Restructuring ISNAR

Report of the CGIAR Team

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Dear Drs. Johnson and Reifschneider:

I am pleased to transmit to you the revised report of the Team that you appointed to develop a plan for restructuring the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR).

The Team initiated its deliberations at a meeting in London, January 12-13, 2003 at which the principles of the restructuring and a comprehensive set of options were developed. The Chairman of the 4th EPMR attended this meeting as a resource person to the Team and provided a valuable link to the background and findings of his Panel.

A period of intensive and widespread consultation followed, as required by our Terms of Reference. The Board, management and staff of ISNAR were consulted, as were a range of stakeholders including major donors, the World Bank, FAO, other CGIAR centres, national and regional research leaders and those with a close knowledge of the CGIAR and ISNAR in particular. I would like to use this opportunity to record my appreciation to all those we consulted for the generous manner in which shared their experience and insights.

The second meeting of the Team was held in Paris on April 10-11. On this occasion the Team reviewed all aspects of the assignment and developed its recommendations. The Team invited the Director General designate of ISNAR to meet with us and present his views. A draft report was circulated to the Team for comment, and importantly the draft was shared with the Directors General of IPGRI and IFPRI and with the DG designate.

It was these recommendations that were put before the ExCo at its meeting in Paris on May 16, 2003. At that meeting the ExCo gave its endorsement to Recommendations 1, 2, and 4a,b and c. In particular, the ExCo recommended that ISNAR not remain as a free-standing CGIAR center but that a restructured ISNAR Program be affiliated with an existing center through a transfer of governance. After extensive discussion the ExCo asked that the IRT review Recommendations 3, 4d and 5.

To accomplish this task the IRT conducted a wide consultation by email. This process culminated in a two-day meeting in Paris on August 18-19, 2003. For this meeting we had the participation of the Interim DG of ISNAR.

From this meeting the IRT developed a draft proposal that has been reviewed by all members of the team and the Directors General of three key centers. It is this revised report that I am now transmitting to you.

I am pleased to report that there was unanimous agreement among the Team on the recommendations that we are putting before you. Those recommendations are designed to ensure that some key activities are conducted in a sustainable manner, activities that we believe will enhance the contribution of investment in agricultural research by both the CGIAR and national programs.

Let me highlight the key messages. In the first place the Team has identified two important programmatic areas that in our judgement represent significant opportunities for producing international public goods and which might in the absence of the structure we have proposed be otherwise undersupplied. To deliver these activities we propose a new ISNAR Program governed by IFPRI. The headquarters of the program would be in Sub-Saharan Africa with close links to national research systems and sub-regional organisations, in order to achieve much greater decentralization.

It is important to stress that the recommendations involve a clean break from the existing structure of a stand-alone centre. Under our proposal, the entire governance of the program would pass to the Board of IFPRI and a director for the ISNAR Program would report to the DG of IFPRI. There would be no separate or Joint Board. We have however recommended the creation of a special Program Advisory Committee to advise the Board of IFPRI on all matters related to the budget, strategic direction and activities of the ISNAR Program.

The Team strongly recommends a rapid transition in which governance would be assigned to IFPRI as soon as possible following AGM03. We have been deeply conscious of the costs of uncertainty to both staff and stakeholders more broadly.

On behalf of the Team, let me thank you for the opportunity to undertake this task. We sincerely hope that the recommendations stemming from our report will prove useful in shaping a sustainable new ISNAR Program that will contribute effectively and efficiently to the goals of the CGIAR.

Yours sincerely

Grant M. Scobie

Chair

ISNAR Restructuring Team

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Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Program

The IRT recommends that a restructured ISNAR Program is built on two major themes.

- a. The primary theme should be to produce new knowledge, with strong international public good characteristics, which contributes to *institutional change* for enhancing the impact of agricultural research.
- b. The secondary theme should be to enhance the performance of agricultural research institutions through attention to their *organization and management*, with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.

Recommendation 2: Governance

The IRT recommends that:

- a. ISNAR should not remain as a free standing CGIAR center; and
- b. Governance of a restructured ISNAR Program should be undertaken through an alliance with an existing CGIAR center.

