

# Background Document for the Alignment Forum

This document has two parts:

**Part 1: Some Visioning Exercises in the CGIAR in the Recent Past**

**Part 2: Some Recent Alignment Initiatives in the CGIAR**

## **Part 1: Some Visioning Exercises in the CGIAR in the Recent Past**

- a. The “Renewal of the CGIAR” Meeting: Lucerne Declaration, 1995
- b. The Third System Review(TSR) of the CGIAR, 1998
- c. Change Design and Management Team (CDMT) Report, 2001
- d. OED Meta-Evaluation Report, 2004
- e. CGIAR Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Task Force, 2005

### **a) The “Renewal of the CGIAR” Meeting: Lucerne Declaration, 1995**

#### **Some Key Recommendations**

##### *Programmatic*

- Focus on products that are IPGs
- Focus on Sub-Saharan Africa
- Establish committee of experts for advise on genetic resources policy

##### *Governance*

- Broaden membership base in developing countries
- Establish committees of NGOs and private sector to strengthen dialogue
- Informality important, do not establish CGIAR as formal organization, but strengthen decision making
- Ensure high quality scientific advice by TAC
- Establish an independent evaluation function reporting to CGIAR as a whole.

### **b) The Third System Review (TSR) of the CGIAR, 1998**

#### **Some Key Recommendations**

##### *Programmatic*

- Follow an integrated gene management approach with a single legal entity that holds patents.
- Organize an Integrated Natural Resource Management network.
- Build a collaborative program to strengthen capacity of NARs for policy research.

##### *Governance:*

- Formalize CGIAR structure through creation of a legal entity- constitute a new central Board as a non-profit public service organization.
- Maintain principles of member sovereignty, center autonomy and independent scientific advice, but there is need for individual member countries to harmonize their own national policies relevant to CGIAR business.

### **Decisions of CGIAR on TSR, 1999**

- Decision against creation of system-level legal entity to negotiate or hold patents on behalf of centers.
- Rejected the recommendation to create a single legal entity

### **c) Change Design and Management Team (CDMT) Report, 2001**

#### **Some Key Recommendations**

##### *Programmatic*

- Formulate and implement a few Global Challenge Programs to “open up” the CGIAR research agenda.
- Transform Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) into Science Council (SC) and redefine its role.

##### *Governance*

- Reduce annual general meetings of the Group from two to one
- Formulate an Executive Council (EC) representing shareholders to carry out delegated functions.
- Create a System Office with integrated communications function with Centers determining how to improve organization of services.
- Adopt an evolutionary approach to restructuring centers, and the CGIAR should set aside funds for voluntary restructuring.

### **Decisions Taken at the first AGM, October 2001**

- Hold only one AGM every year
- Create an Executive Council
- Formulate Challenge Programs
- Set up Science Council
- Set up System Office

### **d) OED Meta-Evaluation Report, 2004**

#### **Some Key Recommendations:**

##### *Programmatic:*

- Focus more on basic plant breeding and germplasm improvement; devolve that portion of adaptive/applied NRM research that does not generate global public goods to NARs.
- Slow down approval of new Challenge Programs to first see initial results of ongoing pilots.

##### *Governance:*

- Adopt a written charter and further analyze and debate the advantages/disadvantages of establishing the CGIAR as a separate legal entity.
- Make ExCo members more fully representative and accountable to the CGIAR membership.
- Increase efficiency of the System through appropriate consolidation, decentralization, streamlining and absorption of marginally effective centers based on management review.

## e) CGIAR Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Task Force, 2005

### **Some Key Recommendations:**

- Consolidate all CGIAR Centers and their activities into one global corporate entity.
- As a first step, consolidate the Centers headquartered in SSA into two global entities: one in West and Central Africa (WCA), and the other in East and Southern Africa (ESA).
- Implement research activities in SSA through two MTPs, one for WCA and the other for ESA.
- Commission other task forces to identify programmatic and structural alignment needs and opportunities in the remaining regions.
- For stepwise structural reform take following actions:
  - i. Until the formation of the global entities, develop in partnership with the SROs and NARS sub-regional MTPs for SSA, starting with CY2006.
  - ii. Request the SC to review the MTPs
  - iii. Request the Boards of IITA and WARDA to form a CGIAR global entity in WCA, starting with the establishment of a single Board.
  - iv. Establish in cooperation with ICRAF and ILRI Boards, a CGIAR global entity in ECA, following a corporate model and with ILRI and ICRAF as its initial constituent units.

### **Decisions and Follow Up by the CGIAR:**

- Roadmap approved at AGM05 includes
  - Programmatic alignment through sub regional MTPs with clear governance arrangements for sub regional MTP implementation
  - Centers to proceed with deliberate speed on corporate services alignment
  - Structural/governance alignment
  - Concerned centers (IITA, WARDA, ICRAF, ILRI) to report to each face to face meeting of ExCo on progress in implementing the CGIAR decisions.
- ExCo 10 following AGM05 monitored the progress on alignment activities in WCA and ESA, and urged the Centers that ‘additional concentrated efforts, at faster speed are required to implement decisions made by membership at AGM05.
- ExCo11 also monitored progress on alignment in SSA, discussed the two sub regional MTPs, and recognizing the value of an evolutionary approach to aligning Center activities in SSA urged the Centers and the Science Council to work closely to develop instruments for regional planning.
- At AGM06, the CGIAR highlighted the need to provide incentives to foster alignment incentives, while not “changing the requests, rules and incentives too often,” and also emphasized the need for clearer SSA sub regional MTPs that include both individual Center and all collective activities in SSA.

