




# Evaluation

*of Higher Education  
Programmes in Nicaragua and  
South-East Europe 2005–2009*

*Annex III:  
Country Report Nicaragua*



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This is an independent evaluation report. Views and conclusions expressed do not necessarily represent those of the contractors.

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## Abbreviations

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
AECID	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo
BICU	Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University
BMeiA	Bundesministerium für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten
BMWF	Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Forschung
CDC	Centros de Desarrollo Comunal
CDCC	Consejo de Desarrollo de la Costa Caribe
CEIMM	Centro de Estudios e Información de la Mujer Multiétnica
CEval	Center for Evaluation at the Saarland University
CIASES	Centro de Investigación y Acción Educativa Social
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CNU	Consejo Nacional de Universidades
FADCANIC	Fundación para la Autonomía y el Desarrollo de la Costa Atlántica de Nicaragua
HDI	Human Development Index
HE	Higher Education
IEPA	Instituto de Estudios y Promoción de la Autonomía
INIDE	Instituto Nacional de Información de Desarrollo
IREMADES	Instituto de Recursos Naturales, Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Sostenible
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MINED	Ministerio de Educación
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ÖED	Österreichischer Entwicklungsdienst
PNDH	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Humano
RAAN	Región Autónoma del Atlántico Norte
RAAS	Región Autónoma del Atlántico Sur
SAIH	Norwegian Student's and Academics' International Assistance Fund
SEAR	Sistema Educativo Autonómico Regional
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
ToR	Terms of Reference
UE	Unión Europea
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
URACCAN	Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaragüense

# **1. Executive Summary**

## **Purpose of this evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation is to scrutinize higher-education-support programs financed by Austrian Development Agency (ADA) in Nicaragua, with a specific look into recommendations for future activities.

## **Program context and strategies**

Nicaragua does not count with a strategy for the development of the higher education sector. However, ADA support is in line with the regional Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast as the project partners are key players for the strengthening of the regional autonomy. With regard to the future country strategy, capacity development through HE support in the RAAN/RAAS is also in line with the focus areas of ADA, particularly taking into account the strong local development focus of the new project proposal by URACCAN. The HE strategy of ADA had not yet been in place when the current projects were formulated. However, they comply up to a certain degree with the guiding principles and some selected key areas of the HE strategy.

## **Program portfolios**

There are only two higher education support projects of ADA and Horizont 3000 in Nicaragua: (1) The cooperation with the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast (URACCAN), particularly the strengthening of the Campus Las Minas in Siuna. The components of the project aim towards the improvement of academic teaching and research through qualification of university teachers, granting university access to vulnerable groups through an internal scholarship program, stipulating local development through the foundation of so-called Centers for Communitarian Development and the awareness-raising for issues related to risk management. (2) A complementary South-South-scholarship program canalized via the local NGO FADCANIC (Foundation for Autonomy and Development of the Caribbean Coast). The participants are supposed to work for regional institutions and, thus contribute to the development of the Caribbean Coast.

Although the evaluation focuses on the current projects, some evaluation criteria can only be analyzed in a meaningful way by taking into account the longer-term history of the cooperation which goes back to the mid-90s. The contribution of HE support to other areas of Austrian cooperation is also taken into account.

## **Relevance**

Ownership is high in both partner organizations as project goals comply with their overall institutional missions. The implementing-agency Horizont 3000 has managed the projects by a demand-driven, participatory approach that is highly appreciated by the partners. In the case of URACCAN, institutional capacity development has advanced to an extent that allows

for implementing future projects without further intermediation of Horizont 3000. This has not yet been proven for FADCANIC. Most ADA guidelines and international standards for capacity development are met, but a systemic multi-level approach to capacity development (i.e. the inclusion of interfaces with the macro-level or other educational sub-sectors) is not within the range of the current projects.

### **Effectiveness**

The project with URACCAN comes close to a holistic approach as its components are visibly interrelated and contribute to a common purpose. The scholarship program of FADCANIC is complementary, although the potential for synergies has not yet been fully tapped. Ratio of input vs. output is satisfactory. Most of the components of both programs have been successful, with only one indicator outside the target corridor (URACCAN) or some delay in output delivery (FADCANIC). Target populations have been reached to an extent that mostly comes close to the target values defined in the indicators. Donor-coordination has neither been established for the HE sector nor for capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS. Particularly donor coordination for the RAAN/RAAS could contribute to facilitate complementary interventions in the different educational subsectors.

### **Sustainability**

The cooperation with URACCAN has had sustainable impact on the strengthening of the institution, as well regarding the improvement of academic excellence as the consolidation of administrative capacities. However, economic sustainability is a critical issue and a structural dependency on donor contributions will persist for an indefinite period. With regard to results-orientation, the quality of the LogFrames varies, with indicators mostly restrained to the measurement of operational results. While output is considered and monitored sufficiently, outcome and impact variables are missing.

### **Outcome and impact**

Brain-drain-effects have not been significant and tracer studies prove that most of the graduates of URACCAN work in the RAAN/RAAS. In the case of the scholarship program by FADCANIC brain-drain is also assumed to remain low. Gender equality and non-discrimination of vulnerable groups is considered adequately, not only in the projects, but by the project partners in general. Particularly in the case of URACCAN, affirmative action for women and indigenous population is taken effectively. While the access and retention of women could be significantly improved, the desertion of indigenous students is still above average. The impact on the regional capacity development cannot be measured in quantitative terms, but is assumed to be considerable. URACCAN has contributed directly to the framework for the regional autonomy (SEAR, regional health model) and URRACAN graduates have a strong presence in local and regional public institutions. The impact is also visible in focus areas of ADA, particularly with regard to rural development and the health sector.

## **Recommendations**

The results of the evaluation suggest the HE support projects are effective and fully legitimate regarding their compliance with the focus areas and, therefore, should be continued. All reasonable scenarios for future HE support include further cooperation with URACCAN. A renewal of the South-South-scholarships should depend on the extent to which selection of participants can be adjusted to the focus areas of ADA and stipulate synergies with other ongoing projects. Future cooperation with URACCAN should emphasize local development components, however, the components for the strengthening of academic excellence and the scholarships for vulnerable groups should be continued as well. The emphasis of teacher qualification should shift from pedagogical and didactical subjects to specialization in specific disciplines. Donor coordination should be stipulated at the regional level in order to allow for an articulation of interventions in the different educational subsectors.

## **2. Acknowledgements**

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and Horizont 3000 in Vienna have been most helpful in the preparation of this evaluation and have given valuable information leading to the Inception Report. The regional office of ADA in Managua/Nicaragua as well as the regional office of Horizont 3000 and the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast (URACCAN) lent important support for the planning of the field study. Other partners and stakeholders have also been most supportive and have established an enabling environment for open discussion of all relevant issues. The evaluation was assisted by the local consultant Mr. Mario Quintana who participated in all stages of the evaluation (planning of the field phase, data collection, advice and further information for the final report). The author of this report would like to express his sincere thanks to all those who participated in the planning and implementation of this evaluation.

## **3. Purpose and objective of evaluation**

This report is part of an evaluation of higher education (HE) support programs financed by ADA in Kosovo, Serbia and Nicaragua. The findings will be included in an overall final report to be submitted in May 2010. In the case of Nicaragua, the major purpose was (1) to evaluate the projects conducted in the time 2005-2009, (2) to make recommendations for future activities, as both current projects in Nicaragua will end in 2010 and (3) to make recommendations on the integration of HE support programs in the future country strategy which is expected to be presented until 2011. HE itself is not a focus of ADA in Nicaragua, hence, analysis and recommendations will focus on the degree to which it contributes to capacity development in the priority areas of ADA (i.e. rural development, health, SME-development). According to the overall Terms of Reference (ToR) the country reports are not supposed to be detailed project evaluations, but to have a more strategic approach towards recommendations on the HE portfolio of ADA. On the other hand, it must also be pointed that only two specific HE projects in Nicaragua are presently financed by ADA. Other than in case of more

complex portfolios, this leaves place for a more thorough analysis at the project level without being distracted from the strategic focus of the evaluation.

### **3.1 Composition of expert group and course of evaluation**

Klaus-Peter Jacoby, M.A., has been the team-leader for the present evaluation. He has been supported by Mr. Mario Quintana as local consultant and resource person. In addition, back-stopping has been provided by Mr. Stefan Silvestrini of the Center for Evaluation (CEval) of Saarland University.

For this evaluation, the following steps have been taken:

In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, desk-research and a first workshop at ADA-office in Vienna has laid the basis for further elaborations. During the visit to Vienna, interviews with staff of ADA, the Federal Ministry for Foreign Relations (BMeiA) and the implementing agency Horizont 3000 were carried out. These and the project documents provided by ADA in Vienna and the country office in Nicaragua led to an Inception Report provided at the end of February 2010.

The field-phase took place between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2010, including visits to Managua, Siuna, and Bilwi/Puerto Cabezas. At the end of the field-phase, a de-briefing took place with personnel of the ADA-office, Horizont 3000 and URACCAN.

The final phase consisted of drafting and submitting this report. It will lead – together with the reports about the field-trips to Kosovo and Serbia – to an overall report to be submitted in May 2010.

### **3.2 Methodology of the Evaluation**

Generally, the methodology followed the ToR on which the bid of CEval has been based and the discussions made during the kick-off-Workshop in Vienna in February 2010. The Inception Phase leading to the Inception Report was meant to clarify all outstanding issues and to prove that the evaluators have a clear understanding of the needs and interests of ADA in regard to this mission.

The following methods for data collection have been used in preparation of this report:

- Desk-research in regard to documents and material provided by ADA Vienna and material collected during the field-trip (please see annex for a full list)
- Exploratory interviews based on a semi-structured guideline with staff of ADA and Horizont 3000 in Vienna
- Interviews with key stakeholders, international donors, project-leaders and other relevant interviewees during the field-trip to Nicaragua
- Site-visit to the Autonomous Northern Atlantic Region (RAAN): (1) Siuna – Campus *Las Minas* of URACCAN, (2) Bilwi/Puerto Cabeza – Campus Bilwi of URACCAN and regional government institutions.
- Focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the projects (students, teachers, local authorities)



All relevant stakeholder groups have participated in the evaluation, either in individual interviews or in focus group discussions, in order to triangulate information on all relevant issues. The exact time-plan of the field-trips and the list of interviewees can be seen in the annex of this report.

## **4. Program context in Nicaragua**

### **4.1 Strategic plans and concepts**

On the part of the Nicaraguan authorities, the strategic framework for Higher Education is very limited. During the last relevant comparative analysis of the HE System in 2002 (cf. Tünnermann 2002) the lack of a National Strategy on HE had been highlighted as a major flaw. As the universities are granted extensive autonomy, the National Council on Higher Education (*Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior – CNU*), a professional body composed by university authorities and the associations of students, university teachers and other university employees, should be in charge of designing a strategy, but has never attended this task. The National Plan for Education (MINED 2010) and the National Plan for Human Development (PNDH 2008) contents are by far too general with regard to the role of HE to serve as a reference for the evaluation.

The PNDH, however, defines guidelines according to the development of the Atlantic Coast autonomous regions that are of importance for the core mission of both project partners who pursue the strengthening of human resources and socio-political structures for the development of the RAAN (North Atlantic Autonomous Region) and RAAS (South Atlantic Autonomous Region). In particular, the PNDH refers to the promotion of the cultural diversity and identity of the Caribbean Coast and the stimulation of an economic model that should be sustainable and based on the cultural and environmental context of the region. The strategy stipulates affirmative action for the empowerment of indigenous and other ethnic populations and an institutional capacity development that takes into account socio-political peculiarities and traditions of self-government.

The governments of RAAN/RAAS have recently formulated their own regional Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast (cf. CDCC 2008), which came into effect after the projects of ADA had already been started. However, it should be the reference for future project proposals in the region, not only for the HE sector. Although similar to the PNDH, no specific references are made to HE, the goals are pivotal for the project partners URACCAN and FADCANIC, who both gave policy advice during the formulation of the strategy. Some strategic goals with relevance for the focus areas of ADA and/or the mission of the project partners are: the revitalization of the cultural identity; the strengthening of the Regional Health Model, the strengthening of an ecologically sustainable and culturally adapted economy, the strengthening of autonomy at local and regional level, among others. While the PNDH and the Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast are coherent with each other, none of them is specific regarding the required policy instruments and as long as the national government remains reluctant to handing over substantial responsibilities to the autonomic institutions, progress towards an effective autonomy will also remain slow.

In conclusion, there are hardly any specific strategic goals referring to HE, but a set of general development goals for the Atlantic Coast. Regarding the compliance of ADA with partner strategies in Nicaragua, this is not a major problem, as the support for URACCAN and the scholarship program of FADCANIC have never been primarily oriented to the strengthening of the HE System as such, but as a means for regional capacity development in a very specific historical, cultural and socio-economic context. Thus, for both URACCAN and ADA, the general Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast will indeed be more pivotal than any HE sector strategy that might be presented in the future.