Recommendation 3: Alliance

The IRT recommends that:

- a. A re-structured ISNAR Program should be operated under IFPRI governance;
- b. The ISNAR Program should be maintained as an identifiable entity with a global perspective and strong integration between its two themes;
- c. The Board of IFPRI should be responsible for the oversight of the ISNAR Program;
- d. The IFPRI Board should be assisted in this task by a high level special Program Advisory Committee (PAC) for ISNAR. The PAC shall advise the IFPRI Board on the strategy, program of work and budget of the ISNAR Program. The initial composition of PAC should ensure some continuity from the ISNAR Board; and,
- e. For a period of at least 3 years, donors continue to identify funding for the ISNAR Program with the contribution for IFPRI, subject to the satisfactory evolution of the restructured ISNAR Program.

Recommendation 4: Location

The IRT recommends that:

- a. The ISNAR Program be conducted in a decentralized manner; and,
- b. Headquarters and directorate be established in Sub-Saharan Africa, either in Addis Ababa or Pretoria.

Recommendation 5: Transition

The IRT recommends that:

- a. Given the importance of refocusing and sustaining the program activities of ISNAR and minimising the costs of uncertainty to staff and stakeholders more broadly, there is an urgent need for a rapid resolution to the restructuring;
- The Boards and management of ISNAR and IFPRI establish a transition team to address key issues involved in implementing the recommendations of the IRT and for achieving a transfer of governance;
- c. The transition team should address such issues as financial and legal obligations of ISNAR;
- d. The ISNAR and IFPRI be invited to brief the CGIAR on the process and plans for the transition at AGM 2003;
- e. The transfer of governance be completed as soon as possible after the CGIAR reaches a decision on the restructuring (expected to be at AGM2003);
- f. The CGIAR through the Executive Council should establish a process to closely monitor the transition and evolution of the restructured ISNAR Program including periodic briefings by the transition team; and,
- g. During the transition period, donors should continue to provide the financial support needed for a successful transition and program redevelopment.

1 Context and Premises

1.1 Evolving Context of National Agricultural Research Systems

Investments in agricultural research in developing countries have been shown to have consistently high returns, averaging over 40 percent, and often higher than those of other public investments in agriculture. Yet, developing countries spend only 0.6 percent of their agricultural GDP on public research, as compared with 2.6 percent for industrialized countries. There is a strong case for both increasing the levels of investment in agricultural research in developing countries, as well as getting more "bang for the buck" for the limited amounts being spent on research. SNAR was founded to help achieve these objectives (particularly the latter), by helping strengthen national agricultural research systems (NARS) in developing countries.

During the last 10 years, ISNAR's emphasis shifted from an almost exclusive focus on national agricultural research organizations (NAROs) to a broader focus on national agricultural research systems (NARS). ISNAR expanded its potential clientele to recognize the pluralistic nature of the NARS which now embraces, in addition to NAROs, universities, the private sector (both for profit and non-profit), regional and sub-regional organizations (ROs and SROs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and even actors outside the agriculture sector. Indeed, others such as farmers' organizations and policy makers in various ministries critically determine major issues affecting institutional development.

Many now view NARS within an even wider innovation systems framework, recognizing the integration between research, extension and education organizations and broader sources of innovation, such as farmers themselves. This concept of an agricultural innovation system emphasizes a non-linear pattern of interaction and feedback between research and development, and the uptake of technology

While some NARS are stronger today than at the time ISNAR was created over 20 years ago, there are many, particularly in Africa, that are still weak and could benefit from the types of products and services that an ISNAR Program could offer. However, the demands are significantly different from those of 20 years ago, as the overall context within which agricultural research takes place has changed dramatically. Furthermore, alternative suppliers have emerged, meaning that the specific niche envisaged for ISNAR at its inception is no longer self-evident. As a consequence the traditional concept of NARS needs re-definition, taking into account the new environment, actors, challenges, and linkages. At the same time, the role of an international center in this arena needs redefining.

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¹ Much of the material cited in this section is from Byerlee, Derek and Gary Alex (2003) "National Agricultural Research Systems: Recent Developments and Key Challenges." Note prepared for the CGIAR Interim Science Council.

