



IDEASS 2008 REPORT

IDEASS is the ART Initiative's international programme for the dissemination of innovations to improve the processes of territorial development in countries. IDEASS was launched in 2002 within the framework of UNDP/ILO/UNOPS programmes and has also developed as a component of several multilateral human development programmes.

IDEASS is founded on the considerations of the UNDP's Human Development Report 2001, devoted to the role of innovation in development, and aims to help pursue the pledges made by the major world summits of the 1990s and the Millennium Assembly. It identifies and promotes international innovations that have contributed to human development and the reduction of exclusion, unemployment and poverty. To disseminate these innovations concretely, IDEASS supports the implementation of specific projects to transfer the methods to countries where there are ongoing programs, with the technical and financial support of international cooperation actors.

Since 2002 IDEASS has worked to support UNDP/UNOPS PDHL human development programmes, UNDP/UNOPS APPI programmes to combat poverty (Anti Poverty Partnership Initiative) and the IFAD/UNOPS STEP Programme in Albania, Serbia and Macedonia.

IDEASS currently operates at the international level and in the following countries, where ART GOLD programmes (Governance and Local Development) and the UNIFEM/UNOPS MyDEL Programme are underway or about to start: Albania, Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Lebanon, Honduras, Indonesia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, Serbia, Sri Lanka and Uruguay.

In each of these countries and at the international level, IDEASS

- *Builds an international supply of innovations*, identified at the international level, among local actors in industrialised countries involved in decentralised cooperation and especially in ART Initiative countries. Country programmes also have an important role in directing the international identification of innovations by reporting specific areas of interest and needs.
- *Promotes innovation* among potential actors in countries and internationally. Promotion is accomplished by disseminating brochures presenting innovations and by organising specific events and technical exchange visits.
- *Formulates and carries out methodology transfer projects* in countries, with actors interested in adopting specific innovations. The projects are implemented with the technical assistance of those involved in designing the innovations, supported technically and financially by ART programmes and other international cooperation organisations interested in participating.

At the international level, the ART IDEASS Programme operates through a secretariat based in the offices of UNDP/UNOPS Rome at the FAO. In 2007 a branch of the International Secretariat was also

set up at the UNDP/UNOPS ART Office in Florence, supported by the Tuscany Region, the provinces of Florence and Prato, and the Municipality of Florence.

The international secretariat operates in close collaboration with the headquarters of UN agencies taking part in the ART Initiative, in particular with UNDP Geneva (Hub for Innovative Partnerships), UNOPS Geneva, UNIFEM's Central America and Caribbean Office in Mexico City, UNEP Europe in Geneva and ILO's Social Protection Service in Geneva.

IDEASS supports ART country programmes. All activities are carried out in close collaboration with national institutions responsible for the promotion of science and technology (science and technology ministries, national science and technology councils, and science academies). In this way, IDEASS helps to improve the impact of the activities of these institutions on ongoing local development processes. These institutions are in fact normally invited to take part in the national coordination committees of ART programmes.

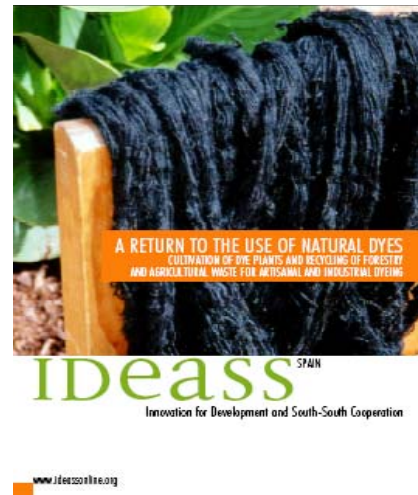
In September 2008, IDEASS activities are being carried out, in the framework of ART programmes, in Albania, Colombia, Ecuador, Sri Lanka, Uruguay and Cuba. Work is underway to implement IDEASS in Central America, Dominican Republic, Serbia, Morocco and Bolivia.

Below is a summary of the main results achieved by IDEASS at the international and country levels.