On the part of ADA, the last country program outdated in 2006 (cf. ADA 2002) and a new country strategy is still on its way. Future focus areas, however, are defined in general terms aiming towards a narrower concentration of ADA support in the following sectors: rural development, health and development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) which are all in line with the above mentioned partner strategies. HE is not a focus area, so its strategic role within the ADA portfolio must still be defined. On the other hand, the HE Strategy of ADA dates from 2009 (cf. ADA 2009a) and has therefore not been relevant for the formulation of the present projects which have started much earlier. However, many of the criteria outlined in the strategy are already met. This is particularly the case for the cooperation with URACCAN that is visibly in line with several of the key areas defined by the HE-strategy (e.g. 1-Institutional capacity development, 2-Focus on specific regions and sectors) and also with most of the general guiding principles except donor harmonization (see chapter 7: Effectiveness) and, partially, results orientation (see chapter 8: Sustainability). The project of FADCANIC is also backed by the current HE strategy that still allows for certain scholarship programs, but it is only partially in line with the criteria outlined for this program type. Although visible impact beyond the individual participants and some multiplier effects are observable (see chapter 9: Outcomes and Impact), relations to specific ADA programs and integration in strategic institutional development plans have to be rethought in the future.

**Recommendations:**

- In Nicaragua, HE is not a focus area of ADA. This implies that projects can only be legitimized on the Austrian side as means for capacity development to the focus areas. The future country strategy should therefore (1) define the role and the scope of HE in relation to the focus areas, (2) define a set of particular contributions expected by HE institutions, based on the past project experiences, (3) a confined set of particular measures for the institutional strengthening of HE-institutions insofar the latter still need to be “upgraded” in order to become effective partners for capacity development in the focus areas.
- With regard to the integration of the HE-strategy in the future country strategy, it is also important to consider the status of HE as a non-focus area. Thus, the question is not if the HE-strategy is reflected integrally in the country strategy – but if cooperation with HE institutions is situated within the compounds of the HE strategy and does not contradict its principles. In order to avoid inconsistencies, the country strategy could name explicitly the relevant key areas of the HE strategy (e.g. specific sector focus, institutional capacity development limited to the level of individual counterpart institutions) and areas that can’t be addressed in Nicaragua (e.g. institutional development and quality enhancement on a systemic level).

## 4.2 The context of the HE sector in the North Atlantic Region

Nicaragua is one of poorest countries in Latin America. According to national statistics office INIDE, in October 2009 more than half the total population of 5.6 million are estimated to be poor, with nearly a one third (28.3 %) living in extreme poverty. The most severe situation is to be found in the Atlantic region which covers nearly half of Nicaragua's territory and ca. 14 % of the total population and where poverty rates surpass 80 %. The region is lacking coverage of basic public services and infrastructure and institutions have been weak and unstable. The human development index (HDI) in 2009 was 0.466 for the RAAN and 0.454 RAAS (national average: 0,696) (cf. ADA 2009e; URACCAN 2010a).

More than half of the population is below 18 years old. The demographical structure poses a major challenge to the educational system which is increased in the RAAN/RAAS by the predominant rurality and the socio-cultural context of indigenous populations (Miskitos, Mayangnas, Ramas) and other ethnic minorities (Creoles, Garífunas). Although the evaluation focuses on HE, it must be kept in mind that poor coverage of primary and secondary education constitutes a narrow bottleneck. According to figures of the Ministry of Education (cf. UE 2010) only 70 % of all pupils finish primary school, less than half of them (45 %) enter secondary school. Eventually, only 7.1 % of the economically active population accesses university where drop-out rates again surpass 50 %. The bottleneck for access to HE is best illustrated by the average permanence in formal education which is 7 years in the case of Managua, but only 3.7 years in the Caribbean Coast.

The subsector of HE was virtually absent from the RAAN/RAAS before the foundation of URACCAN in the early 90s. Since then, the core mission has been to foster the autonomy and the cultural heritage of the Caribbean Coast by training professionals with profiles and values adapted to the specific needs of the region. Another peculiarity is the model of a communitarian university that systematically expands into rural areas in order to promote equitable access to higher education for otherwise excluded groups (e.g. rural agricultural populations, indigenous and ethnic communities). The university counts today with four campuses (Las Minas, Bilwi, Bluefields, Nueva Guinea) of which particularly Campus Las Minas has been supported constantly by ADA and Horizont 3000. In 2009, the campus Las Minas counted with nearly 1900 students (including its extensions in Rosita, Bonanza and Waslala) and offered 9 different careers at graduate level (*licenciatura* and *ingeniería*), one professional specialization at postgraduate level and some additional courses for extension studies. Since 1995, another communitarian university for RAAN/RAAS was created (Bluefields Indian & Caribbean University – BICU), but URACCAN remains the intellectual center of the region and the focal point for the promotion of the autonomy of the Caribbean Coast.

## 5. Program/project portfolio in Nicaragua

The history of the present portfolio of Austrian cooperation in the HE sector goes back to the mid-90s when ADA and Horizont 3000 (or back then, the Austrian Development Service ÖED) commenced supporting the creation of URACCAN, particularly the foundation and strengthening of the Campus Las Minas in Siuna, and a complementary South-South-scholarship program canalized via the local NGO FADCANIC. Both projects have been prolonged until present time, with the current projects dating from Juli 2007 (URACCAN) and

January 2006 (FADCANIC). Although the evaluation focuses on the current projects, some evaluation criteria (particularly with regard to impact and sustainability) can only be analyzed in a meaningful way by taking into account the longer-term history of the cooperation.

With regard to URACCAN, the cooperation focused, through time, on a wide range of issues, such as personnel and organizational development, curricular development, foundation of research and extension centers, scholarship programs for vulnerable target groups, and more (cf. Vijil 2007). Without any doubt, the contribution of ADA and Horizont 3000 was essential for the foundation and consolidation of the university and most interviewees take it as a fact that, without that early support, the Campus Las Minas might not even exist today. As the consolidation of URACCAN proceeded, project goals tended to be more ambitious and specific and led to a gradual shift from the consolidation of core academic structures to the strengthening of URACCAN's role as a change agent for local and regional development in particular areas (cf. ADA 2007a; URACCAN 2010).

According to the project plan (cf. ADA 2007a), the overall objective is to contribute to the further strengthening of the model of a communitarian, intercultural university for the indigenous population and other ethnic groups in the RAAN/RAAS regions. The specific purpose consisted in the further improvement of academic excellence in URACCAN as well as the implementation of agendas for local development in rural areas around the university campus. The project has four components:

1. **Improvement of the capacities of academic personnel in teaching and research:** The core element of this component is a Master's program in Academic Teaching that aims to enhance didactical capabilities of the academic staff and stimulate applied research. The program is complemented by further training measures in pedagogical subjects and in English as a second language.
2. **Access of vulnerable groups (indigenous people, inhabitants of remote areas) to HE:** The component refers primarily to a scholarship program for members of the above mentioned groups that otherwise could remain excluded from HE. A significant part of the scholarships are dedicated to residential students, i.e. they include food and lodging within the university compound. The goals specify quota regarding gender (35% women) and the proportion of indigenous beneficiaries (33 %).
3. **Support of communitarian development processes:** The component includes the creation of five so-called Centers for Communitarian Development (*Centros de Desarrollo Comunitario* – CDC), which are supposed to be a focal point for the design and implementation of ecologically sustainable models for local development. The activities on the local level are primarily carried out by three centers of the university which have been created during previous project phases with support of ADA: (1) The Center for Studies and Information on Multiethnic Women – CEIMM, (2) The Institute for Natural Resources, Environment and Sustainable Development – IREMADES, and (3) The Institute for the Study and Promotion of Autonomy – IEPA. The communitarian development is linked to the core academic activities by the integration of students in the field work and the usage of field experiences for research purposes.
4. **Capacity Development in Disaster Control and Risk Management:** This component refers to two main activities that are, in fact, not directly related with each other. While on the one hand, courses are carried out in order to train members of local

government in Risk Management, on the other hand, students are sensitized on subjects like HIV/AIDS, family violence and sexual education.

The second project supported by ADA in the HE sector is the **scholarship program of FADCANIC** (cf. ADA 2005b) that finances postgraduate studies in Latin American universities for professionals related to the strengthening of the Autonomy of the RAAN/RAAS-region. The project is much less complex than the support of URACCAN since project is limited to scholarships for a total of 11 postgraduate students (8 students at a Master level, 2 at a doctorate level and 1 other postgraduate specialization). According to the LogFrame the project purpose is the strengthening of institutions at the Caribbean Coast. Project components are:

1. **Improvement of the strategic planning capacities of the regional autonomic institutions** through the academic specialization of the above mentioned postgraduate students, and
2. **Improvement of teaching quality in higher education in the region** through the selection of postgraduate students who work as teachers in the regional universities (particularly URACCAN) and thus, can apply their improved capacities in academic teaching

However, the above mentioned goals refer to parallel effects of one single intervention, rather than two different components.

## 6. Relevance

The supply of trained professionals in the Atlantic region is still short. Thus, both HE support project of ADA reflect a major need of the partners and address an important development problem of the region. As shown in chapter 3.1, the programs are in line with relevant partner strategies, particularly the Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast, taking into account that no particular strategy exists for the HE system. The interviewed stakeholders agree that the identified levels of intervention are pertinent and based on an adequate problem-analysis. URACCAN and FADCANIC are both central players dedicated to the strengthening of the regional autonomy so that the goals of both projects are intimately related to their core mission. In that respect, ownership has not been a problematic issue. This is particularly important for the case of URACCAN where the partner does not only act as an intermediary for the allocation of resources to the final beneficiaries (as in the case of FADCANIC), but pursues a long-term strategy for its institutional development (cf. URACCAN 2008a). According to interviewees at URACCAN and the implementing agency Horizont 3000, the goal structure of the ADA projects is not only in line with but emerged from the goal structure of URACCAN itself. While Horizont 3000 played an important role for the design of project interventions in earlier stages, URACCAN has already developed planning capacities that allow for a self-dependent coordination of donor contributions. A well designed new project proposal for 2010 has been written by URACCAN itself without major intervention of Horizont 3000.

As a quality of the communitarian university model, URACCAN interacts closely with regional and local authorities, community leaders and target groups. This implies a range of instru-

ments for participatory analysis of local needs for capacity development and the feasibility of interventions. Thus, URACCAN has managed to adapt its academic program specifically to the labour market demand and development needs of the region. Some interviewees point to the need for more intermediate technical education (i.e. training below university graduate level) which is offered by URACCAN only in some selected subjects (e.g. training for primary school teachers at the level of *técnico superior*) and is basically a blank on the educational landscape of RAAN/RAAS. In the case of FADCANIC, a much narrower group of beneficiaries is attended whose needs are also met adequately through the South-South-scholarships, although a feasibility study and/or previous institutional arrangements with partner universities would have been needed in order to avoid administrative bottlenecks related to the collocation of the postgraduate students (see chapter 7: Effectiveness).

The role of the implementing agency Horizont 3000 has been evaluated positively by both project partners. They emphasize demand orientation, commitment, and the ability to engage in a credible participatory approach. On the other hand, Horizont 3000 applied sufficient methodological rigor in order to assure adequate monitoring. The evaluation did not observe tendencies of assuming functions that should be based on the ownership of the counterpart institutions. On the contrary, the approach of Horizont 3000 accelerated the growing self-dependency of URACCAN which now seems to be capable of carrying out further support projects without intermediation of Horizont 3000. In the case of FADCANIC, it is more difficult to estimate the administrative capacity development, as some shortcomings at the operational level have been observed. The interview show that FADCANIC has systematized lessons learnt for the current modality of South-South-scholarships and, in case of a renewal of the program, should be capable of conceptually designing the intervention. However, as long as weaknesses related to the budgetary planning have not been demonstrably eliminated, intermediation of Horizont 3000 should be maintained.

Some of the aspects mentioned above already imply criteria related to ADA's guidelines and/or international standards of capacity development (e.g. demand orientation, situation analysis and local adaptation of services, use and strengthening of local expertise etc.) which have been evaluated positively. In general, both projects reflect the major goal of all capacity development which is to bring about a significant change in either quantity or quality of outputs of relevant institutions. While in the case of URACCAN, ADA supports an institution which itself pursues the mission of fostering capacity development in the region, in the case of FADCANIC, support is given to individuals who are supposed to act as change agents in their present or future working environment.

