Processes; 50% in Materials Technology and 100% in Metallic Constructions.
- ◆ Demonstrational experience of comprehensive focalising and intervention of components in the Public Workshops of Alajuela and Alajuelita (study of training needs, call up and direct relationship with poor women and with women's associations, training of staff, IGW application and scholarships related to gender, especially in the case of heads of households).
- ◆ 26 female micro-entrepreneurs improved their management indicators and their employability through their participation in the experience of improvement of entrepreneurial practices.
- ◆ 1,000 women were indirectly attended by the Programme, including those who attended courses revised by the Curriculum Development component and those who attended courses whose teacher was trained by FORMUJER.
- ◆ 100 courses applied some of the methodologies or strategies of FORMUJER.

6. Some lessons learned

The aim of this section is to supplement the critical recovery of the implementation process of the Programme, previously carried out regarding some of the most significant learning processes, concerns and alerts generated in the NEU, in the understanding that, with a similar weight to that of the achievements and impacts, they are important contributions to the attainment of the purpose of strengthening institutions and labour training policies.

- ➔ Spiralling progress, exploration and trial of paths to success, work in phases and the logic of the process have been the distinctive strategic characteristics of FORMUJER Costa Rica. These allowed it to begin with a gender mainstreaming objective and to conclude with a comprehensive, broader methodology proposal, aimed at improving the quality of vocational training, which places the axis in the individual situated in a specific context, and because of that may be replicated and extended to other population groups affected by different manifestations of vulnerability and discrimination.
- ➔ The generation of demand itself proved to be the most effective and appropriate strategic option to establish and position a topic such as gender, which proposes significant changes within an entity that did not perceive it as necessary and even showed signs of resistance and discredit.
- ➔ To initiate the implementation of the proposal by mainstreaming the gender perspective allowed the paths and gaps to position the Programme and its proposal to be identified. Likewise, it led to the generation of strategic allies, who believed in it and felt committed, and gradually multiplied the capacity of arrival and contributed to the institutionalisation and appreciation of the Programme as a reference point regarding gender. This first positioning and the continuous demonstration of technical suitability and soundness in the training issues became the platform for the identification and joint construction of demonstrational experiences, which were the spearheads of the national validation and adaptation of the regional proposals and methodologies.
- ➔ The other key to the strategy implemented was the comprehensive and systemic conception occurring, both in the formulation of the general strat-

egies and methodologies and in addressing the different components, which allowed the achievements of each of those components to provide feedback and act as a demonstrational effect of the general conception.

- Although it implied more time and resources, the attainment of experiences and versions of its own, i.e., generated and experienced by INA staff, was essential to permeate the institutional culture and establish the Programme as part of the daily routine and not as a parallel or confrontational space. This institutional implantation was a requirement to place a value on the regional condition of the Programme. Once this recognition was attained, the appropriation, feedback and exchange with regional developments were deepened and sped up. This was essential to progress in strengthening and consolidating the comprehensive and systemic proposal.
- In the light of the results obtained, it can be asserted that, for historically highly structured and large entities such as INA, it is necessary and effective to develop a first instance in which time, resources and efforts are invested for the purpose of integrating and adapting proposals to institutional style and characteristics. Likewise, the first actions must be directed at achieving communicational impact: to inform, from the beginning, at all institutional levels, on all the objectives and management modalities of the Programme, establish easy channels of interrelation and joint work, establish, from the start, the seal of identity of the intervention, to subsequently achieve cumulative effects, ensure broad impact in the presentation, incorporate novel, colourful designs and develop a consistent, sound communicational proposal, in accordance with the conceptual and technical postulates of the proposal, and integrated into its modus operandi.
- The interventions aimed at developing and validating methodologies and strategies to generate transformations, both in terms of practice and of institutional culture, are gradually being constructed, redefined and revised as their execution progresses. However, this situation is not usually taken into account in the design, and when the proposal has matured, and there are products available and results begin to be visualized in terms of dissemination and institutionalisation, the intervention concludes, which may weaken its sustainability and waste opportunities to maximise what has been achieved. Therefore, it would be necessary to design them with a certain process logic and in phases, where the transfer and sustainability

stage would have its own time and, ideally, would be adjustable, flexible and in keeping with institutional peculiarities and the implementation strategy developed. A categorical expression of this need, in Costa Rica's experience, is the fact that FORMUJER is finalizing its work at the time when the best conditions to generalise proposals and ensure sustainability are being displayed, as can be seen in section 7.