## **Part 2: Some Recent Alignment Initiatives in the CGIAR**

### **a. Alignment Initiatives at the System level**

#### **b. Alignment Initiatives among Centers**

### **a. Alignment Initiatives at the System level**

#### **1. Developing System Priorities - Focus on Programmatic Alignment**

- The CGIAR requested the interim Science Council (iSC) at AGM02 to lead an exercise to update the System's priorities, guided by a Vision and Strategy adopted in the 2000 CGIAR mid-term meeting. The Vision and Strategy document identified 7 planks that set broad guidelines for priority setting.
- The work on priority setting initiated by the iSC was continued by the newly organized SC. A new strategic framework for assessing system priorities was presented to ExCo in 2004.
- At AGM04, SC described the approach and process it adopted to define new system priority (SP) areas for research. It was a "multi-pronged approach which was both analytical and broadly consultative with stakeholders."
- The SP document was presented at ExCo8; a revised version was discussed and recommended for CGIAR approval at ExCo9. The SPs, which include 5 general priority areas and 20 sub-priorities, were approved by the CGIAR at AGM05.

#### **2. Member Coordination Forum, 2006**

- Exco ad hoc committee set up to move towards implementation of system priorities and coordinated funding. Expected to submit Final Report to ExCo 12.
- A Member Coordination Forum was held as part of the Business Meeting at AGM 06 to facilitate sharing of information on funding policies, identifying the challenges and opportunities in funding System Priorities and discussing possible initial steps in harmonizing of evaluation in the CGIAR.

### **b. Alignment Initiatives among Centers**

#### **1. The Alliance of CGIAR Centers, 2006**

In 2006, the Alliance of the CGIAR centers was formed to "respond collectively to development challenges and to operate more cost efficiently as a result of resource sharing." It is envisaged as a mechanism for Centers to achieve economies of scale through such measures as programmatic alignment and use of common services.

## **2. “Market Driven” Initiatives**

At AGM 05 a “market driven” approach was initiated to encourage alignment initiatives, and interested centers were asked to formulate alignment proposals that could receive special support from the CGIAR. A number of proposals have been received, as outlined below -some of which have already received funding support from a few Members.

### **1. IWMI-Worldfish**

- Focus- Mainly corporate services, some programmatic and governance elements also.
- Major Elements-
  - i. Set up a joint venture for aligning their finance, HR and IT policies. Shared HR Information Management System to also serve CIFOR, perhaps others as well.
  - ii. Research collaboration focus on wetland and fisheries in Mekong; basin synthesis of water productivity in Nile and Ganges etc.
  - iii. One joint Board member
- Major Supporters- World Bank, Canada

### **2. ILRI-ICRAF**

- Focus- Mainly corporate services and programmatic alignment; some governance elements also.
- Major Elements-
  - i. Joint Research Methods Group set up, proposal to share corporate services-common IT platforms, HR strategy and systems, common financial policies and harmonized procurement services.
  - ii. Develop a regional MTP for ESA, creation of a network of researchers in “innovation clusters” across centers and partners, coordinated by a hub unit that has responsibilities spread among several Focal Persons drawn from the centers with a single coordinator. This is the group that has been putting together the first Regional Plan for Collective Action. An interim coordinator hired.
  - iii. 2 common Board members (one of whom is CG nominee)
- Major Supporters- World Bank

### **3. IITA-WARDA**

- Focus- Mainly corporate services and programmatic alignment; some governance elements also.
- Major Elements-
  - i. Proposed alignment of corporate services, both centers have signed an MOU to share corporate services in Nigeria, Tanzania and Benin.
  - ii. Develop a regional MTP for WCA, an interim coordinator appointed.
  - iii. 2 common Board members (one of whom is CG nominee), Nominations committees holding joint meetings.
- Major Supporters- World Bank

#### **4. CIMMYT-ICARDA**

- Focus- programmatic
- Major Elements- focus on wheat improvement in CWANA, MOU signed at AGM 2005, joint appointment of Director for ICWIP,
- Major Supporters- being considered for financial support by some Members

#### **5. IRRI-WARDA-CIAT**

- Focus- programmatic focus on rice research for Africa
- Major Elements-improving and exchanging germplasm with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa-5 thematic groups identified- genomics, policy, seed, post- harvest and commodity chain, establish common platform for database sharing on rice, short-term exchange visits among scientists at the three centers, short term training for NARES scientists at centers,
- Major Supporters- expected support from Canada

#### **6. CIMMYT-IRRI**

- Focus- programmatic
- Major Elements-
  - i. Proposal to set up of Crop Research Informatics Laboratory (CRIL) for comparative analysis of data,
  - ii. Proposal on IPSA- Intensive Production Systems in Asia-focus on rice-maize systems to assess impact of introducing maize into intensive rice-based systems on environment,
  - iii. Proposal to set up Cereal System Knowledge Portal (CSKP) to align knowledge on rice, maize and wheat production systems.
  - iv. Appointment of a 4- member Joint Board Committee to oversee joint projects, one Common Board member.
- Major Supporters-under review

#### **Lessons Learnt So Far**

- CGIAR has been revisiting the issue of its structure and strategy a number of times in the past.
- Alignment has been on our agenda for a long time- both programmatic and also structural.
- Some basic principles have been important- donor sovereignty, consensus decision-making and center autonomy.
- Keeping in mind donor sovereignty and center autonomy, how can we be most efficient and effective- has been a recurring question.
- Past recommendations on single corporate body have been rejected.
- Evolutionary approach has been preferred.
- There have been many initiatives on alignment in the recent past- on all three fronts- programmatic, corporate services and governance/structural.
- Incentives are needed to keep up the momentum in alignment initiatives.