In the case of URACCAN, change processes and the desired effect on the quality and quantity of the institutional output are well-designed, although project indicators do not properly measure the results of capacity development. For example, indicators point to the number or percentage of academic staff with a Master's degree, but do not question explicitly the quality of educational services themselves. Similarly, indicators specify on the availability of local development agendas in communities supported by the CDC, but they do not measure the local capacities stipulated by the use of such a planning instrument. The project stakeholder could coherently explain the underlying result chains to the evaluators; nevertheless, they should be reflected more explicitly in the project documents. In the case of FADCANIC, the students are well-chosen, field research applied to relevant subjects for regional development is compulsory, and some positive outcomes in their working environments are visible

(see chapter 8). However, like in many scholarship programs, the project design relies on a results chain that implicitly supposes that institutional development can be triggered by capacity development on the level of individuals. Although this will happen more probably if individual career choices are in line with the institutional needs of the employers (which seems to be the case for most participants) it would be helpful if the participation in the scholarship program was explicitly embedded in institutional development strategies of the employers.

A structural constraint for both projects is the fact that HE support by ADA is limited to the sphere of an individual organization (URACCAN) or individual students (FADCANIC). However, as pointed out in the context analysis (chapter 4), not all of the bottlenecks for capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS are linked to challenges *within* the HE-institutions, but to the articulation with other highly dysfunctional subsectors (e.g. secondary education, technical education), or to constraints at the macro level (e.g. allocation of funds by the CNU). As interfaces between the subsectors and complementary interventions at the macro-level cannot be addressed by ADA, a more systemic multi-level approach to capacity development is out of reach.

In summary, capacity development at the level of the interventions (organizations, individuals) complies to a high degree with the requirements of ADA and led to positive outcomes that will be discussed in chapter 9, whereas factors that are external to the HE sector and/or the RAAN/RAAS cannot be attended.

*In regard to the issue of results-oriented management, please refer to chapter 7 and 8, as results will be discussed there.*

### **Recommendations:**

- According to the results related to the ownership and planning/monitoring capacities, URACCAN seems to be perfectly able to act as implementing agency of future projects, without further intermediation of Horizont 3000. ADA already intended to assign the project directly to URACCAN and should proceed with this decision that does not at all exclude further advice by Horizont 3000 “on-demand” by URACCAN. In the case of FADCANIC, on the other hand, a more intense back-stopping, and therefore further intermediation of Horizont 3000, should be ensured if the scholarship program should be renewed.
- The management capacities are generally adequate, but could be raised additionally supporting strategic planning processes at the local campus level. URACCAN disposes of a strategic plan for the entire university, but due the socio-cultural peculiarities of each sub-region, complementary strategic plans of the individual campuses would add further value.
- ADA’s support for capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS has focused on higher education although professional training at intermediate educational level is as much a bottleneck as HE. Partially, this demand can and should be addressed by URACCAN. Although this recommendation probably exceeds the range of the future cooperation with ADA, URACCAN should always consider the potential needs for careers at the level of *técnico superior* when carrying out needs and labour market analysis.

## 7. Effectiveness

On a meso and micro level, the cooperation with URACCAN comes relatively close to a program-based holistic approach. Qualification of teachers and other elements of institutional development, facilitation of access to HE for vulnerable groups, and a direct support to local development processes are not only complementary interventions, but a close synergy between the academic sphere and the communitarian field work is always pursued. As pointed out by a staff member, URACCAN “must be clear about the fact that it is not an NGO, but a university” which implies that support to local development must be in line with research and curricular work placements for students (and vice-versa).

The scholarship program by FADCANIC is limited to one single intervention: the financial support to the postgraduate studies of 11 professionals in the RAAN/RAAS region. To a certain extent, it is complementary to the URACCAN project as both pursue a similar overall objective aimed towards developing the capacities of professionals and institutions in the region. The fact that 6 out of 11 participants are personnel of URACCAN suggests that both projects merge into a kind of capacity development program for the RAAN. However, support for URACCAN concentrates in Las Minas while FADCANIC scholarships have been accessible for students from all over the region (including personnel from other URACCAN campuses). Thus, both projects have different impact areas - although partially in different campuses of the same HE institution. In conclusion, the outcome and impact of both projects may add up in a complementary manner, but will not fully tap the potential for synergies.

Alongside the Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund (SAIH), the Ford Foundation and the Canadian Cooperation (CIDA), ADA has been one of the most important bilateral donors for HE in the Atlantic region, and by far the most important for URACCAN Las Minas. Although the total amount is limited, as is the total budget of URACCAN (slightly above 1 mill. US-\$ in 2009), it covers core elements of the communitarian university model, namely the support of local development through the CDC, the internal scholarship program, or interventions with high multiplier effects like the Master's Program in Academic Teaching. Hence, the relation of a total input of 490,000 € to the results, outcome and impact (see also chapter 9) is considered a very positive one by most interviewees, as well as by the evaluators. The budgeted input for the scholarship program by FADCANIC was similar (463,000 €), but as the factual impact is more disperse and to be expected on a longer term perspective, no final judgment about the overall efficiency of the ADA support can be made at this point. However, as in 9 cases the postgraduate studies took place in unforeseen part-time modalities (i.e. they did not require full-time presence in the target countries), only some above half of the total budget has been spent until now. The study modalities did not affect the program results and outcome; hence, efficiency might be valued more positively. On the other hand the remaining funds, that could have been used to amplify the number of beneficiaries, remained unused as they could not be applied within a time-limit for admissions that was established after clearance with ADA.

If we follow the indicators set out in the project-plans of both programs, all components have been relatively successful. In the case of URACCAN only one out of 9 indicators at the result level (*35 % of teachers with knowledge of English as a second language*) has not been met, or at least approached, while the project of FADCANIC required 5 instead of 3 years to reach the expected results. In both cases, however, goal attainment at the outcome level and con-



tribution to the overall objectives has not been affected seriously by these shortcomings. Subsequently, goal attainment will first be shortly summarized in relation to the formal goals and indicators according to the logical frameworks:

In regard to the components of the URACCAN project:

**1. Improvement of the capacities of academic personnel in teaching and research:**

In quantitative terms, the desired results were achieved, as 30 students concluded the Master's program in Academic Teaching, 23 of them teachers at URACCAN (matching exactly the target) and most of the Master's theses dealt with applied research on subjects of immediate relevance for URACCAN Las Minas and the strengthening of its pedagogical model. Thus, the Master's program contributed significantly to intensify research activities at URACCAN. Although research was mostly related to the postgraduate studies of teachers and will continue on a more moderate level after the conclusion of the Master's program, most interviewees agree on a very positive impulse for the quality of research as well as teaching. On the other hand, most interviewees at the national level agree on the opinion that the visibility of the academic achievements of URACCAN is still quite limited to the regional level and that more dissemination at the national level would be recommendable. With regard to the LogFrame indicators, the only explicit shortcoming is that little progress has been made regarding the capacities of teachers in English as a second language.

**2. Improvement of the access of vulnerable groups (indigenous people, inhabitants of remote areas) to higher education:**

In 2009, 259 students (target: 300) were granted scholarships in order to study at URACCAN. According to the institutional report for 2009 (URACCAN 2010a), 40 % of them were female students (target: 35 %) and 18 % students from indigenous communities (target: 33 %). The quantitative goals were not fully met, partly due to moderate drop-out rates during the course of studies, which is a more relevant problem in the case of indigenous students. However, drop-out rates for internal scholarship students (i.e. students that live on the campus and receive food and lodging) are significantly lower than those of external students and focus group discussions with beneficiaries allow for the conclusion that for many of them the scholarship was an essential precondition for accessing the university. All in all, the result is evaluated positively.

**3. Support of communitarian development processes in the region of Las Minas:**

So far, and in line with the official target, Centers for Communitarian Development (CDC) have been established in 5 communities. They are concluding or already implementing agendas for local development and have served as focal points for the training of community leaders via a diploma in Communitarian Development. The community leaders trained by the 5 existing CDC are supposed to act as multipliers for neighboring communities, an effect which has not been pursued yet, but is essential for the future intervention strategy of URACCAN. The integration of graduates in the CDC has been achieved as planned, although with 5 students for two years instead of 10 students for one year – which is functional for CDC but reduces the overall number of students integrated professionally in their home communities.

**4. Capacity Development in Disaster Control and Risk Management.** A seminar in Risk Management for the staff of local governments had been delayed and did not

start until the second half of 2009. Although the respective indicator will probably be met, due to the delay no prediction can presently be made regarding the outcome of the trainings at the local level. On the other hand, integration of subjects like HIV/AIDS, family violence and sexual education in the academic programs of URACCAN has been achieved as planned. The subjects are now compulsory in every career of the university. Furthermore, a psychologist has been employed permanently to attend the needs of students for personal assistance.

In regard to the components of the **scholarship program by FADCANIC**:

As to the scholarship program, the quantitative results are generally in line with the indicators. Although not all of the participants have already graduated, and at least one doctorate student will not finish graduation during the duration of the project, there has only been one drop-out. However, the project faced serious administrative problems, as criteria for admission at foreign universities and study modalities had not been anticipated. The experiences with former scholarship programs that contrary to the current project were based on previous agreements with the host university, failed as a blueprint for the present phase. Thus, the project faced a total delay of 2 years, although this may not necessarily affect the outcome of the project.

6.3 Presently, the activity of ADA in the HE sector is not integrated into any effective kind of donor coordination. One reason is that most donors focus on primary and secondary education where donor contributions amount to ca. 20 % of the national budget (cf. UE 2010). Around 12 multilateral and bilateral donors participate in a Sector-wide-Approach (SWAP) and coordinate via round tables (*Mesa Sectorial* and *Mesa de Donantes en Educación*, among others: World Bank, AECID, CIDA, USAID, JICA, UNICEF, UNDP). As the coordination mechanism does not focus on higher education nor on the Caribbean region, ADA has little reason to engage at this level, although an interviewed representative of the table suggests that ADA should do so in order to facilitate the articulation between the different educational subsystems. However, due to the regional orientation of ADA's HE support, it would probably be much more effective and efficient to count with a mechanism for donor coordination specifically at the regional level. For some time, a regional round table for donor coordination in the Atlantic region dealt with educational issues (HE, Intercultural Bilingual Education), but only got together until 2007. As for today, a government authority of the RAAN states that only for the public bilateral or multilateral donors, an inventory of current development cooperation is available, but no general coordination mechanism is in place. As for NGO activities in education or the focus areas of ADA, an important proportion of ongoing cooperation isn't even known to the regional authorities. For the individual partner organizations URACCAN and FADCANIC, this situation is manageable as the number of donors in the HE subsector is quite limited. Thus, particularly URACCAN has managed quite well to use available funds for complementary purposes. However, where bottlenecks for the sector development transcend the subsystem of higher education (i.e. where the articulation with the subsystems of secondary and/or technical education is concerned, see chapter 3.2), the lack of donor coordination hinders a more coherent development strategy.

6.4 Coherence within the Austrian activities can be evaluated on two different levels: within/between the current projects and their components, and between ADA and the implementing agency Horizont 3000, taking into account the principal-agent-relationship between ADA and Horizont 3000 and the political independency of the latter regarding its overall-

portfolio. Other than in the case of countries where ADA is contributing broadly to the development of the HE system, the Ministry for Science and Research (BMWF) has no significant stakes in Nicaragua and coherence at an inter-ministerial level is not an issue.

Coherence at the level of the current projects themselves has already been positively valued (section 6.1). As far as coherence between ADA and Horizont 3000 is concerned, no deviations have been reported regarding the overall objectives or specific purposes that both partners attributed to the projects and their role for the regional development. At the contrary, Horizont 3000 envisions education as a focus area, and the RAAN as a focus region, which not only has been complementary to ADA's radius in Nicaragua, but implies that Horizont 3000 is carrying out several educational projects that are complementary with the institutional support to URACCAN (e.g. projects related to professional training for teachers in indigenous areas, support to the intercultural bilingual education EIB).

### **Recommendations:**

- Both projects have delivered most of the aspired results and are to certain extent complementary. However, synergies could be enhanced by adapting the selection process more systematically to the focus areas and the needs of complementary projects of ADA in Nicaragua. It should be mentioned that not all interviewees agree on the pertinence of narrowing the focus of the scholarship program – the evaluation team however holds the opinion that measures of capacity development should deviate from the focus areas of ADA as little as possible.
- The overall results of the scholarship program would justify the continuance of ADA support. However, some adjustments at the operational level would be necessary in order to facilitate a smoother implementation process. Some elements that should be considered: 1) previous agreements with a selection of host universities in order to facilitate the admission processes for students, 2) obtaining previous information on the range of study modalities in order to assure adequate financial management, 3) previous calculation of country and career specific costs in order to facilitate and optimize resource allocation at the level of individual students.
- As for URACCAN, the future focus should emphasize local development components (see chapter 4 regarding strategy), however, the components one and two (strengthening of academic excellence and supporting access of vulnerable groups) should be continued as well. The emphasis of teacher qualification should shift from pedagogical and didactical subjects to specialization in specific disciplines. Scholarships for vulnerable groups should continue.
- ADA should stipulate new efforts of donor coordination at the regional level, taking into account donors in all educational subsectors. It is probable that the responsibility for educational administration will be transferred soon from the national authorities (e.g. MINED) to the regional institutions. The time period when the so-called Regional Autonomic Subsystem for Education (SEAR) starts operating effectively should be a good window of opportunity for new initiatives of donor coordination.