The international supply of innovations

The IDEASS Catalogue currently contains 28 qualified innovations from Albania, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Italy, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Portugal, Serbia and Spain. Numerous other innovations have been identified in different countries and work is being carried out with their inventors to produce promotion documentation.

It is worth pointing out one aspect of IDEASS work which has great potential: the involvement of European local authorities participating in the ART Initiative in decentralised cooperation activities. Public and private structures of European territories, in fact, have a remarkable heritage of local development methods and tools, still little known or applied in international cooperation, and which can contribute significantly to the processes of territorial development, improving technical solutions and intervention methods in different fields of action. In particular, there is great potential for the promotion and valorisation of environmental resources through innovative productive initiatives, the sustainable management of local public services through various forms of subsidiarity between the public and private sectors, the valorisation of endogenous food cultures, and the valorisation of clean and sustainable forms of energy. Also in the field of welfare, European countries and territories have know-how that they can share to manage territorial and humanised services for people in difficulty, integrate people with problems into the workforce, and for the sustainable management of social services through forms of subsidiarity between the public sector, associations and cooperatives.



All these innovations have become widespread in European territories, but it is not always realised that they can make an important contribution to the work of administrators and technicians in developing countries, who face the everyday problems of implementing public services and productive initiatives in contexts lacking financial resources and knowledge of international trends and know-how.

Criteria used in the selection of innovations

The following criteria are used to select innovations in the IDEASS Catalogue.

- *Impact.* IDEASS promotes innovations that help solve internationally recognized human development problems and which have been proved to produce a significant and sustainable impact.
- *Transfer potential.* DEASS promotes innovations with universal characteristics that can be used in other contexts and for which concrete methodology transfer projects can be generated.
- *National and international validation.* IDEASS promotes innovations that have already been reliably validated nationally and internationally.
- *Cost-benefit.* DEASS promotes innovations that have clear advantages in terms of cost-benefit, as compared to alternatives that meet the same needs.
- *Availability of technical assistance.* Finally, DEASS promotes innovations whose inventors are prepared to offer technical assistance for transfer to interested countries through concrete cooperation projects.

Special emphasis is also placed on promoting innovations of a universal nature, which can be used in poor or disadvantaged countries as well as industrialised countries. This aspect is particularly appreciated by interlocutors and academic institutions in the different countries.

To define innovations that will become part of the IDEASS Catalogue, the International Secretariat, in addition to adopting the above specific criteria, normally consult high level experts on these themes and experts working in various specialised international organisations. These experts assess the technical soundness of the innovations and their potential impact in developing countries.

Innovation research at international level

The International Secretariat carries out work on a permanent basis to identify innovations that have the necessary requisites. High-level experts from different professional sectors are involved in this work. Collaboration agreements have been established with numerous UN agencies, cooperation programmes in different countries, non-government organisations, universities and research centres.

IDEASS operations in countries can also arouse interest for specific innovations. In these cases, the International Secretariat carries out international research to find innovations that can meet the country's needs. Prevailing requests have so far involved the use of organic products for agriculture, implementation of alternative energy solutions, and alternative technologies for the disposal of waste.

Structured and specific international activities are also carried to identify innovations, in cooperation with interested organisations. An example is represented

The Innovations Competition for the European Network of Business Innovation Centers

A collaboration agreement was signed with EBN (European Business Network) to organise a competition on human development innovations. The competition, which aimed to involve BICs in the activities of IDEASS and local economic development agencies that operate in ART countries, ended with a prize giving ceremony for winning innovations during the national BIC meeting in Budapest on June 27, 2008.

A scientific committee to evaluate the innovations was set up, consisting of the head of UNEP Europe; the manager of the Millennium Goals Campaign in Europe; a representative of the ART Scientific Committee; a representative of the Catholic University of Chile; the manager of Kragujevach LEDA (Serbia)

The first prize was awarded to the innovation "Albergo diffuso", presented by the Lazio BIC (Italy) and consisted in a mission to LEDAs in the Dominican Republic, in the framework of the ART GOLD Programme.

The second prize was awarded to the innovation "Solaref" presented by Annecy BIC (France) and consisted in a mission to LEDAs in Lebanon, in the framework of the ART GOLD Programme.