There have been a number of major developments in the external environment affecting ISNAR and the CGIAR over the last 10 years. NARS are undergoing a period of unprecedented challenges that are proceeding in different ways and at different speeds across regions and countries. Key developments include:

- the evolution and maturation of the ROs, SROs and GFAR;
- the almost exclusive focus on public NAROs has shifted to a focus on systems that include a broader range of actors, such as universities, ARIs, NGOs and the private sector:
- the concept of NARS has been broadened to provide focus on national agricultural innovation systems (NAIS), which highlights the purpose of research (to generate agricultural innovation) and acknowledges the contributions to agricultural innovation of actors such as farmers and NGOs;
- the desire to take advantage of new technologies (such as biotechnology and information and communication technology) is challenging many developing countries to adjust their existing legal, regulatory, policy and institutional frameworks;
- the private sector is now a stronger actor in agricultural innovation systems than in the 1980s, requiring clear definition of public vs. private roles in research and exploring ways of strengthening public-private research partnerships;
- a move towards more demand-led research agendas, with competitive bidding, putting increasing strain on budgets of the traditional NAROs;
- more research is conducted through networks and in a partnership mode than before, highlighting the need to focus attention on ways of making these institutional modes more effective;
- changes and reforms within public sector agriculture research due to reduced funding or outside pressure to decentralize the system; and
- a strengthened and enhanced capacity of some NARS on the one hand (China, Indonesia, India, Brazil, Uganda, Kenya) and weakening or stagnant NARS on the other.

In responding to these difficulties many NAROs have attempted to streamline research priorities, reform management and incentive systems and involve a broader range of actors in the research process. Reform from within, however, has been slow and often only partially successful.

Some of the new challenges facing NARS today include:

- 1. confronting new priorities in a rapidly changing world, with growing liberalization and globalisation (e.g., stronger demand for competitive and quality-conscious agriculture);
- 2. defining public and private roles—with the private sector increasingly serving the commercial farming sector, public funding must focus more sharply on the poor;

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² 4th ISNAR EPMR Report

³ For a diagrammatic representation of the changing patterns of public research funding taken from Byerlee and Alex (2003) see Appendix H.

- 3. developing partnerships and alliances, including public-private collaboration and forging of regional and international alliances;
- 4. strengthening the demand side of R&D to ensure research systems are more responsive and accountable to clients;
- 5. dealing with intellectual property rights (IPRs) to better access modern science and to gain access to genetic resources;
- 6. linking agricultural research policy to wider science and technology (S&T) policy, especially to R&D in other ministries;
- 7. making public institutions and funding more sustainable, via, among others, reforms of public research organizations; and
- 8. adapting to the changes, particularly within the more complex national innovation systems framework, with a greater number of actors and linkages.

These challenges are indeed formidable. In this context, a major challenge facing the CGIAR, and more specifically the new ISNAR Program, is to define the knowledge products and services required by its NARS partners. This is a first step in articulating the strategic priorities of a new ISNAR Program within the context of its comparative advantage as a CGIAR center with a mandate to focus on international public goods (IPGs).⁴

1.2 International Public Goods and ISNAR

The main objective of the CGIAR is to help generate IPGs through agricultural research and related activities. While there is little difficulty in classifying many knowledge products of ISNAR as IPGs and therefore, justifying CGIAR expenditures on them, the legitimacy of spending CGIAR funds on service activities is often questioned on the grounds that these do not represent IPGs.

Recent thinking on IPGs throws new light on the dimensions of this complex concept. While many activities of a service rature (such as capacity building) do not directly generate IPGs, they prepare the ground, and indeed are critical enabling factors, for better "consumption" of IPGs, and thereby contribute in a complementary fashion to the overall effectiveness of IPGs. For example, improving the management of national research institutions (such as through better planning) enables that institution to more effectively adapt, test and transfer a new elite plant variety (in this case, an IPG) to farmers' fields, with the concomitant link to poverty alleviation.

⁴ The IRT acknowledges that some steps have been taken by ISNAR in redefining its programs, but as stressed by the EPMR much remains to be done.