## 8. Sustainability

Before addressing the specific questions of the ToR, some general observations on the sustainability of the present projects have to be made. Although output, outcome and impact are clearly visible and have been evaluated positively (see chapters 7 and 9), sustainability is a more ambiguous issue. In the case of URACCAN, the most critical issue is the financial dependency on donor cooperation which accounts for nearly half of the budget of URACCAN Las Minas as well of URACCAN in general. In general terms, university authorities state that public resources and own income could cover for the operational costs of the core academic program while extension activities, support to communitarian development and scholarships, i.e. those elements that constitute the particularity of the university model, are based on external sources. Over the last years, URACCAN has managed to increase income from own activities and reduce the share of donor cooperation, but this is only a gradual change and dependency on foreign contributions will persist as a long-term structural problem – at least as long as public financing does not cover a more significant share of the budget. There are complaints by some interviewees, not only within URACCAN, that the distribution of public resources by the CNU is not always transparent and that URACCAN is receiving a lower share than other universities in the Central or Pacific region. However, there are presently no prospects for a change of this situation.

Other aspects of sustainability look far more promising. URACCAN is institutionally stable, has constantly improved its planning and monitoring mechanisms and counts with a comprehensive set of instruments and procedures for quality insurance at the academic level. A most important pillar for sustainability has been the capability of URACCAN to assure the constant recruitment of qualified personnel that originates from the Atlantic region itself (more than 90 % of the staff, frequently graduates of URACCAN itself) that is rooted in the region's cultures and committed to the communitarian university model.

In case of FADCANIC, sustainability at the project level is not yet an issue, as the scholarship program did not aim towards structural changes within the counterpart organization and participants are just graduating. Prospects for outcome or experiences of former scholarship programs regarding longer-term impacts are analyzed in chapter 8.

For recommendations in regard to the inclusion of elements of ADA's HE-strategy into a future country-program, please refer to chapter 3.1., for recommendations on the continuity of the current cooperation in the HE-sector to the box at the end of this chapter.

With regard to degree of results-orientation, the logical frameworks of the current projects are quite coherent for the operational level, but lack strategic orientation towards outcomes and impacts. To begin with, only the URACCAN project document respects the vertical logic of the framework (i.e. the sequence of results, purpose and overall objective). In the case of FADCANIC, the levels are partially inverted and there nearly identical goal formulations for results and the overall objective level. In both projects, the indicators are mostly quantified and implicitly time-bound, they refer to measurable variables and, hence, do not pose a major methodological challenge. They have also turned out to be attainable, although in the case of FADCANIC with a considerable delay due to administrative difficulties (see chapter 7). Attainability, however, has been accomplished at the cost that most indicators are bound to low levels of the impact chain and measure rather operational goals although the purposes or the overall objectives should be addressed. For example, the *percentage of*

*teachers with a Master's Degree* (URACCAN) doubles a similar indicator at results level, but does not measure the project purpose (Improvement of academic excellence) as quality of research and teaching remains unmeasured. Or in the case of FADCANIC, the overall goal of strengthening institutions that are relevant for the development of the Caribbean Coast, is not adequately measured by an indicator that only envisages the *number of professionals* that have been graduated through the scholarship program. In technical terms, most indicators on higher levels of the impact chain lack "independence", i.e. they measure means for attaining the goals, but do not measure the goals themselves.

On the other hand, it has also to be pointed out, that not only Horizont 3000 has been eager to engage in a constant participatory project monitoring, but that URAACAN itself has developed a routine of monitoring a broad set of key variables and published institutional reports on a quarterly basis. In regard to the use of planning tools, URACCAN has proven to be a "learning institution", too, which is evidenced by the new project proposal for 2010 (URACCAN 2010a). The logical framework still shows some of the minor flaws mentioned above for the current projects, but has improved with regard to results orientation as indicators do even include behavioral changes at target group level.<sup>1</sup>

The new project proposal has been conceptually designed and written by URACCAN without major support of Horizont 3000, according to the interviews with both institutions. With regard to planning and administrative capacities, this is in itself an indicator for the successful capacity development in URACCAN. Capacity Development has also led to progress with regard to the quality of teaching, research, curricular development, the ability to engage in local development processes, etc. There are, however, areas where capacity development is still pending. This is particularly the case regarding the professional specialization of university teachers, as previous project phases focused primarily on transversal issues of pedagogical and didactical qualifications.

### Recommendations:

- As pointed out above, URACCAN is structurally reliant on external donors, a fact that has been known from the first steps of the cooperation and that can only be ameliorated gradually and in a long-term perspective. From the point of view of the evaluation, the undeniable relevance of URACCAN as a regional change agent, also in focus areas of ADA, justifies that at least a mid-term-commitment is maintained, as far as possible combined with advice on additional income-generating mechanisms and the identification of donors that potentially could "take over" in the future (i.e. donors with a more explicit focus on education and/or higher education).
- URACCAN should continue to explore systematically income-generating mechanisms to reduce the structural dependency on external resources to a moderate level. Some of these mechanisms could be the following: 1) intensify coordination with local and regional authorities in order to strengthen co-responsibility for higher education, 2) expand the range of services liable to pay costs (e.g. extra-academic course "on-

<sup>1</sup> The project has not yet been formally approved by ADA and might still be subject to possible modifications and adjustments. Therefore a more detailed S.M.A.R.T. analysis of individual indicators may be delivered on demand.

demand", applied research, etc.). For reasons related to the communitarian self-concept of URACCAN, neither an increase in tuition fees nor differentiation of fees according to the socio-economic status of students are functional mechanisms for substantially generating additional income.

- From the perspective of results-oriented planning and management, ADA should invest additional efforts in the quality assurance for project proposals and the underlying logical frameworks. As not all potential project partners have the ability to elaborate adequate impact chains and indicators, ADA should provide active support at that stage of the planning phase.

## 9. Outcomes and impact

Both higher education projects in Nicaragua aim to increase the availability of highly educated professionals in the RAAN/RAAS region and thus, contribute to socio-economic and institutional development and the strengthening of the autonomy. Therefore, the retention of graduates, not only in Nicaragua but in the RAAN/RAAS region, becomes a key factor for the degree to which both projects may achieve the desired impact.

It is one of the most important results of the evaluation that, so far, brain drain effects have not been a relevant issue for either of the projects. A recent tracer for URACCAN Las Minas provides evidence that up to two years after finishing university, not only 91 % of the graduates are working, but nearly all of them do so in the Atlantic region.

In the case of the scholarship program by FADCANIC, brain drain can't be evaluated yet as most of the participants are recently finishing their postgraduate theses. Most of them are, however, employed by regional organizations, including the regional universities (6 out of 11 in URACCAN itself). The scholarship implies an obligation of working at least three years in organizations that are relevant for the regional development and focus group discussions prove that participants take this commitment seriously. A majority of participants defines a contribution to the development of the Caribbean Coast as their personal long-term objective, while only two students point to the possibility of seeking opportunities abroad after a certain time period. This observation is congruent with the results of previous cohorts where a follow-up of individual career paths shows that most ex-participants hold job positions that are directly or indirectly related to the RAAN/RAAS.

There are two key factors that contribute to the retention of professionals in the RAAN/RAAS: (1) As both regional universities have been founded less than two decades ago and are reaching significant numbers of students for quite a short time, the region is still short of well-trained professionals in many areas. Therefore, graduates are absorbed easily by the labour market. Although the share of graduates whose work is directly related to their academic career varies according to the subjects (e.g. livestock breeding 100 %, forest management 25 %), nearly 90 % of the graduates interviewed in a tracer study (cf. Castillo et al. 2009) point out the high relevance of their academic education for their professional career. (2) The second factor that contains brain drain is the high degree of adaptation of URACCAN's academic program to the regional conditions and to the demand for particular professional pro-

files. In the past, this compliance has been achieved through periodic needs assessments and constant dialogue with regional institutions, although recently, the labour market is coming close to saturation for some particular careers, thus needs assessment will remain a continuous task.

A core element of URACCAN's mission as a communitarian university is to assure equal opportunities to all potential target groups, particularly to vulnerable groups such as indigenous people and students from remote areas that hitherto have been excluded from the traditional university system. Orientation towards gender equality has also been present in URACCAN since its foundation. In that regard, URACCAN complies with the cross-sectional issues that are defined in the HE Strategy of ADA, not only at a project level, but on the level of core institutional goals of the project partners.

It has already been analyzed (see chapter 6) that the official goals regarding gender and particular vulnerable groups are effectively translated into enhanced access to higher education for women as well as for indigenous students, with an internal scholarship program being the single most important instrument to include particularly those beneficiaries that otherwise would be excluded from HE. However, enhanced access doesn't automatically imply that vulnerable groups benefit in a long-term perspective. At the outcome and impact level, the important question lies in how far access to HE guarantees non-discrimination in the labour market. In this regard, retention during the study period and work placement after graduation are key variables.

Due to variety of socio-cultural and economic reasons, it is in fact visible that retention of indigenous students is a problematic issue. In 2009, only 7 out of 211 graduates (3.4 %) of the graduates in Las Minas (incl. the university extensions) were indigenous. Although this issue requires improvement measures, it must be considered that without the particular communitarian university model of URACCAN, access of indigenous people would be nearly impossible. Thus, taking into account also the activities of URACCAN at the community level, the overall valuation of the impact on this particular group still remains moderately positive. Furthermore, the activities of URACCAN at lower educational levels in the context of communitarian development must also be taken into account and contribute to the empowerment of indigenous communities.

An important bottleneck for the access, not only of indigenous people but the population of rural areas in general, is the poor coverage and quality of rural secondary education (see figures in chapter 3.2). Although one single institution like URACCAN cannot be required to compensate for the fallacies of the general educational system in the region, some efforts are undertaken (and should be intensified in the future) to build "bridges" to higher education even where traditional secondary schools are hardly accessible. The key instrument are the so-called preparatory courses where potential students are given the opportunity for an accelerated conclusion of secondary school level. This "bridge" is criticized by some representatives of the national authorities for lowering educational quality and requirements for university access. From the point of view of the evaluation, however, it seems consistent with the regional context and the mission statement of URACCAN to emphasize equality of opportunities over rigorous interpretation of access requirements. From a longer-term perspective (and thus, related to earlier stages of the cooperation by ADA and Horizont 3000), URACCAN also contributed significantly to the improvement of primary and secondary education by introducing training programs for school teachers in Intercultural Bilingual Educa-

tion. This approach is meant to grant indigenous populations access to primary education in their mother tongue and to offer concepts for the gradual introduction of Spanish as a second language. Hence, it is a key element for the educational quality in areas with indigenous population.

In regard to gender equality, retention of women was also a problematic issue in the past despite an apparently equal access to university (51 % of all students in 2009 were female). However, desertion only due to pregnancy went temporarily up to over 30 %. The university addressed this issue with several measures, partially included in the present project phase supported by ADA. The employment of staff for psycho-social assistance, regulations with enhanced responsibilities for male students in case of pregnancies and the implementation of sexual education and gender issues as obligatory subjects in all careers concurred to reduce pregnancy among female students to a minimum and led to equal retention rates among both genders. Remaining gender inequalities, for example with regard to career selection and first work placement / income (cf. Castillo et al. 2009), obey to the external socio-cultural context and cannot be significantly influenced by one single institution.

When it comes to people with disabilities, the situation is somewhat more ambiguous. Although the infrastructure of URACCAN is not fully barrier-free for disabled persons, university authorities assure that all necessary support is given to them in order to facilitate participation in the academic and social life on the campus. In the interviews, the examples of two successful graduates with walking and visual impairments are mentioned. On the other hand, there is no explicit policy of the URACCAN for this group. This might be relevant insofar it can be supposed that bottlenecks for disabled persons exist mainly on earlier educational levels and no similar “bridges” to university are built as it is the case of the previously analyzed groups. It should be noted that, unlike the case of gender and ethnicity, no quantitative data is available on people with disabilities and the evaluation relies solely upon the interviews with university staff.

With regard to the future role of HE in Austrian development cooperation with Nicaragua, the contribution of the projects to the capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS, particularly the focus areas of ADA (health, rural development, MSME-development), is a key issue. First of all, both projects have had a wider focus on capacity development, not for particular areas, but for the strengthening of the regional autonomy in general. The impact at this level is unquestionable, particularly for URACCAN which is by far the most important source in the Atlantic region for the recruitment of young professionals by regional and local governments. The latter absorb about 75 % of the graduates (cf. Castillo et al. 2009). The presence of former URACCAN students could be appreciated by the evaluators in all public sector institutions that participated in the interviews or focus group discussions. In the case of the scholarship program offered by FADCANIC, all participants are employed by (70 %) or linked to regional public sector institutions, the two universities or NGOs. For their theses, they are carrying out applied field research upon development issues related to RAAN/RAAS, partly with direct relevance to their own working environment.