Work is underway with the respective inventors to produce brochures on the two innovations, which will be included in IDEASS international catalogue.

Taking into account the success of the competition EBN is planning to convene, in collaboration with IDEASS, a second edition in 2009.

by the Innovations Competition organised in collaboration with EBN, the European Network of Business Innovation Centers.

As stated above, specific work for the identification of innovations is also carried out in collaboration with local authorities involved in decentralised cooperation in ART programmes.

Innovation research in countries

Of special interest for the goals of the IDEASS Programme in terms of cooperation, is innovation research in countries. This can in fact enhance the creative abilities of the different countries and generate considerable satisfaction.

Activities are carried out in close collaboration with national institutions responsible for the promotion of science and technology (ministries, councils, national science and technology agencies, and science academies). Through IDEASS, these institutions strengthen their capacity to valorise and disseminate innovations produced in their country because they can be directly used by actors involved in development processes.

This work helps strengthen academic institutions in their role of supporting concrete development processes. For example, a result of particular importance is the work of CONICYT Nicaragua in getting the Ministry of the Environment to declare the Ojoche, a tree that produces food of high nutritional value, a protected national species. The production of food from the Ojoche seed was awarded a prize in the national human development innovation competition, organised by CONICYT in 2004 in collaboration with IDEASS.

Innovations can be found in different ways: through consultation with specialized agencies and universities, by carrying out specific studies, or by holding national innovation competitions.

In Cuba, systematic work was carried out by a working group consisting of centres of excellence involved in scientific research in the country. The result was numerous high-level innovations, which have already been distributed at the international level. The Cuban Academy of Sciences recognized the importance of the IDEASS Programme in its contribution to the documentation of innovations with the production of brochures, which can be easily disseminated nationally and internationally and create a better promotional impact.

In Nicaragua the first national competition for human development innovations, in the framework of IDEASS and convened by the National Council of Science and Technology and the UNDP, was held in 2004. Good results showed the value of holding competitions as a useful way of identifying innovative methodologies and products from different countries. At the end of the competitions, innovations with universal characteristics are identified for inclusion in the IDEASS international Catalogue. Many other innovations, however, are of great interest to their respective countries, and in these cases, too, brochures are produced and promoted at the national level.

A competition was also held in 2004 by CONICYT in Guatemala. In 2005 another edition of the competition was held in Nicaragua, with a 40% increase in participants. In 2005 a competition was held for the first time in Serbia, sponsored by the University of Novi Sad. IDEASS publishes standard documentation for organising competitions on its website, so that it can be replicated in other countries. These national innovation competitions, advertised in the media and open to participation by all inventors, help expand innovation activities in countries. The promotion of innovations in participant countries generates considerable satisfaction in all stakeholders.

National innovation competitions have already been scheduled in many ART programme countries, particularly Bolivia, Colombia, Morocco and Uruguay.

Promotion of innovations

The IDEASS website (www.ideassonline.org) has been operational in English and Spanish since 2004, managed by the International Secretariat. The site has an average of 6,800 visitors per month and represents a fundamental instrument for the international promotion of innovations, to publicise the programme's activities and to involve new actors. The site enables countries to access brochures, documents and work tools, also improving communications between the different actors involved.

In particular, the site (the catalogue section) publishes innovation brochures in English, French and Spanish. The inventors write a text for each innovation identified, using a standard format provided by the International Secretariat, to be included in a brochure together with photos and charts. The Secretariat oversees the production of texts and brochures, printed by a company contracted through tenders. The International Secretariat has the brochures translated into English and Spanish.

The innovation brochures can be downloaded by anyone and easily packaged for dissemination, avoiding considerable printing costs. In addition, when promoted innovations arouse concrete interest, brochures are translated into the language of different countries (French, Albanian, Serbian-Croatian, and Portuguese) so that they can be used by interested actors and operators.

The production of texts by the inventors is a qualifying aspect, but which has proven to be rather laborious. The inventors of innovations, in fact, tend to produce texts for experts rather than for local development administrators and technicians. The adoption of a language that can convey the potential use of an innovation to a wider audience, however, is a prerequisite to generate interest in other countries. And the commitment of the inventors in drafting texts is a prerequisite for their involvement in the subsequent phase of providing technical assistance for methodology transfer projects. In addition, in this way, IDEASS clearly acts as an international facilitator, promoting the circulation of innovations and valorising the inventors. This approach, although laborious, is especially and uniformly appreciated.

