

## **Alliance of the CGIAR Centres**

### **Governance in the SSA regional MTPs**

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The Alliance Executive originally mandated the development of the two regional MTPs, and it has followed progress in the design and implementation of the plans with extreme interest. During the last meeting of the Alliance Executive and Alliance Board, a consensus was reached that similar governance mechanisms should be used in ESA and WCA, and, furthermore, that the Alliance should provide overall governance for the implementation of the MTPs..

On the basis of the progress accomplished so far in the discussions and consultations with partners in both regions, the Alliance recommends the following simple precepts be followed in both regions, accounting for regional differences in the application of the general principle that the Alliance provide governance oversight for all collective activities in the regional MTPs.

- The governance of activities that are undertaken individually by a partner/Centre remains the responsibility of the governance body in this institution. The principles that follow concern the governance of the facilitation, monitoring, reporting, implementation of the activities undertaken collectively in each region.
- The specific mechanisms chosen should be designed in full consultation with all partners and should meet with the agreement of a large majority of the partners;
- These mechanisms should ensure and facilitate regular communication and consultation with partners and open relationship to potential partners.
- Transaction costs, which can quickly become overwhelming when the range of partners is as wide as it is within both regions, need to be contained and the creation of new committees and other structures should be kept to the absolute minimum. Indeed, in each region, a large number of Alliance Centres, some with a global mandate, sub-regional organizations (ASARECA, SADC-FANR, CORAF), the sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Programme coordinated by a pan African organization (FARA), regional and national level universities, NGOs, the private sector and a large number of national agricultural research institutes are directly involved in the MTPs.
- There should be one agreed ultimate level of governance, rather than multiple levels with ambiguous ultimate authority and responsibility.
- As much as possible work and funding should be organized through existing instruments/structures.

- The Alliance Executive will approve the MTPs for review by the Science Council and later endorsement by the group. It also approves the annual work plans and the monitoring of achievements.
- In case of conflict over some dimension of collective action, the Alliance Board will act in its conflict resolution capacity, as per the Principles and Procedures of the Alliance, ratified by the 15 Boards and Board Chairs.
- One of the objectives of the MTPs is to implement a new way of doing business with the region based on alignment of activities with the needs of partners, priorities of the region, and comparative advantage in scientific collaboration. It is desirable to consult widely when establishing the strategy and priorities but use more focused fora and methods for developing the program
- Programmes of the MTPs must meet the criteria of both the CGIAR and the region: i.e., they respond to important regional needs that can be met by international and regional public goods whose production falls in the mandate and comparative advantage of the CGIAR. The MTP will take advantage of program consultative mechanisms to ensure that programs are co-created and meet regional and CGIAR criteria. Communication and consultation at all levels are key.
- Facilitation of the implementation of the MTPs should be through flexible, transparent, accountable mechanisms and clearly articulated terms of reference and performance criteria for the relevant individuals
- There are many good examples of scientists working well together, as the many informal working groups and communities of practice in the CGIAR attest; however, the Centre-members of the Alliance have yet to develop adequate systems to reward an individual's contributions to activities led by other Centres. The Alliance will support the implementation of the MTPs in this respect, working with the Coordinator/Lead scientists in the development of such a collective action orientated reward system for the CGIAR scientists involved.
- Although the MTPs will be based on nested consultation at various levels from the scientist to the subregional organizations, there is a need for some form of scientific programme advisory committee to provide guidance and advice before proposals go to the Alliance.

Specific concerns about the governance of MTP activities have been raised and circulated by the Board Chairs of WARDA and IITA. These require further discussion in relation to the above principles.