Beyond the development of capacities in a sense of human resources, URACCAN has also given a decisive contribution to the development of institutional capacities for the autonomous regions. Particularly the models Regional Educational System (SEAR) and the Regional Health Model have been designed (although not yet fully implemented) with policy advice by URACCAN. Some interviewees go that far to claim that without the existence of



URACCAN the autonomy status of RAAN/RAAS itself might not have been implemented. While this kind of institutional capacity development is seen by many as one of the most relevant impacts of URACCAN in the past, some interviewees are critical about the present role of the university and observe that due to a generally more polarized political climate some distance has grown between regional policymakers and URACCAN, slightly debilitating its prominent role in policy advice.

The generally very positive appraisal of the contributions to capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS applies in a significant degree to the focus areas of ADA, too. With regard to rural development, the university does not only offer a particular career in Communitarian Development, but has used the Austrian support to intensify its presence at community level. Through the CDCs (see chapter 5), a diploma in Communitarian Development is offered in order to train community leaders, stimulate local development agendas and projects for sustainable production, as well as to sensitize the population on gender and health issues. While progress at an operational level is satisfactory (see chapter 7), a systematization of the impact on local development is not yet available. In qualitative terms, focus group discussions with community leaders indicate, at least, that awareness on several issues has been raised successfully (for example: in relation to the need for planning instruments, sustainable production, empowerment of women, mediation between ethnic groups etc.). The development of a methodology for the measurement of factual impact on local socio-economic development, however, is a pending challenge which should be met by URACCAN during the new program starting in the second half of 2010.

With regard to health, the sector was not targeted directly by the present HE projects. Although sensitization on HIV/AIDS was taken into account for the target groups of both projects, this is not to be understood as a measure for health sector capacity development. Beyond the scope of the present project, however, URACCAN has accumulated quite an expertise in traditional medicine and is offering careers in the health sector as part of its academic program (e.g. a Master's program for the management of VIH/SIDA and a career in nursery at the level of *técnico superior* on the campus Bilwi). It has also given policy advice during the design of the model for the Health System of RAAN/RAAS which recognizes the complementary role of traditional medicine within the modern health system. Expertise and contributions to capacity development by URACCAN are also relevant in the context of ADA program for the combating of HIV/AIDS where the university is carrying out the above mentioned Master's program in Bilwi.

The impact on MSME-development is less visible than in the other two focus areas of ADA. Some synergy can be observed in regard to the support of Communitarian Development where production patterns (introduction of new products with higher added value) and the pooling of peasants in cooperatives are targeted. However, the impact is limited to agricultural activity in rural areas. The recent tracer study also shows that less than 20 % of the graduates are absorbed by the private sector. With only 6 % running their own business, no information is available on the scale and activity of the respective enterprises (cf. Castillo et al. 2009).

The previous observations allow for several key recommendations that are summarized in the box below:

**Recommendations:**

- The impact of ADA's partners, particularly URACCAN, on at least two of the three focus areas is empirically evident and significant. Depending on the particular project design, future cooperation may be fully legitimate regarding their compliance with the focus areas and, therefore, should be continued (see also recommendation no. 1 regarding sustainability).
- If capacity development for ADA's focus areas is considered the main function of higher education support programs, a gradual shift should be called for by ADA with regard to the impact areas addressed by project goals: From the support of a general organizational and personnel capacity development within the university (for example: the efforts undertaken in order to improve the didactical skills of university teachers) to a more intense cooperation in areas where impacts on rural development, health and/or MSME-development are addressed directly.
- As this shift has already been observable in the present project phase (see the creation of CDCs), the new project proposal for 2010 fully complies with the previous recommendation. It can be characterized, not as a HE project with effects on local development, but as a local development project carried out by an academic institution as change agent and thus, integrated in the academic cycles of research and teaching. From the point of view of the evaluation, the results have validated the current project proposal which should be supported by ADA in its present form.
- For URACCAN, the most severe bottleneck for further development is not internal institutional shortcomings but the low coverage and quality of secondary education in the region. Although this topic might probably be out of the range of the Austrian contribution, URACCAN should intensify its efforts of supporting the creation of rural secondary schools and/or stipulate the implementation of preparatory courses at community level.
- Although a considerable proportion of indigenous students matriculate at URACCAN, desertion is still very high compared to other groups. URACCAN should dedicate some formal research to retention and desertion factors for indigenous students and introduce affirmative action in order to assure their permanence at the university.

## 10. Three scenarios for future activities in Nicaragua

**Scenario 1 (continuity):** Implement the new project with URACCAN according to the present proposal (i.e. strong focus on local development, with additional components for the specialization of teachers and the facilitation of university access to vulnerable groups) without an explicit exit scenario. Be in readiness to keep extending cooperation with URACCAN as long as key requirements related to the capacity development in focus areas of ADA are met. Also renew the scholarship program with FADCANIC under intermediation of Horizont 3000, but adapt selection criteria to focus areas of ADA and/or the scope of the URACCAN project.

*Rationale:* The evaluation has proven the HE cooperation to be successful and contribute effectively to the capacity development within the focus areas of ADA as well as the local and regional institutional development in general. Difficulties related with the scholarship programs were located at the operational, not the outcome and impact level, and more pronounced synergies between both projects might even enhance the specificity of impact on capacity development. No time-limit is set for the cooperation with URACCAN as the outlook with regard to economic self-dependency is too uncertain.

*Challenge:* While it seems undisputable that the cooperation with URACCAN should be continued, the main challenge for the scholarship program would be to stay in line with the focus areas of ADA. Although the areas themselves might be met through adequate selection criteria, it will be much more difficult to create synergies with specific ongoing projects within these areas (e.g. due to the time-period required for postgraduate studies, the mobility of young professionals, etc.). However, this argument might be somewhat debilitated by the fact, that the current participants report several examples of ongoing application of study contents that already occurs *during* their participation in postgraduate studies.

**Scenario 2 (concentration on URACCAN):** Implement the new project with URACCAN according to the present proposal without an explicit exit scenario and remain ready to keep extending the cooperation whenever it is judged pertinent. However, concentrate on URACCAN and phase out the scholarship program.

*Rationale:* Regarding URACCAN, the same as in scenario 1. The scholarship program is not continued because its outcome, although observable, could be considered not sufficiently specific as to potentiate impacts of ADA support within the focus areas. Under a cost-effectiveness perspective, the same resources can be applied in order to build specific measures for capacity development within focus sector projects.

*Challenge:* For ADA, no major challenge would arise but to communicate adequately the phasing out of the scholarship program. From the point of view of the partner organizations, the most important challenge will be to promote (and finance) other forms of international knowledge exchange, taking into account that integration in international networks is quite limited for both regional universities, as it is for many regional institutions.

**Scenario 3 (preparation of exit):** Implement the new project with URACCAN according to the present proposal, but restrict cooperation to one more phase and prepare exit by concentrating on impact-generating mechanisms.

*Rationale:* Although the contribution of URACCAN to the capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS has been significant for the focus areas of Austrian development cooperation as well, ADA might prefer to support more specific activities for capacity development and integrate components into sector-specific health, SME or rural development projects instead of maintaining a long-term cooperation with one specific HE institution. URACCAN has been consolidated sufficiently and is supposed to be capable of operating independently if phasing out is announced with several years of anticipation.

*Challenge:* This strategy might not be what URACCAN expects from ADA. Although ownership is high and efforts for increasing self-dependency are taken, the partner does presently not count with a proximate expiration of the support. The most important challenge would be to use the remaining time period effectively in order to find alternative internal or external

sources that would assure sustainability. If this cannot be achieved, it is probable that URACCAN would have to concentrate on the key academic program and restrict activities aimed towards communitarian development which are mostly externally financed.

**Recommendation:** Follow scenario 1 for maximization of outcome in the HE sector, if this criterion is predominantly weighted over efficiency. Alternatively, follow scenario 2 under cost-effectiveness considerations for capacity development in the focus areas of ADA.

Scenario 3 is not recommended by the evaluation.

## **11. Conclusions**

### **11.1 Conclusions in regard to the strategy**

1. Nicaragua does not count with a strategy for the HE sector. However, ADA's support does fit into the regional Strategy for the Development of the Caribbean Coast.
2. With regard to the future country strategy, capacity development through HE support in the RAAN/RAAS is in line with the focus areas of ADA, particularly taking into account the strong local development focus of the new project proposal by URACCAN.
3. The HE strategy of ADA had not yet been in place when the current projects were formulated. However, they comply up to a certain degree with the guiding principles and some selected key areas of the HE strategy.

### **11.2 Conclusions in regard to relevance**

1. Ownership is high in both partner organizations as project goals comply with their overall institutional missions. The implementing-agency Horizont 3000 has managed the projects by a demand-driven, participatory approach that is highly appreciated by the partners.
2. In the case of URACCAN, institutional capacity development has advanced to an extent that allows for implementing future projects without further intermediation of Horizont 3000. This has not yet been proven for FADCANIC.
3. Both projects focus on capacity development at the level of the partner institution itself (URACCAN) and at the level of impact among external target populations/institutions. Many ADA guidelines and international standards for capacity development are met, but a systemic multi-level approach to capacity development (i.e. the inclusion of interfaces with the macro-level or other educational sub-sectors) is not within the range of the current projects.

### **11.3 Conclusions in regard to effectiveness**

1. The project with URACCAN comes close to a holistic approach as its components are visibly interrelated and contribute to a common purpose. The scholarship program of

FADCANIC is complementary, but synergies between both projects are not systematically pursued.

2. Ratio of input vs. output is satisfactory. Most of the components of both programs have been successful, with only one indicator outside the target corridor (URACCAN) or some delay in output delivery (FADCANIC). Target populations have been reached to an extent that mostly comes close to the target values defined in the indicators.

3. Donor-coordination has neither been established for the HE sector nor for capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS. Particularly donor coordination for the RAAN/RAAS could contribute to facilitate complementary interventions in the different educational subsectors.

#### **11.4 Conclusions in regard to sustainability**

1. Throughout the course of ADA projects since the mid-90s the cooperation with URACCAN has had sustainable impact on the strengthening of the institution, as well regarding the improvement of academic excellence as the consolidation of administrative capacities. However, economic sustainability is a critical issue and a structural dependency on donor contributions will persist for an indefinite period.

2. With regard to results-orientation, the quality of the LogFrames varies, with indicators mostly restrained to the measurement of operational results. While output is considered and monitored sufficiently, outcome and impact variables are missing.

#### **11.5 Conclusions in regard to outcomes and impact**

1. Brain-drain-effects have not been significant and tracer studies prove that most of the graduates of URACCAN work in the RAAN/RAAS. In the case of the scholarship program by FADCANIC brain-drain is also assumed to remain low.

2. Gender equality and non-discrimination of vulnerable groups is considered adequately, not only in the projects, but by the project partners in general. Particularly in the case of URACCAN, affirmative action for women and indigenous people is taken effectively. While the access and retention of women could be significantly improved, the desertion of indigenous students is still above average.

3. The impact on the regional capacity development cannot be measured in quantitative terms, but is assumed to be considerable. URACCAN has contributed directly to the framework for the regional autonomy (SEAR, regional health model) and URACCAN graduates have a strong presence in local and regional public institutions.

4. The impact is also visible in focus areas of ADA, particularly with regard to rural development and the health sector.

## **12. Lessons learnt**

### **12.1 Lessons in regard to relevance**

It is common for Latin American universities that their spectrum of activity transcends academic careers and is complemented by social action and training services that are open to a non-academic public. However, this characteristic is particularly pronounced in the case of a communitarian university model like that of URACCAN. The communitarian university model has been very pertinent for the ADA approach of strengthening an HE institution, not aimed towards HE sector development, but towards capacity development for a very specific geographical and socio-cultural environment. Some of the positive outcomes of the evaluation would probably not have been achieved, if the partner institution were a “traditional” university.

A major lesson learnt is the fact that HE support projects, particularly in very poor countries with less effective educational systems, have always to keep in mind not only the shortcomings of the HE sector itself, but also the articulation between the different educational sub-sectors (e.g. primary/secondary education, technical education) as access to HE or the facility to accomplish an efficient diversification of professional profiles depend on it. Of course, a holistic approach that transcends the HE sector is presently beyond the grasp of ADA, hence, importance of donor coordination and the stipulation of complementary interventions increases.

### **12.2 Lessons in regard to effectiveness**

With regard to donor coordination, however, it is a lesson learnt that participation in national sector-wide round tables (like the *Mesa Sectorial* for Education) does not entail much benefit if HE support projects are focused on one specific region only. Even if a round table for education in the RAAN/RAAS should be considered too specific, it is probable that a general regional round-table would allow for a more effective and efficient donor cooperation than one with a sectoral (but national) scope.