As soon as the innovation brochures are edited they are sent by the International Secretariat, together with the newsletter *InfoIDEASS*, to correspondents in countries and international correspondents.

The International Secretariat has also produced an *Executive Catalogue* of innovation brochures that have already been produced and disseminated internationally, to speed up promotion. It gives a brief description of each innovation so that those of greatest interest and which meet the needs of a country can be identified. The *Executive Catalogue* is posted on the IDEASS site, in English, Spanish and Arabic.

Innovations are also promoted through specific initiatives carried out in collaboration with interested institutions. For example 4 reports on innovations promoted by IDEASS were produced and broadcast as part of a RAI Italian television series. Articles have been published in qualified magazines. Brochures are printed and disseminated at ART Initiative events, meetings and promotional activities. During 2007, for example, the IDEASS Programme and innovations were presented at the international forum of local communities held in Casablanca (Morocco) and in March 2008 in Athens in the WACAP Forum of Cities Against Poverty. Since 2004, IDEASS innovation brochures have been disseminated in at least 20 international events held in different countries, involving a total of at least 10,000 representatives of national institutions and international cooperation.



IDEASS AZORES, PORTUGAL
Innovation for Development and South-South Cooperation

www.ideassonline.org

The brochures are also regularly used by the inventors to promote their innovations in different contexts. An example is the Autonomous Region of the Azores which in 2007 disseminated a brochure on the breeding of grazing dairy cows, during all the events inaugurating the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union.

Innovation promotion workshops

One strategic promotion activity is the organisation of international workshops on specific innovations, addressed to stakeholders in all ART programme countries. The International Secretariat has contacted several local organisations and authorities, to get them involved. Documentation has been prepared for the organisation of seminars on themes such as the regeneration of old town centres, kangaroo mother method, phyto purification for the treatment of water, sustainable tourism (Compagnia dei Parchi, environmental engineering, the integration of traditional medicine in public health systems, University of Crafts & Trades. The documents have been presented to several potential sponsors in Italy, Spain, Mexico and Colombia.

The Tuscany Region responded positively funding the first international workshop, on methods for integrating traditional and natural medicine in public health systems. This innovation, promoted by IDEASS, comes from the Cuban Health Ministry's Centre for Traditional and Natural Medicine. The Tuscany Region is the first European region to have included complementary medicine in its regional public health system.

The workshop, funded by the Tuscany Region, will take place from 28 to 31 October, 2008, and involve 40 representatives of health ministries from all ART countries and countries where the Tuscany Region has health cooperation programmes. The workshop is expected to generate demand from many countries for the transfer of this strategic innovation to improve public health and reduce the cost of medicine.

The promotion of innovations, by means of brochures, is aimed at creating demand for more information on potential use, allowing countries to assess their relevance to solve problems at national and local levels, with a view to possibly developing methodology transfer projects. The brochures are used to provide information on the innovations to local authorities and competent national institutions in programme areas.

Contacts are also established with international cooperation organisations and UN agencies in countries, in view of technical and financial participation in methodology transfer projects.

Technology transfer projects

When co-promotion has generated specific interest in an innovation, steps are taken to formulate a project to transfer the method to the country, which involves activities of various kinds, depending on the type of innovation under consideration.

The Compagnia dei Parchi conference in Albania

In December 2006 the *Compagnia dei Parchi* went on a mission to Albania, at the request of by the Ministry of the Environment. On December 14, at the end of the mission, the methodologies used by the Compagnia dei Parchi were presented at a national conference organised by UNDP Albania, which was attended by a large number of persons from the Albanian press and television. The conference was attended by representatives of the Albanian Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Tourism, and Ministry of Agriculture. Also taking part were representatives of cooperation organisations operating in the country: Dutch Cooperation, Italian Cooperation, USAID, World Bank, UNDP GEF Programme, UNDP MedWetCoast Project. All participants received brochures and information on Compagnia dei Parchi methodologies and expressed interest in participating in the implementation of a project in Albania that adopts the proposed methods. At the end of the conference, the Albanian Government accepted a proposal by the Federparchi President for Albania to take part in the May 2008 "Mediterranean Park Fair as "Special Guest Country".