⁵ Morrisey, Oliver, Dirk Willem de Velde and Adrian Hewitt (2002) "Defining International Public Goods: Conceptual Issues." Overseas Development Institute, London http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/issues/GPG/ODI.rtf; World Bank (2001) "Global Development Finance." Washington.

In addition to their impact on the effectiveness of IPGs, many service activities lead to generation of national public goods (NPGs), in the sense that better functioning national research institutions already constitute a public good. There are also indirect international effects. NPGs reducing poverty in one country generate spillover effects in terms of international stability, which itself is an IPG.

If the service in question is provided to a regional institution (such as SROs) or an international effort (such as an international research network), this helps enhance an existing regional or international public good.

Thus, ISNAR's role need not necessarily be restricted only to research. The production of knowledge needs to be accompanied by a complementary strategy to identify and utilize the most promising opportunities for putting knowledge into practice. Action research, process consultation and advocacy are among important means that could help achieve this aim.

In short, the ISNAR Restructuring Team (IRT) does not subscribe to a sharp demarcation between research and services, a debate that has plagued ISNAR since its inception. Both are required, and play a complementary role. It should however be roted that whether both should be provided by an ISNAR-like international center is a separate matter. It hinges in part on the availability of alternative suppliers and the need for close linkages and feedback between research and services.

1.3 Key Premises of the Restructuring

Our analysis and recommendations are conditioned by a set of premises that (a) were provided to the IRT by the CGIAR; (b) were contained in the 4th External Program and Management Review (EPMR), as endorsed by the CGIAR; (c) emerged from the consultations conducted by the IRT or (d) were endorsed by consensus by the IRT as starting assumptions for our analysis. These constitute a backdrop to the analysis that follows and are listed below:

- 1. Business as usual is not acceptable.
- 2. Phasing out ISNAR should not be considered as an option.
- 3. Improving cost effectiveness is an important objective of the restructuring.
- 4. ISNAR activities should be carried out in a decentralized fashion—more so than at present.
- 5. The activities of ISNAR should have identifiable links to poverty alleviation. At the same time, closer links should be established with advanced research organizations in relevant disciplines, both in developing and industrialized countries.

- 6. The strategic focus of ISNAR should be on providing products and services emerging from insights gained from undertaking research with partners. These products and services should either be in the form of IPGs or should have strong links to IPGs.
- 7. The sectoral dimensions of agricultural research should be explicitly considered by ISNAR, which, heretofore had an exclusive focus on "agriculture" as narrowly defined. Fisheries, forestry, livestock, and water research institutions in developing countries are often behind "agriculture" in terms of their capacity, and are in even greater need of strengthening than agricultural research institutions.
- 8. About 20 percent of the CGIAR centers' expenditures are devoted to capacity building. ISNAR's efforts in capacity building should be better linked with the efforts of the other centers, which should be considered both a client and partner of ISNAR.
- 9. ISNAR should have closer links to partners in developing countries, and with advanced research organizations and development agencies. The historical partnership with FAO could be maintained and strengthened through biannual joint planning sessions.
- 10. ISNAR's program of activities should be much more tightly focussed and it should withdraw from areas seen as tangential to its main thrust of enhancing the contribution of agricultural research systems to poverty alleviation.

2 Priorities for an ISNAR Program

2.1 Demand for ISNAR-type Products and Services

Two basic assumptions underlie the continuing need for an ISNAR Program within the CGIAR. The first relates to individual organizations and their need for organizational and managerial strengthening to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. The second relates to the functional efficiency of the research system itself: Research systems must evolve via new institutional arrangements and, through broader stakeholder consultations and new types of partnerships, enhance the relevance and impact of agricultural research. Given today's environment and the challenges ahead, both kinds of changes are considered necessary for raising agricultural productivity and competitiveness in developing countries, which in turn enhances the contribution of agricultural research to poverty alleviation and food security, thereby addressing specific CGIAR goals.⁶

NAROs are the traditional clients of ISNAR. Some NAROs are quite advanced in both institutional and scientific development, while a large number are in a very fragile stage of development, lacking critical mass, political support, human resources and leadership capacity. Currently, the demand for different research organization, management and policy products varies enormously between these different types of NAROs. Although

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⁶ A simple model for considering how these programs contribute to enhancing the contribution of agricultural research is sketched in Appendix G.