### **12.3 Lessons in regard to sustainability**

The HE support projects have generally been evaluated positively and have contributed successfully to the capacity development of many sectors in the RAAN/RAAS. However, it was known from the very beginning of the cooperation that the university model would structurally depend on donor contributions for an indefinite period. As many donors are reluctant to assume that kind of long-term commitment to one single institution, it is an important lesson learnt for the Austrian cooperation that in some cases the disposition for long-term commitment should even precede the decision to engage in the cooperation. The case of URACCAN illustrates some criteria for the pertinence of this decision: 1) the partner is a regional/sectoral key player that guarantees for a certain amount of multiplier effects or synergy with other development projects, 2) sustainability is reached in other non-economic dimensions and a serious effort of gradually increasing self-dependency is visible, 3) the ca-

capacities of the partner organization allow for a gradual shift from institutional sponsoring for internal capacity development to projects that maximize external impact, i.e. benefits for external target groups.

#### **12.4 Lessons in regard to outcomes and impact**

The case of URACCAN university shows that capacity development through HE institutions in small countries or regions can be achieved without serious brain-drain-problems if some pre-conditions are met: 1) Curricula aren't built on standardized contents assumed to be universally applicable, but on the particular socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the context, 2) The labour market is characterized by a shortage of trained professional, 3) pull factors for emigration (e.g. better prospects for professional development abroad) don't surpass a certain magnitude and can be compensated by creating local career opportunities.

### 13. Summary of recommendations

#	For whom?	Recommendation
1	ADA Office Nicaragua, ADA country desk	<p>With regard to the future country strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of ADA's partners, particularly URACCAN, on at least two of the three focus areas is empirically evident and significant. Depending on the particular project design, future cooperation may be fully legitimate regarding their compliance with the focus areas and, therefore, should be continued.</li> <li>• In Nicaragua, HE is not a focus area of ADA. This implies that projects can only be legitimized on the Austrian side as means for capacity development to the focus areas. The future country strategy should therefore (1) define the role and the scope of HE in relation to the focus areas, (2) define a set of particular contributions expected by HE institutions, based on the past project experiences, (3) a confined set of particular measures for the institutional strengthening of HE-institutions insofar the latter still need to be "upgraded" in order to become effective partners for capacity development in the focus areas.</li> <li>• With regard to the integration of the HE-strategy in the future country strategy, it is also important to consider the status of HE as a non-focus area. Thus, the question is not if the HE-strategy is reflected integrally in the country strategy – but if cooperation with HE institutions is situated within the compounds of the HE strategy and does not contradict its principles. In order to avoid inconsistencies, the country strategy could name explicitly the relevant key areas of the HE strategy (e.g. specific sector focus, institutional capacity development limited to the level of individual counterpart institutions) and areas that can't be addressed in Nicaragua (e.g. institutional development and quality enhancement on a systemic level).</li> </ul>
2	ADA Office Nicaragua, ADA country desk	<p>With regard to the conceptualization of future HE support projects in Nicaragua:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to the results related to the ownership and planning/monitoring capacities, URACCAN seems to be perfectly able to act as implementing agency of future projects, without further intermediation of Horizont 3000. ADA already intended to assign the project directly to URACCAN and should proceed with this decision that does not at all exclude further advice by Horizont 3000 "on-demand" by URACCAN. In the case of FADCANIC, on the other hand, a more intense back-stopping, and therefore further intermediation of Horizont 3000, should be ensured if the scholarship program should be renewed.</li> <li>• ADA should stipulate new efforts of donor coordination at the regional level, taking into account donors in all educational subsectors. It is probable that the responsibility for educational administration will be transferred soon from the national authorities (e.g. MINED) to the regional institutions. The time period when the so-called Regional Autonomic Subsystem for Education (SEAR) starts operating effectively should be a good window of opportunity for new initiatives of donor coordination.</li> </ul>
3	ADA Office Nicaragua, ADA country desk, URACCAN	<p>With specific regard to the potential continuance of the URACCAN project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The management capacities are generally adequate, but could be raised additionally supporting strategic planning processes at the local campus level. URACCAN disposes of a strategic plan for the entire university, but due the socio-</li> </ul>



#	For whom?	Recommendation
		<p>cultural peculiarities of each sub-region, complementary strategic plans of the individual campuses would add further value.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As for URACCAN, the future focus should emphasize local development components, however, the components one and two (strengthening of academic excellence and supporting access of vulnerable groups) should be continued as well. The emphasis of teacher qualification should shift from pedagogical and didactical subjects to specialization in specific disciplines. Scholarships for vulnerable groups should continue.</li> <li>• If capacity development for ADA's focus areas is considered the main function of higher education support programs, a gradual shift should be called for by ADA with regard to the impact areas addressed by project goals: From the support of a general organizational and personnel capacity development within the university (for example: the efforts undertaken in order to improve the didactical skills of university teachers) to a more intense cooperation in areas where impacts on rural development and/or health are addressed directly.</li> <li>• As this shift has already been observable in the present project phase through the creation of the CDCs, the new project proposal for 2010 fully complies with the previous recommendation. It can be characterized, not as a higher education project with effects on local development, but as a local development project carried out by an academic institution as change agent and thus, integrated in the academic cycles of research and teaching. From the point of view of the evaluation, the results have validated the current project proposal which should be supported by ADA in its present form.</li> <li>• Although a considerable proportion of indigenous students matriculate at URACCAN, desertion is still very high compared to other groups. URACCAN should dedicate some formal research to retention and desertion factors for indigenous students and introduce affirmative action in order to assure their permanence in URACCAN.</li> <li>• As pointed out above, URACCAN is structurally reliant on external donors, a fact that has been known from the first steps of the cooperation and that can only be ameliorated gradually and in a long-term perspective. From the point of view of the evaluation, the undeniable relevance of URACCAN as a regional change agent, also in focus areas of ADA, justifies that at least a mid-term-commitment is maintained, as far as possible combined with advice on additional income-generating mechanisms and the identification of donors that potentially could "take over" in the future (i.e. donors with a more explicit focus on education and/or higher education).</li> </ul>
4	URACCAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• URACCAN should continue to explore systematically income-generating mechanisms to reduce the structural dependency on external resources to a moderate level. Some of these mechanisms could be the following: 1) intensify coordination with local and regional authorities in order to strengthen co-responsibility for higher education, 2) expand the range of services liable to pay costs (e.g. extra-academic course "on-demand", applied research, etc.). For reasons related to the communitarian self-concept of URACCAN, neither an increase in tuition fees nor differentiation of fees according to the socio-economic status of students are functional mechanisms for substantially generating additional income.</li> <li>• For URACCAN, the most severe bottleneck for further development is not internal institutional shortcomings but the low coverage and quality of secondary education in the region. Although this topic might probably be out of the range of the Austrian contribution, URACCAN should intensify its efforts of supporting the creation of rural secondary schools and or stipulate the implementation of preparatory courses at community level.</li> <li>• ADA support for capacity development in the RAAN/RAAS has focused on higher education although professional train-</li> </ul>

#	For whom?	Recommendation
		ing at intermediate educational level is as much a bottleneck as HE. Partially, this demand can and should be addressed by URACCAN. Although this recommendation probably exceeds the range of the future cooperation with ADA, URACCAN should always consider the potential needs for careers at the level of <i>técnico superior</i> when carrying out needs and labour market analysis.
5	ADA Office Nicaragua, ADA country desk, FADCANIC	<p>With specific regard to the potential continuance of the FADCANIC project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both projects have delivered most of the aspired results and are to certain extent complementary. However, synergies could be enhanced by adapting the selection process more systematically to the focus areas and the needs of complementary projects of ADA in Nicaragua. It should be mentioned that not all interviewees agree on the pertinence of narrowing the focus of the scholarship program – the evaluation team however holds the opinion that measures of capacity development should deviate from the focus areas of ADA as little as possible.</li> <li>The overall results of the scholarship would justify the continuance of ADA support. However, some adjustments at the operational level would be necessary in order to facilitate a smoother implementation process. Some elements that should be considered: 1) previous agreements with a selection of host universities in order to facilitate the admission processes for students, 2) obtaining previous information on the range of study modalities in order to assure adequate financial management, 3) previous calculation of country and career specific costs in order to facilitate and optimize resource allocation at the level of individual students.</li> </ul>
6	ADA Office Nicaragua, ADA country desk,	<p>With regard to results-oriented management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the perspective of results-oriented planning and management, ADA should invest additional efforts in the quality assurance for project proposals and the underlying logical frameworks. As not all potential project partners have the ability to elaborate adequate impact chains and indicators, ADA should provide active support at that stage of the planning phase.</li> </ul>

## **14. Annex**

### **14.1 List of interviewees**

1. Alejandro, Pio (Coordinator, Instituto de Estudios y Promoción de la Autonomía)
2. Alemán, Carlos (President of the Council of the RAAN)
3. Amador Solas, Frankling Uniel (scholarship holder FADCANIC, URACCAN – Siuna)
4. Arguello, Julio (Department for Research and Postgraduates, URACCAN – Siuna)
5. Arguello Mendieta, José Alberto (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
6. Barrera, Innocente (CDC Leader, San Marco)
7. Beer, Gaudi (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
8. Beteta Gazmendi, William Juan (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
9. Blandón Aguilar (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
10. Blandón Hernández, Aura Teresa (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
11. Blandón Sagastume, Enia (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
12. Castillo, Carmelo (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
13. Castillo, Jasmil (Head of Department for Livestock Breeding, URACCAN – Siuna)
14. Castillo, Leticia (Secretary for Academic Affairs, URACCAN – Siuna)
15. Castillo Tórrez, Gabriel Antonio (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
16. Chacón, Doris (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
17. Chang, Carmenza (Teacher in Livestock Breeding, URACCAN – Siuna)
18. Chavarría, Ariel (Teacher in Forest Management, URACCAN – Siuna)
19. Dávila, Jacoba (Coordinator, CEIMM)
20. Días, Mayra (Concejal, Rosita)
21. Dometz, Farand (Representative Office SEAR, Ministry of Education)
22. Donaire, Rodolfo (CDC Leader, Comenegro)
23. Flores Sosa, Eulogia (Concejal, Government of Siuna)
24. Fuertes Luagos, Hazel Anielka (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
25. Gaitan, Julian (Concejal, Government of Siuna)
26. Getino, Elena (Sector specialist for Education, European Union)
27. Giménez, Luís (Community Leader, Las Breñas)

28. González, Aura (Head of Department for Business Administration, URACCAN – Siuna)
29. González, Nidia (CDC Leader, Carao)
30. Grünberg, Gustav (Universität Wien)
31. Gutiérrez, Francisco (Coordinator of the Scholarship Program, URACCAN – Siuna)
32. Hernández, Antonio (Vice-Mayor, Government of Siuna)
33. Hernández, Karina (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
34. Hoernicke, Christina (Sektorreferentin, ADA)
35. Hooker, Alta (Dean, URACCAN)
36. Hooker, Ray (President, FADCANIC)
37. Hooker, Victor (Local Government RAAN – President of the Education Commission)
38. Ibarra, Arturo (Mayor of Rosita)
39. Ibarra Ramirez, Yamilka (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
40. Jarquín, Iván (Coordinator, IREMADES)
41. Knight, Centuriano (Local Government RAAN – President of the Health Commission)
42. Kroll, Doris (Director, Horizont 3000)
43. Lee, Bismarck (Vice Rector, URACCAN – Siuna)
44. Loáisiga Aguinaga, Ulises José (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
45. López García, Juan Alberto (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
46. Marchena, Carolina (Teacher in Local Development, URACCAN – Siuna)
47. Mena, Lilieth (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
48. Miranda, Melvin (Local Government RAAN – Secretary for Natural Resources)
49. Neuwirth, Hubert (Leiter, Kobü-Managua)
50. Ochoa, Aleyda (CDC Leader, Comenegro)
51. Olivas, Margarita (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
52. Oporta, Lucelia Miranda, (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
53. Ordoñez, Ronald (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
54. Orozco (Concejal, Rosita)
55. Palacios Alaniz, Eli Magdiel (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
56. Pérez, Germán (CDC Leader, Carao)
57. Pérez Castillo, Aracely (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
58. Ríos, María Antonia (Concejal, Rosita)
59. Rivas, Francisco (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
60. Rivera, Aurora (Community Leader, Las Breñas)