At the request of UNDP offices and ART Programme teams, the International Secretariat organises missions by innovation inventors to the country concerned. The first missions are generally financed by the International Secretariat if inventors are from countries of the South. During missions, which on average last 7 days, the following activities are carried out:

- *Formulation of the methodology transfer project.* Through field visits and by setting up ad hoc working groups with stakeholders, innovation inventors provide technical assistance to verify feasibility and formulate a project for the use of the innovation in the country. The project includes details on activities, technical assistance required of the inventors, training, monitoring and evaluation procedures, and cost.
- *Innovation presentation.* A national event is organised for the inventors to present innovations to competent national authorities, potential users, public and private bodies, universities, international cooperation organisations and UN agencies. The events are always organised in collaboration with the UNDP Representative and ART GOLD programmes. The involvement of international cooperation in this phase of work has proved to be of particular importance in establishing partnerships for south-south projects.

Since 2004 the IDEASS International Secretariat has organised the following first missions by the inventors of the abovementioned innovations to countries interested in implementing specific methodological transfer projects:

- Stabilak in Nicaragua with the collaboration of CENSA Cuba.
- Stabilak in Colombia, with the collaboration of CENSA Cuba.
- Stabilak in Albania, with the collaboration of CENSA Cuba.
- Kangaroo Mother in Albania, in collaboration with Professor Hector Martinez of the Bogotá Maternity Hospital (Colombia), with the Meyer Hospital of Florence, and the Tuscany Region.
- Constructed Wetlands in Honduras, with the collaboration of ARPAT (Tuscany Region, Italy).
- Constructed Wetlands in Cuba, with the collaboration of ARPAT (Tuscany Region, Italy).
- Constructed Wetlands in Albania, with the collaboration of ARPAT (Tuscany Region, Italy), UNDP GEF Programme and the NGO CRIC.
- Maloka in Cuba, with the collaboration of Maloka (Colombia) and the Cuban Academy of Sciences.
- Neem in Albania, with the collaboration of the Centre of Tirupati (India) and the Albanian Institute for the Protection of Plants.
- Biorat in Libya, with the collaboration of Labiofam Cuba and the Libyan National Environment Agency.
- Moxibustion in Serbia Montenegro, with the collaboration of the Centro Fior di Prugna, Florence (Italy).
- Traditional and Natural Medicine in the SADR, in collaboration with the MTN Centre Cuba, UNHCR and the Raphael Association, Pisa (Tuscany Region).
- Traditional and Natural Medicine in Paraguay, in collaboration with the MTN Centre, Cuba, and the Latin-American Association of Traditional Medicine.
- Compagnia dei Parchi in Albania, in collaboration with Federparchi and Legambiente (Italy).
- Compagnia dei Parchi in Lebanon, in collaboration with Federparchi and Legambiente (Italy).

Environmental Engineering in Colombia

A feasibility study is being carried out in Colombia, as part of the ART REDES Programme, for the construction of an environmental engineering site in the Department of Nariño. Contacts have been made with the competent institutions, which expressed considerable interest in these land management techniques.

At the same time there are contacts with Colombian universities to verify interest in writing a university curriculum on natural engineering methods. The project could include a first module of the Crafts & Trades University, recovering Andean natural engineering practices. There are ongoing consultations with the Colombian National University, the University of Antioch and the University of Pasto (Nariño). Once the exploratory phase of promotion is over, a mission will be organised by professors from the University of Florence, who promoted this innovation in IDEASS.

After the first missions, the following activities were carried out in different countries.

- Presentation of the projects to potential sponsors. Ad hoc working groups, supported by the ART Programme and the International Secretariat, held meetings with international cooperation organisations or potential donors (foundations, banks, industrialised countries, and local authorities operating with decentralised cooperation) to present projects and promote financial and technical participation in the implementation phase.
- Implementation of technology transfer projects. Some of the projects presented are already in progress or in the start-up phase, with the technical support of innovation inventors and the financial and technical support of promoting programmes and other mobilised international cooperation organisations.