→ By way of example we could mention:

- The methodological proposal to enhance employability through the design and management of the occupational project, as the structuring axis of the teaching/learning process of the participants but also of the institutional training supply, was a process of joint construction and feedback among the countries and the regional co-ordination that reached its maximum consolidation in the year 2002. FORMUJER Costa Rica consistently incorporated it following the Thematic Workshops on Exchange and Systematisation; therefore, although the appropriation by INA has experienced substantive advances, it has not been concluded and requires in-depth training for the Institution to visualise it and generalise it.
- The Programme concludes after having established a conceptual platform, instruments and successful experiences that may be transferred to other areas to obtain institutional awareness regarding the need to incorporate a systemic approach to institutional policy and work, and a dual address –cross-cutting and focalised– of the gender perspective. However, and despite advances and efforts made, it did not manage to influence, e.g., the formulation of INA's general goals, in the 2002-2006 Development Plan that maintains the concept of high coverage without incorporating diversification and participation in, e.g., high technology areas.
- FORMUJER has consolidated a methodology proposal that is applicable by the INA population itself, by institutional multiplying agents who appropriated the methodology and execute it, this being one of the most important dimensions of sustainability, for which it worked from the beginning of its execution. Likewise, it has strengthened the Women's Advisory Service, through methodology transfer and train-

ing. At the same time, it has transcended the institutional space, to permeate with its proposals other areas of national policies and modus operandi, and has proved the potentiality of developing alliances and co-ordination strategies (MATAAC Project, Ministries of Labour and Education, University for Work Programme, etc.).

- FORMUJER could only achieve a few experiences of successful labour insertion of trained women, because the incorporation of labour practices as part of training, in INA, is only possible in the learning modality which comprises only 4% of the female population. The amendment of the Regulations in order to progress in this line, is still pending.
 - Overcoming of resistances that can still be observed in certain populations, the universalisation within INA of the proposal, especially regarding its systemic approach, and the deepening and sustainability outwards are challenges which still remain to be met.
- The success of the FORMUJER proposal is partly due to: the methodological consistency between the conceptual model and the management model and the importance given to the latter. One of the priority methodological axes of the Programme was the appreciation and recovery of the institutional strengths and peculiarities which are used jointly to incorporate the gender perspective and develop methodologies for its concretion. The application of this methodology to the management setting, made possible and promoted the gradual construction of its strategies, building on explorations and acknowledgments of institutional strengths and characteristic features. Thus, each country and each institution made its own way, although based on what was learned from and supported by the advances of others. This was possible due to the existence of the regional co-ordination organ that identified this complementation and promoted its appropriation and integration. In the case of Costa Rica, the willingness and effort made to learn about and interpret institutional operation and the development of a highly negotiating management style, were definitively determining factors for designing and implementing the intervention model and for overcoming the vision of work as assistance with a gender perspective that prevailed in the Institution.