61. Rivera, Mercedes (CDC Leader, San Marco)
62. Rocha, Nubia (Sector Expert for Education, Horizont 3000)
63. Rodríguez, Jacoba Estela (Library)
64. Romero, Reyna Ordoñez, Ronald (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
65. Rossmann, Tania (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
66. Rufus, Eulogio Pedro (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
67. Ruíz, Ariel (scholarship holder, URACCAN – Siuna)
68. Ruíz, Leonor (Head of Department for Local Development, URACCAN – Siuna)
69. Ruíz, Sergio (Coordinator for External Cooperation, URACCAN – Siuna)
70. Saavedra Polanco, Ariel (Student, URACCAN – Siuna)
71. Sinclair, Albert (Vicerector, URACCAN – Bilwi)
72. Smith, Yamileth (CDC Leader, Wasakin)
73. Talavera, Telemaco (President, National University Council)
74. Taylor, Arnulfo (CDC Leader, Wasakin)
75. Tinoco, Mercedes (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
76. Trujillo, Didian (Community Leader, Las Breñas)
77. Tunnemann, Carlos (Sector Expert for Education, Ex-Minister for Education)
78. Valdivia, Verónica (Coordinator, URACCAN Extension in Rosita)
79. Vanegas, Humberto (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
80. Vijil, Josefina (Director, Centro de Investigación y Acción Educativa Social - CIASES)
81. Waldan, Barnabás (Local Government RAAN – Secretary for Education)
82. Watler, William (scholarship holder FADCANIC)
83. Zuñiga, Victor (Office for External Cooperation, URACCAN – Siuna)

## 14.2 Schedule of field-trip

Date	Time	Activity	Counterparts	Location
<b>Sun – 04 April</b>				
Arrival in Managua				
14:00-18:00 Briefing with local consultant, study of documents				
<b>Mon – 05 April</b>				
	09:00 – 11:30	Briefing and Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hubert Neuwirth (Kobü Leiter)</li> <li>• Christina Hoernicke (Sektorreferentin)</li> </ul>	Kobü Managua
	14:00 – 16:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alta Hooker (Dean)</li> <li>• Bismarck Lee (Vice Rector, Recinto Las Minas)</li> </ul>	URACCAN, Office Managua
	16:00 – 18:00	Planning of field visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation team only</li> </ul>	Hotel Los Robles

Tue – 06 April				
	10:00 – 12:00	Interview	• Josefina Vijil (Director CIASES, Sector Expert)	CIASES
	13:00	Interview	• Telemaco Talavera, President National University Council	CNU → Cancelled because of travel abroad, reprogrammed for June 15
	16:00 – 18:00	Interview	• Gustav Grünberg (Universität Wien)	Kobü Managua

Wed – 07 April				
	7:00 – 10:00	Travel a Siuna		---
	11:00 – 12:30	Interview with Coordinator of Research Centers	• Jacoby Dávila (Coordinator CEIMM) • Pio Alejandro (Coordinator IEPA) • Iván Jarquín (Coordinator IREMADES)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	13:30 – 14:30	Focus Group with University Teachers (participants of the M.A. in Academic Teaching)	• Ariel Chavarría (Forest Management) • Carmenza Chang (Livestock Breeding) • Carolina Marchena (Local Development) • Et al.	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	14:30 – 15:30	Interview with Heads of Departments	• Julia Arguello (Research and Post-graduates) • Jasmil Castillo (Livestock Breeding) • Aura González (Business Administration) • Leonor Ruíz (Local Development)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	15:30 – 16:30	Focus Group with Students	• See list of interviewees	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	16:30 – 17:30	Interview	• Leticia Castillo (Secretary for Academic Affairs)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	17:30 – 18:30	Revision of the program and briefing for the following day	• Bismarck Lee (Vice Rector) • Sergio Ruíz (Coordinator for External Cooperation) • Victor Zuñiga (Office for External Cooperation)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas

Thu – 08 April				
	9:00 – 10:30	Focus Group with Scholarship Holders	• See list of interviewees	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	10:30 – 11:30	Interview	• Francisco Gutiérrez (Coordinator of Scholarship Programs)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	11:30 – 12:30	Meeting with Local Government of Siuna	• Antonio Hernández (Vice-Mayor of Siuna) • Julian Gaitan (Concejal) • Eulogia Flores Sosa (Concejal)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	13:30 – 15:00	Focus Group with Leaders of Extension Centers (CDC)	• See list of interviewees	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	15:00 – 16:30	Interview	• Jacoba Estela Rodríguez (Library)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas
	16:30 – 17:00	Revision of the program and briefing for the following day	• Bismarck Lee (Vice Rector) • Sergio Ruíz (Coordinator for External Cooperation)	URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas

			nal Cooperation) • Victor Zuñiga (Office for External Cooperation)	
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**Fri – 09 April**

	08:00 – 11:00	Travel to URACCAN-Extension in Rosita	---	---
	11:00 – 12:00	Interview	• Verónica Valdivia (Coordinator of URACCAN Extension Rosita)	URACCAN Extension Rosita
	13:30 – 14:30	Interview	• Arturo Ibarra (Mayor of Rosita)	City Hall Rosita
	14:30 – 16:00	Interview	• María Antonia Ríos (Concejal, Rosita) • Geraldina Orozco (Concejal, Rosita) • Mayra Días (Concejal, Rosita)	City Hall Rosita
	16:00 – 18:00	Interview	• Bismarck Lee (Vice Rector) • Sergio Ruíz (Coordinator for External Cooperation) • Victor Zuñiga (Office for External Cooperation)	Hotel Tercio Pelo, Rosita

**Sa – 09 April**

	08:00 – 10:00	Travel to Las Breñas	---	---
	10:00 – 12:00	Focus Group with Community Leaders	• See list of interviewees	Las Breñas
	13:00 – 19:00	Travel to Bilwi (Puerto Cabezas)	---	---

**So – 10 April**

Data analysis and team discussion of first conclusions / lessons learnt / recommendations

**Mo – 11 April**

	08:00 – 19:30	Interview	• Albert Sinclair, Vice Rector URACCAN Bilwi	URACCAN Bilwi
	09:30 – 10:30	Interview	• Tania Rossmann, participant of the scholarship program of FADCANIC	URACCAN Bilwi
	10:30-12:00	Interview	• Centuriano Knight, Local Government RAAN – President of the Health Commission	Office of the Health Commission RAAN
	13:00-14:00	Interview	• Melvin Miranda, Local Government RAAN – Secretary for Natural Resources	Office of the Secretary for Natural Resources RAAN
	14:00-15:00	Interview	• Barnabás Waldan, Local Government RAAN – Secretary for Education • Victor Hooker, Local Government RAAN – President of the Education Commission	Office of the Secretary for Education RAAN
	15:30 – 17:00	Focus Group with participants of the scholarship program of FADCANIC	• Gaudi Beer • Humberto Vanegas • William Watler	FADCANIC

<b>Tue – 12 April</b>				
	08:00 – 10:00	Focus Group with participants of the scholarship program of FADCANIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lilieth Mena</li> <li>• Doris Chacón</li> <li>• Mercedes Tinoco</li> </ul>	FADCANIC
	12:00	Travel from Puerto Cabezas to Managua	---	---
	17:00-19:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carlos Alemán, President of the Council of RAAN</li> </ul>	URACCAN Managua

<b>Wed – 13 April</b>				
	08:00-09:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doris Kroll, Director Horizont 3000</li> </ul>	Horizont 3000, Regional Office
	09:00-10:30	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nubia Rocha, Sector Expert for Education of Horizont 3000</li> </ul>	Horizont 3000, Regional Office
	11:00-13:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ray Hooker, President FADCANIC</li> </ul>	FADCANIC
	14:00-15:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farand Dometz, Ministry of Education – Office SEAR</li> </ul>	MINED
	16:00 – 17:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telemaco Talavera, President National University Council</li> </ul>	CNU

<b>Thu – 15 April</b>				
	11:00-12:30	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carlos Tunnermann, Sector Expert for Education, Ex-Minister for Education</li> </ul>	Domicile of the Interviewee
	15:00-16:30	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elena Getino, Section for Human and Social Development, Delegation of the European Union</li> </ul>	Delegation of the European Union
		Preparation of the De-Briefing	---	---

<b>Fri – 16 April</b>				
	10:30-13:00	Kobü Managua	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-Briefing with personnel of ADA, Horizont 3000, URACCAN (see list of interviewees)</li> </ul>	Kobü Managua
	15:00-16:00	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADA, Sektorreferent MSME-Development</li> </ul>	Kobü Managua

<b>Sat – 17 April</b>				
	06:00	Departure to Germany via Mexico		

<b>Sat – 17 April to Fri – 23 April</b>				
		Prolonged stay in Mexico-City due to the shut-down of European airports (Report Writing)		
		Flight to Germany on Fri – 23 April, 20:55 (Arrival: Frankfurt am Main 14:40, Wittlich 19:30)		



### 14.3 List of documents and publications

#### General Documents

ADA (2008a): Leitfaden für Projekt- und Programmevaluierungen, Wien 2008

ADA (2009a): Higher Education and Scientific Cooperation. Strategy. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2009b): Umsetzungsmatrix zur Hochschulstrategie. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2009c): Formatvorlage country strategies. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2009d): Ausschreibungsunterlage (Aufforderung zur Angebotsabgabe) für das Verhandlungsverfahren nach dem Bundesvergabegesetz 2006 zum OEZA-Projekt „Evaluation Hochschulbildung in Nicaragua und Südosteuropa 2005-2009“. Wien: ADA.

ÖSB Consulting/ L&R Sozialforschung (2007): Bildungssektorevaluierung 2007 (inkl. Länderberichte)

ADA (o.J.): OEZA – Qualitätskriterien Glossar. Wien.

ADA (o.J.): OEZA – Qualitätskriterien Armutsminderung. Wien.

ADA (o.J.): OEZA – Qualitätskriterien Bildung. Wien.

ADA (o.J.): OEZA – Qualitätskriterien Gender-sensitive Entwicklungszusammenarbeit. Wien.

ADA (o.J.): OEZA – Qualitätskriterien Kapazitätsentwicklung. Wien.

ADA (o.J.): Allgemeininformation zur Österreichischen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (OEZA) bzw. Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Power Point Presentation, Wien.

ADA (o.J.): Allgemeininformation zum OEZA Bildungssektor. Power Point Presentation, Wien.

#### Kosovo

*Short project descriptions and short internal comments are not documented here.*

ADA (2002): Programa de País para Nicaragua 2003-2006. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2005a): Projektdokument zu EZA-Vertrag 2327-00/2006. MIRIAM Frauenförderungsprogramm in Guatemala und Nicaragua. Managua.

ADA (2005b): Projektdokument zu EZA-Vertrag 1495-00/05. Süd-Süd-Stipendienprogramm für AkademikerInnen der Karibikregionen Nicaraguas (2005-2008). Managua 2005.

ADA (2006a): Regionalprogramm Zentralamerika. Analyse/Themenbeitrag zum Thema Bildung und Kapazitätsaufbau. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2006b): Zentralamerika. Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit – Beiträge und Perspektiven. Wien: ADA.

ADA (2007a): Projektdokument zu EZA-Vertrag 1778-01/2007. Die Universität der Karibikregionen, URACCAN Siuna. Stärkung des kommunalen, interkulturellen Universitätsmodells. Managua.

- ADA (2007b): Projektdokument zu EZA-Vertrag 2532-00/2007. Kapazitätenaufbau in marginalisierten Gebieten: Campus Virtual Centroamericano. Managua.
- ADA (2008b): Regionalstrategie Zentralamerika 2008-2013. Wien.
- ADA (2009e): Länderinformationen Nicaragua. Wien: ADA.
- ADA (2009f): Kurzbericht Dienstreise Nicaragua, FGF Mag. Brigitte Öppinger-Walchshofer u. HAL PP Mag. Robert Zeiner, 16. bis 25. März 2009. Wien.
- ADA (2010): Programa Austriaco de Cooperación en Educación Superior e Investigación para el Desarrollo 2010-2014. Wien.
- ADA (o.J.): Kurzinformationen zu allen derzeit laufenden österreichischen Entwicklungsprojekten in Nicaragua. Managua, Stand Anfang 2010.
- Castillo Gómez, Leticia/Lee León, Bismarck/Benito Jarquín, Roger (Castillo et al. 2009): Seguimiento a profesionales graduados de la URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas, generación 2001-2006. In: Ciencia e Interculturalidad No. 1, Junio 2009.
- Consejo de Desarrollo de la Costa Caribe (CDCC 2008): Estrategia de Desarrollo de la Costa Caribe. Puerto Cabezas.
- Del Cid Lucero, Victor Manuel (2005): Ten Years of Cooperatoin of SAIH – for the Improvement of Teacher and Academic Quality on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. Managua.
- Gobierno de Reconciliación y Unidad Nacional (PNDH 2008): Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Humano 2008-2012. Managua.
- Horizont 3000 (2008): Estrategia de Trabajo de Horizont 3000 en el Sector Educación, Nicaragua. Managua 2008.
- Horizont 3000 (2009a): Informe de avance del programa de becas de posgrado de profesionales de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua, al 31 de diciembre de 2008. Managua.
- Horizont 3000 (2009b): Informe de avance del proyecto Fortalecimiento del modelo de universidad comunitaria e intercultural, URACCAN Siuna, al 31 de diciembre de 2008. Managua.
- Horizont 3000 (2009c): Informe de avance del proyecto Fortalecimiento del modelo de universidad comunitaria e intercultural, URACCAN Recinto Las Minas 2007-2010, al 30 de junio de 2009. Managua.
- Horizont 3000 (2009d): Jahresbericht 2008. Wien.
- Horizont 3000 (2009e): Länderstrategie Nicaragua 2008-2010. Wien.
- Horizont 3000 (2010): Informe de avance del programa de becas de posgrado de profesionales de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua, al 31 de diciembre de 2009. Managua.
- Koordinationsbüro für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit der Österreichischen Botschaft Mexiko in Managua: Quartalsberichte 2008 und 2009.
- Kroll, Doris; Vogel, Thomas (2007): Apoyo al fortalecimiento institucional de la universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua. Managua.