NAROs remain central to most NARS in developing countries—and thereby will likely remain a primary client of ISNAR's new program—other organizations both within and outside the agricultural sector are playing a greater role in performing certain types of research.

The SROs in particular are emerging as key actors. SROs encompass—or have the potential to encompass—the diverse range of relevant stakeholders within the agricultural R&D systems of their regions. This provides a highly suitable context for enhancing institutional performance using an innovations systems framework in which the new ISNAR Program could operate. SROs provide the necessary platform at the regional level for introducing reforms in the way in which agricultural research is funded, prioritized, coordinated and implemented. This could also provide the impetus for broadening stakeholder involvement at the NARS level. The promising developments of the SROs in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) suggest these could serve as useful platforms for ISNAR's new program.⁷

Clearly, the range of demands from NAROs, SROs and other sets of clients, whether explicitly articulated or not, is likely to vastly outstrip ISNAR's capacity to deliver. The new ISNAR will need to make strategic choices in focusing its efforts on priority thrusts.

2.2 Products and Services

Because the CGIAR addresses constraints of international relevance, the new ISNAR Program must focus on generic knowledge products and services having a strong IPG character. More specific to its mandate, these should be related to products and services that enhance institutional performance (a) at the organization level; and, (b) at the level of national or regional agricultural innovation systems. ISNAR should refrain from offering services in direct support of institutional change particularly at the individual organizational level, unless such activities generate new insights and generic solutions of regional or global significance.

The IRT has defined three broad areas where a new ISNAR Program could potentially have significant impact through producing client-relevant knowledge products and services in the future. These are in: **organization and management**—with a focus on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of individual institutions; **institutional change**—with a strong focus on institutional arrangements and innovation systems more broadly; and **research policy**—with a focus on the broader sectoral issues that impact on the agricultural research. Table 1 provides a list of specific types of knowledge products and services under each of these broad areas considered to be of relevance to the range of clients that fall under ISNAR's purview. These should be considered indicative only.

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⁷ Geoffrey Mrema, pers. comm. 2003

⁸ The IRT lacked sufficient information and/or analysis to prioritize across these products and services with respect to different ISNAR clients in different regions. Articulating more specific priorities and regional focus strategies are tasks more appropriately undertaken by a new ISNAR program team.

2.2.1 Organization and Management (O&M)

To make agricultural research more effective and relevant, ISNAR has traditionally focused its attention on addressing two major constraints that inhibit institutional performance: (a) lack of knowledge and (b) lack of human resource capacity. Its efforts to develop O&M guidelines and improved practices (e.g., on project management, priority setting) and its training and development of training materials reflect the need and perceived opportunity for strengthening agricultural research institutions in developing countries. These activities have collectively aimed at enhancing at the institute level the capacity for agricultural research to generate and disseminate relevant technologies and polices. The IRT believes many of these knowledge products are still highly relevant to individual institutions—not only to NAROs but also to other actors within the NARS as they face the challenges ahead. This has particular relevance to those in SSA.

2.2.2 Institutional change and innovation systems

The new challenges facing NARS make it clear that there are numerous other constraints that go beyond organizational efficiency aspects. These have already been alluded to in the list of challenges and many of them address, in addition to the two constraints listed above, two other constraints: (c) inadequate incentive structures; and, (d) ineffective institutional arrangements (including inward looking institutional cultures that prevent organizational change from within). These might relate to, for example, a lack of understanding of how agricultural research institutions and agricultural research systems function at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. A better understanding of these processes would provide the principles upon which new and more effective institutions and institutional arrangements could be designed.

Theoretical and analytical work on agricultural innovation systems in developing countries would likewise provide essential information on which guidelines for fostering institutional change could be built. Analysis of case studies of effective public-private partnerships and alliances would provide the basis for establishing new models and guidelines for R&D partnerships. These are just some of the products and services that ISNAR's clients would find useful as they seek more efficient ways of funding, prioritizing and implementing their collective research programs. This is particularly relevant to the ROs and SROs as they emerge and become increasingly important on the scene.