Additional funding was found for the following projects, which are now being implemented:

- Kangaroo Mother in Albania, with the support of WHO/Albania, the ART GOLD Programme and the Meyer Hospital of Florence. The project is being carried out in the Shkodër Regional Hospital and includes a training course on the method at the national level, involving maternal-infant operators across the country. The Tuscany Region has approved a contribution for experts from the Meyer Hospital to guarantee technical assistance for the project.
- Constructed Wetlands in Honduras, with the support of UNDP, the APPI Programme and the Italian NGO CISS (South-South International Cooperation) through a European Union programme. A pilot natural water purification system was built in the Municipality of Nacaome (Department of Valle) with technical assistance from ARPAT (Tuscany Region Environment Agency).
- Constructed Wetlands a Cuba. A pilot natural water purification system was designed and is being built in the Province of Guantanamo, with the support of UNDP, the PDHL Programme and Canadian cooperation, and technical assistance from ARPAT (Tuscany Region Environment Agency). The Tuscany Region has approved a contribution for ARPAT experts to guarantee technical assistance for the project.
- Constructed Wetlands in Albania. Work on the construction of a pilot natural water purification system in the municipality Narta (Vlora Region) has nearly been completed, with the support of UNDP, the GEF Programme and the ART GOLD Programme and technical assistance from ARPAT (Tuscany Region Environment Agency). The Tuscany Region involved Publiacqua in guaranteeing the necessary funds for technical assistance from ARPAT in the project.
- Constructed Wetlands in Albania. In the municipality Prespa, a pilot natural water purification system is being designed, with the support of the ART GOLD Programme and the Italian NGO CRIC, and with technical assistance from ARPAT (Tuscany Region Environment Agency).
- Compagnia dei Parchi in Albania, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Tourism, with the support of the ART GOLD Programme and with technical assistance from Federparchi and Legambiente. The project concerns a park in the Shkodër Region and the implementation of a national plan for the valorisation of parks in a perspective of local development.
- Natural medicine integrated into the SADR's public health system. Following a mission by the Cuban MTN Centre to the SADR, the Raphael Association of Pisa, as part of the DEHMOS project in support of the Saharawi Ministry of Health, is carrying out activities to integrate the practices of traditional medicine in the public health system, with the support of Tuscan local authorities.

At the request of the countries concerned, work is being carried out to organise the following missions:

- Natural engineering in Colombia. As mentioned above, preparatory activities are underway to define a project for the transfer of natural engineering methodologies and a university curriculum involving the recovery of the traditional knowledge of the Andean population (Crafts & Trades University). Technical assistance will be provided by the DIAF Department of the University of Florence, in collaboration with the University of Vienna.
- Compagnia dei Parchi, Crafts & trades University, and natural dye production in Lebanon. Activities are being carried out in Lebanon to prepare missions to promote the above innovations, perhaps in 2008.
- Kit for the diagnosis of leptospirosis in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan Ministry of Health has already informed the ART GOLD Programme it is interested in learning more about methods to produce diagnostic kits for leptospirosis to carry out countrywide diagnostic campaigns. Activities are in progress to organise a mission to transfer the method in collaboration with the Nicaraguan Ministry of Health.
- In Central America, under the UNIFEM/UNDP/UNOPS MyDEL Programme (Women and Local Economic Development) activities are being programmed to identify innovations concerning traditional and organic food production. Work will be carried out in collaboration with specialised centres operating in the region, notably the Eart University of Costa Rica and El Samorano Centre of Honduras. The specific aim is to promote women's businesses that use these technologies to improve the availability of food by valorising local resources.
- There are ongoing activities to organise a mission of Spanish experts on the recovery of natural dyes in Uruguay, scheduled for November 2008. Participation was programmed at the national event *Lo Nuestro*, organised by the Uruguayan Industry Ministry's Technological Laboratory (LATU). The experts will be providing technical assistance to LATU, which is already working on the production of natural dyes.