→ The management problem in FORMUJER Costa Rica deserves to be especially mentioned given that its resources, which involved IDB funds and counterpart funds, were incorporated into the institutional budget of INA, and therefore, the NEU had no access to them nor was it able to exert direct management. This demanded a large investment of time, energy, creativity and negotiation from the national co-ordination to reconcile standards and budgets of the Agreement with the administrative procedures of INA, especially in terms of contracting services and consultancies. It had a categorical incidence on planning and meeting schedules, and implied, as regards co-ordination, working with greater identity on the administrative activities, thus unbalancing the technical work. Although this factor rendered the execution more complex, it also served to gather all the management experiences and resources which are very enriching for future interventions. In this sense, the fact that the Programme had a follow-up and revision mechanism, such as the Regional Workshops, was essential for the revisions to be agreed upon as work progressed. Moreover, the support and desire for flexibility of the Administrative Management of INA and the IDB, both, at the country office level and that of the Women in Development Unit, and the interrelationship with regional co-ordination, were essential to identify and process the adaptations and procedures for the execution of the Programme. As an example of this, and as regards the regional dimension, the continuity of its co-ordination as of May 2002 was authorised and the Exchange Thematic Workshops were delivered, something that was not initially planned. Both instances, as is mentioned in Chapter II of this book, were vital for the methodological consolidation and achievements of the Programme.

7. Sustainability and transfer of the intervention model

In March 2003, the IDB approved an extension of a disbursement until 30 September, which enabled dissemination and transfer actions regarding the intervention model to be solidified and addressed in greater depth, as well as the definition and formalisation of a Sustainability Plan that was approved by the Executive Presidency.

Through the Sustainability Plan, INA agreed to:

- ➔ Redefine the current role of the Women's Advisory Service in order to fully assume the FORMUJER proposal, and implement and provide continuity to the methodologies for mainstreaming the gender perspective, as well as those aimed at disadvantaged populations.
- ➔ Go into depth as regards appropriation of gender approaches, employability training, cross-cutting competencies and construction of a personal training and employment project, especially by the teaching and Planning staff, in order to advance in its generalised adoption.
- ➔ Institutionalise the methodology for specific studies with a gender perspective (studies of training needs and follow-up of training results).

In that regard, the Executive Presidency issued a general outline of work addressed to the Women's Advisory Service, entrusting it to assume the technical role performed by FORMUJER and to carry out the following actions:

- ◆ Assume the conceptual and methodological proposal of FORMUJER as a general outline within its institutional work and apply its systemic and comprehensive approach when working with the different population areas of INA.
- ◆ Execute and propose actions leading to this objective, placing special emphasis on:
 - Curriculum development: boost and promote the joint application of the employability, gender and competency based training approaches, and provide continuity to and broaden the coverage of staff training on Gender in Vocational Training, applying the methodology and material developed by FORMUJER.
 - Guidance: promote the work methodology by project and the application of the Integrated Guidance Workshops, both in attention to students and in institutional work.
 - Liaison with the productive setting: strengthen the link between curriculum supply and labour demand through joint actions with the Liaison Committees, making specific analyses with a gender perspective and generating instances of sensitisation of the entrepreneurial sec-

tor. Likewise, apply the methodology of improvement of entrepreneurial practices regarding the micro-entrepreneurial sector.

- Scholarship system according to gender condition: promote, assign and follow-up the awarding of this kind of scholarships, by the Social Work staff.
- Communication: carry out, in co-ordination with the Communication Advisory Service, actions aimed at disseminating and promoting the institutional commitment to equal opportunities.

These provisions have been supported through the formulation of work plans by component of the Advisory Service in which the co-ordinator of FORMUJER took an active part.

As one of the last activities of the Programme, and together with the Advisory Service, a Seminar-Workshop on employability and occupational project strengthening was held, addressed to the planning, curriculum development and teaching staff of INA in which, for the first time in the Institution, joint work among members of all the Cores was approved. The regional co-ordinator and two members of the team of FORMUJER Argentina participated in this activity, and it enabled the exchange and transfer of all the regional experience and developments on the different issues. In view of the acceptance, enthusiasm and commitment of the participants, the plans of the Advisory Service are being reviewed and strengthened in order to attend to demands for support in the implementation in their respective areas of incidence.