L&R Sozialforschung/inbas (2005): Evaluation of the role of NGOs as partners of the Austrian Development Cooperation in Nicaragua and of their contribution to the eradication of poverty, Vienna.

Ministerio de Educación (MINED 2010): Estrategia Educativa 2010-2015. Managua: MINED.

Ruíz Calderón, Leonor (2009): Deserción en la educación superior, Recinto Las Minas, período 2001-2007. In: Ciencia e Interculturalidad No. 1, Junio 2009.

Tünnermann, Carlos/Yarzabal, Luís (2002): Tendencias y Potencialidades del Desarrollo de la Educación Superior en Nicaragua. Managua: Asdi.

Delegation of the European Union in Nicaragua (UE 2010): El Sector de Educación (Presentation at the Donor Round Table for the Educational Sector). Managua, April 2010.

URACCAN (2004): Informe final de autoevaluación institucional 2004. Nueva Guinea/Bluefields/Siuna/Bilwi.

URACCAN (2008a): Plan Estratégico Institucional 2008 – 2012.

URACCAN: Informes académicos cuatrimestrales de URACCAN, Recinto Las Minas, de 1er cuatrimestre 2008 al 1er cuatrimestre 2010.

URACCAN (2008): Informe de Gestión Anual Institucional 2007. Managua.

URACCAN (2009): Informe de Gestión Institucional 2008. Managua.

URACCAN (2010a): Documento de Proyecto – Desarrollo de capacidades técnicas y humanas para la implementación del Plan de Desarrollo Regional con Identidad en el Sector de Las Minas. Siuna 2010.

URACCAN (2010b): Informe Académico 2009, Recinto Las Minas. Siuna.

Vijil, Josefina et al. (2007): Contribución de la Cooperación Austriaca al Fortalecimiento de URACCAN – Las Minas. Evaluación realizada en febrero – marzo 2007. Managua.

Zambrano, Margarita (2010): External Evaluation CEIMM – Cooperation Report 2003-2010. Managua.

#### **14.4 Comments on the logframe of the new project proposal of URACCAN: “Development of human and technical capacities for the implementation of the Regional Development Plan in the Sector of Las Minas”**

##### **Purpose of the logframe comments**

The country report for Nicaragua has focused on recommendations for future support of ADA to the HE sector in the Atlantic region in Nicaragua and also given a general valuation of the present project proposal of URACCAN. In general, the conclusion was that URACCAN contributes well to capacity development in the focus areas of ADA, which is also the case for the new project and its strong focus on local development. Nor further comments are made at this strategic level.

In addition to the report, and with regard to the strengthening of results oriented management, the present comments analyze the logframe of the new project, i.e. vertical logic of the goal structure and the quality of indicators.

### **Vertical logic**

In general terms, the vertical logic (i.e. the coherence of the results chain) is plausible. The components (a: human capacity development through the academic program of URACCAN, b: strengthening of administrative capacities of local governments, and c: quality standards and commercialization strategies for communitarian economies) are mutually exclusive, but complementary and contribute to a common purpose and overall objective.

At the results level, the goals are well-defined and should be within the range of the project management, i.e. they are not yet project effects and impacts, but attainable results of proper project implementation. This valuation may vary at the indicator level which will be commented separately.

The Project Purpose could be defined more precisely. The goal formulation should avoid combining means (aseguramiento del personal calificado) and ends (para la ejecución del Plan de Desarrollo ...) in one goal formulation, but focus exclusively on the level that will be the criterion for goal attainment. In the opinion of the evaluators, personal calificado belongs to the results level, while the project purpose should resume more clearly what benefit is generated by the project components.

No comments are made with regard to the overall objective. The goal formulation is quite generic, but this is common – and acceptable – at this level of the results chain.

### **Indicators**

Indicators are analyzed individually, using the concept of “S.M.A.R.T. indicators”:

S = specific	Is the indicator a proper expression of the respective project goal?
M = Measurable	Can the indicator be measured / observed?
A = Attainable	Is the desired result within the range of the project?
R = Relevant	Is the variable a key indicator that contributes to a proper understanding and management of the project?
T = Time-bound	Is there a clear timeframe for the attainment of the indicator?

If the criteria are met by the indicator, they just receive a check mark “✓”. Otherwise, recommendations for modification are given.

**Result 1:**

**Strengthening of the professional capacities of men and women in the autonomic institutions of the Autonomous Regions in view of challenges of the regional development process.**

<b>Indicator 1:</b> 25 professionals (50% women) graduated from the Master's program in Planning and Regional Development with Identity.	S	✓
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	✓
	T	✓ (Most of the indicators are implicitly time-bound to the end of the project phase)
<b>Indicator 2:</b> 85 professionals (men and women) are updated on new technologies through postgraduate or continuous education	S	Postgraduate and continuous education are quite different capacity development measures and the project document refers more explicitly to the postgraduate specializations. Maybe the indicator should be more specific in this respect. No criterion is applied in order to measure successful conclusion instead of the educational process (at the contrary, indicator 1 measures not only participation, but graduation which is far more relevant. Does the evaluation process of the postgraduates allow for the application of the same criterion?).
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	The indicator is only relevant for the project management, if capacity development measures and the set of applicable technologies are well-defined. This has not necessarily to be part of the indicator, and seems to be clear in the project document. Just verify that the indicator does refer to well-defined educational services.
	T	✓
<b>Indicator 3:</b> 260 new professionals (40% women) graduated with technical skills and human capacity that allow for contributing to the regional development	S	The project document refers to 260 new students which get access to URRACAN through the scholarship program – which is not the same as <i>260 new professionals graduated</i> . Please make clear, if it refers to the same population of scholarship holders. Otherwise, make clear, to which specific project interventions it is related and state the desired results more specifically.
	M	✓ (if the population is clear, see above)
	A	If the indicator refers to the scholarship holders, <i>260 egresados</i> could be too ambitious, as this is the total number of scholarship holders. Verify if the target number is still attainable if realistic drop-out rates are taken into account.
	R	✓ (if the population is clear, see above)
	T	✓
<b>Indicator 4:</b> 25% of the scholarship holders are indigenous students	S	The indicator is not situated at the result level, but at the level of activities: It seems to be a sub-category of Activity 1.4 " <i>Garantizar el ingreso de 260 nuevos estudiantes de pregrado becados</i> " At the results level, an indicator should refer to the % of graduates, or at least to the retention of students until the end of the project phase.
	M	✓
	A	✓

	R	Taking into account the general drop-out rates, an absolute number of indigenous graduates could be more relevant than a % of the student population
	T	✓

<b>Indicator 5:</b> Curricular proposals with innovative focuses	S	Curricular proposals may be important milestone within the intervention strategy – but they are <u>not</u> a specific indicator at the results level for Results No. 1. Maybe, the indicator could even be eliminated from the logframe.
	M	✓
	A	No target is specified.
	R	Taking into account the general drop-out rates, an absolute number of indigenous graduates could be more relevant than a % of the student population
	T	Time-frames are irrelevant, if no target is specified.

<b>Additional indicators:</b>	The number of indicators should not be enhanced in order to keep the indicator set manageable. However, if indicator 5 is eliminated, a target for research output could be relevant, as the project proposal refers to it as a relevant part of the intervention strategy.	
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## Result 2:

### Strengthening of the administrative capacities of the communitarian territorial government structures

<b>Indicator 1:</b> 21 communitarian authorities are implementing their territorial development model (communities are specified in the project document)	S	✓
	M	✓
	A	Although the effective implementation of the development models is clearly a project result, the indicator does not allow for determining the degree of goal attainment. The formula “are implementing” is nearly arbitrary. Some criterion is needed, in order to determine if a community is implementing the model <i>effectively</i> or <i>successfully</i> .
	R	✓
	T	✓

<b>Indicator 2:</b> 21 development communitarian plans have been incorporated in municipal investment plans and municipal development plans	S	✓
	M	✓
	A	If the project supports 21 communities, the success rate is supposed to be 100% ... Is this realistic? Depending on the context, a target “X out of 21 plans”, etc. could be pertinent. (The same could apply to indicator No. 1)
	R	✓
	T	✓

<b>Indicator 3:</b> 15 ex-scholarship holders strengthen the communitarian administration in the CDCs	S	In a strict sense, this is not a result indicator, but a means for achieving the result. As result is properly expressed by the indicators 1 and 2, this is no major flaw.
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	If ADA prefers to maintain the indicator for accountability reasons, it should do so. However, the indicator is relevant at the process level, not the results level.
	T	✓

**Result 3:**

**Concepts of quality standards for the improvement of the communitarian and indigenous economies have introduced with respect to production and commercialization.**

<b>Indicator 1:</b> Strategies and mechanisms for the communitarian and indigenous commercialization are being implemented	S	✓
	M	✓
	A	See indicator 1 for Result 2 Additionally, no quantitative or qualitative target is formulated. What exactly must be reached in order to accomplish the goal?
	R	✓
	T	Time-frames are irrelevant, if no target is specified.

<b>Indicator 2:</b> Culturally pertinent quality standards are applied in the productive models	S	For an external reader, it remains unclear what exactly the indicator does refer to. If the concept specifications (a: what is meant by quality standards, c: What does characterize their proper application, b: how can cultural pertinence be determined) is too complex and cannot be integrated in the indicator formulation, they should nevertheless be made explicit in the intervention strategy.
	M	Due to the unclear concept specification, measurement will probably be difficult.
	A	See indicator 1
	R	✓
	T	Time-frames are irrelevant, if no target is specified.

<b>Indicator 3:</b> Productive systems for forest management have been improved, recovering native species and applying quality standards in 21 communities and to pilot areas	S	The criterion of "quality standards" seems to duplicate indicator 2? At least, the two indicators are apparently not mutually exclusive. If this is the case, eliminate 1 indicator.
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	✓
	T	✓

<b>Indicator 4:</b> 5 Communitarian Networks of men and women are commercializing 50% of their production and negotiating in the local and national market	S	✓ In general, the indicator seems to be specific and relevant. Maybe, the term "communitarian networks" could be specified more clearly.
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	✓
	T	✓

**PROJECT PURPOSE:**

**Assure qualified autochthonous personnel for the implementation of the Regional Plan for the Development of the Caribbean Coast**

<b>Indicator 1:</b> Personnel and students of URACCAN are advising the implementation of development plans in 5 municipalities of Las	S	This seems to be more a process indicator than a specific expression of the project purpose. See also the comments on the goal formulation itself.
	M	✓
	A	✓

Minas	R	See above "S" ... measuring effective progress of the implementation of development plans would be more relevant. "Advising" is only the means.
	T	✓
<b>Indicator 2:</b> 5 CDC are managing their socio-economic development model in their territory	S	What is the criterion for effective management of the development model? What is the quality jump with regard to the results of the CDC in the present phase?
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	✓
	T	✓
<b>Indicator 3:</b> Active participation of women in decision making in order to contribute to the sustainable development of their communities	S	The content is very relevant, but it is more a goal than an indicator formulation. What exactly can be observed: Presence in meetings? Certain behaviours? Opinions of people regarding the role of women? Etc.
	M	The indicator has been specified by an observable / measurable variable
	A	(does not yet apply)
	R	✓
	T	(does not yet apply)



**OVERALL OBJECTIVE****Strengthening the regional autonomy from the perspective of the Regional Development Plan**

<b>Indicator 1:</b> 25 qualified professionals contributing to the regional development	S	(✓) It must be clear that the indicator is specific only, insofar not only the no. of properly allocated personnel is measured, but their EFFECTIVE contributions to the regional development.
	M	✓
	A	(✓) The indicator would require 100% insertion of M.A. graduates in relevant institutions. Is the expectable?
	R	✓
	T	Depending on the duration of the M.A. program, the indicator may exceed the duration of the project phase. This should be clear in the indicator formulation.  If possible: a milestone for the end of the project phase should be formulated (for example: XX of graduates inserted in relevant regional institutions → attention: the milestone refers to a lower level of the results chain, in this example: project purpose.)

<b>Indicator 2:</b> 240 families with sustainable productive systems that improve the quality of live.	S	✓
	M	✓
	A	✓
	R	✓
	T	✓