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# Importance of regional cooperation; example of the guide for GI examiners

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## Résumé

The project "Calidad de los alimentos vinculada al origen y las tradiciones en América Latina" promoted by FAO and with the support of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), was implemented between 2009 and 2011 and brought together professionals from five countries from Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru.

In almost all Latin American countries, the formal implementation of Qualified Geographical Indications (CGI) is a relatively recent process and under construction. In this context, a large part of the state officials of these countries are faced with a new issue and new tasks for which they often have few tools and limited professional skills.

The project was then oriented towards providing training and facilitating exchanges in two types of instances: in regional training workshops that brought together mainly professionals from national registries and some technicians dedicated to the construction of GIs. On the other hand, the national workshops brought together professionals from different public organizations and private consultants.

The balance of the project allows us to assess the lessons learned about the nature of GIs and their particularities, the awareness of their use as tools to promote territorial development and the generation of relationships between professionals from different countries that were projected over time. The lessons learned from the national cases were capitalized on, identifying success factors and limitations (Pallar de Ica – Peru, Guaraná de Maués – Brazil, Moras del Cerro – Costa Rica, Salame de Caroya – Argentina, Merken – Chile, Cacao de Arriba – Ecuador-), from which a publication based on four cases was prepared (<https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/fe877b4e-f702-4db9-a2b5-9e3bed7aae6e>)

In turn, some doubts, divergences of criteria and deficiencies were detected regarding the eligibility of the products to be registered through GI. For example, when assessing the presence of a certain specific quality and its link to the territory, doubts arose about whether the presence of a certain reputation of the product is sufficient, what is the minimum time of presence of the activity in the territory and how to consider the historical aspects, what type of specificities should the product present and what local factors can determine the link to the territory, how to consider the territorial identity aspects, how to evaluate the criteria for delimiting the territory, etc.

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By identifying this demand, experts from Latin America and FAO, who participated in the project, wrote a Guide in Spanish, dedicated to professionals of national GI registries. It was edited by the FAO, and it is called "Orientaciones para la evaluación de solicitudes de registro, Indicación Geográfica, Denominación de Origen" ([www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/olq/files/generaldoc/IGC\\_FAO](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/olq/files/generaldoc/IGC_FAO)). In a second stage, the guide was reorganized for the international context and translated into English with the title "Promoting sustainability through the registration of geographical indications. Guidelines for public authorities to examine applications" <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14336/5284>. In this guide, the central elements addressed are, the aspects of the general processes and specific procedures for the examination of requests, which results in recommendations for the establishment or review of legal and institutional frameworks.

**Mots-Clés:** technical bases, evaluation of applications, Geographical Indications