In terms of institutionalisation, these achievements have been reinforced and increased as of March 2003, due to the already mentioned decision of the Executive Presidency to promote the proposals of FORMUJER within the setting of the University for Work Programme. Said Programme aims at articulating the economic-productive sector with the social sector and fosters the execution of agreements with the Ministry of Public Education, all public universities and schools, with the purpose of carrying out a process of equivalence, revision and recognition of the programmes and subjects taken in INA which may enable workers and students to continue their studies and, consequently, the instrumentation of continuous training in Costa Rica. The inclusion of the FORMUJER proposal within this framework, not only entails a qualitative leap forward in terms of dissemination and sustainability, but also is contributing to strengthen public

policies in terms of gender equity and an important contribution is being made to improve employability and training opportunities for men and women, especially those who live in conditions of poverty or who carry out micro-entrepreneurial activities and need support to improve their competitiveness.

The lines of action that are being developed in this regard are the following:

- ➔ Generation of conditions for implementing a pilot project of comprehensive application of the FORMUJER methodology aimed at poor women and men, in a minimum of three Regional Areas of INA selected according to their potentialities for development and employment. Through that project –which shall be developed with INA’s own resources that have already been earmarked in the budget- INA will be performing and contributing to the general outline of the National Development Plan and to its major objective: fighting against poverty. The execution of this project shall be undertaken by the Women’s Advisory Service supported by the Regional Co-ordinator of FORMUJER. Within this line, promotion and exploration meetings have already been held with all the Regional Directors. As a result of these instances, four Regional offices have stated their interest in participating in the project. All those offices have persons who have been trained by FORMUJER and belong to the different strategic areas. This constitutes an important base of capabilities and support to begin the implementation of the project. Together with the Advisory Service, the Regional Co-ordinator carried out an analysis of the human and budgetary requirements to undertake this experience and filed the application and proposals for candidates with the Presidency and the University Programme that is processing its procurement. On the other hand, considering that the financing provided by the IDB for the regional FORMUJER Programme has concluded, Cinterfor/ILO has agreed to make the continuity of the technical support viable through the inclusion of the project in its Programme sustainability and dissemination plan, as well as among the objectives of technical co-operation with INA for the next two years.
- ➔ The delivery of the “Gender and Employability Approach as Cross-cutting Axes in Curriculum Design” course in the month of September 2003, for twenty teachers from CIPET and five teachers from INA, where FORMUJER will transfer its experiences and methodologies to promote

the incorporation of gender, employability training and occupational project approaches in the Costa Rican technical education system. Considering that the primary role of the CIPET is to train and update the teaching staff of technical education and the technological programmes of academic schools, the ultimate objective of this course is to have a team of trainer trainers incorporating, to their suitability for skills development and competency based training, these approaches which add relevance and quality to the training supply and also increase their capacities to reach the disadvantaged population pursuant to their awareness of the successful experiences developed by FORMUJER. This team shall, in turn, train INA teachers who shall undertake the responsibility to disseminate and multiply these approaches and methodologies within the Institution. This is an inter-institutional activity which is governed by an agreement that specifies the commitments and contributions of all the participating entities. In this regard, the FORMUJER Programme values this activity and has regarded it as an important expression of the articulation and complementation efforts and contributions among all its executing entities. Thus, the Programme has made all the national and regional materials prepared available, authorising their faithful reproduction for teaching purposes, and upon being authorised expressly to do so, states the following: FORMUJER Costa Rica undertakes the reproduction of such material in a specially designed electronic version, as well as all the logistical support, and to authorise the participation of the Regional Co-ordinator; FORMUJER Argentina authorizes and assumes the costs of the presence of its specialist in curriculum development and shares with Cinterfor/ILO those related to its specialist in occupational projects, belonging to one of its co-executing VTIs.

All of the above configures a fertile scenario, with enormous impact as regards dissemination and sustainability of the intervention model in which the finalisation of the execution of the Programme constitutes a factor of weakness which should be compensated through the technical and financial strengthening of the Women's Advisory Service.

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