It should be noted that institutional change is not restricted solely to traditional agricultural research systems. Rather, in keeping with the expansion in 1992 of the CGIAR to include forestry, agro-forestry, fisheries and water research, opportunities exist for research into institutional change that would enhance the productivity of research agencies in these areas.

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⁹ 4th ISNAR EPMR Report.

2.2.3 Agricultural Research Policy

The effectiveness of agricultural research is often hindered, or sometimes enhanced, by factors such as national policies, international regulatory frameworks and other effects such as liberalization and globalization. Although policy and sectoral analysis once constituted an important and effective area of ISNAR activity, it has more recently failed to generate in this area the type of outputs expected of an international center. Nevertheless, the demand for new knowledge of policy making processes, analyses of trends affecting investments in agricultural research and other types of general information on policies remains high, irrespective of whether a new ISNAR Program provides it.

The list of examples provided in Table 1 encompasses a set of generic knowledge products and services of potential relevance to primary clients without respect to whether an ISNAR Program, or some other alternative supplier, might be best positioned to produce these.

2.3 Alternative Suppliers

A list of alternative suppliers of the specific "ISNAR-type" knowledge products and services are included in Table 2. This must be viewed as indicative, particularly as alternative suppliers may have expertise in one component of a product but not in others. Nevertheless, based on the information provided by ISNAR staff and management, and drawing on both the 4th ISNAR EPMR report and consultations with a range of key stakeholders and clients, the following is IRT's assessment of the alternative suppliers and their major strengths:

- IFPRI (research policy analysis; priority setting methodologies; networks; advocacy);
- Other CGIAR Centers (policy analysis for specific commodity focus areas; IPR issues);
- FAO (institutional strengthening, research mgmt best practices, training material development, capacity building, knowledge sharing, technical assistance, advisory services and advocacy);
- UN agencies, e.g., UNDP/UNEP/UNIDO/WHO (biotechology/biosafety, HIV-AIDS activities);
- World Bank and regional development banks (analytical policy research, capacity building, knowledge sharing);
- Universities/ARIs (research management and policy, training material development, analytical research on institutional development and change; innovation systems analysis; biotechnology);
- ROs/SROs (advocacy, knowledge sharing).

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¹⁰ 4th ISNAR EPMR Report.

Table 1: ISNAR-type Knowledge Products and Services

| Major Theme | Focus | Examples | Alternative Suppliers |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Organization and Management | Organization | Best practices/advice in specific areas of O&M, e.g., IPR framework, reform programs, biotechology/biosafety Research management tools and guidelines (e.g., planning, priority setting, assessment) Enhanced capacity for effective O&M of agricultural research systems, e.g., through training and development of training materials Disseminating information/new knowledge, e.g., through networks, website, and training | WB, FAO, IFPRI, ISAAA, ARIS FAO, IFPRI, GTZ, SPIA FAO, NARS, private consultants, SROs FAO, ISNAR, other CGIAR centers, |
| | | notivorito, wobsito, and training | many others |
| Institutional Change | Innovation system | New understanding of how agricultural research institutions and systems function (i.e., AKIS) in developing countries at national, sub-regional and regional levels Conceptual and analytical frameworks for agricultural innovation systems in developing countries Established principles and best practices for carrying out reforms aimed at enhancing institutional performance, e.g. for effective delivery and utilization of new knowledge; for designing specific types of institutions; for strengthening agricultural research system linkages new funding (e.g., competitive or matching grants), prioritizing and implementation mechanisms. Guidelines for R&D partnerships and alliances; public-private partnership models in agricultural research; public vs. private goods component of agricultural research specified | Universities and ARIs, development Agencies, WB, FAO Universities and ARIs WB, FAO, ARIs |
| | | Specific information on/analyses of key topics (biotechnology, IPR, bio-safety, etc.) | IFPRI, ISAAA, FAO, universities and ARIs |
| | | Guidelines for facilitating institutional change for SROs: bringing partners together and building consensus; developing, communities of practice; deriving efficient division of labour among partners. | Management consultancy firms |
| | | Evaluation of agricultural research system reforms in developing countries with implications for policies that encourage more demand-led, impact-oriented agricultural research at the national and regional levels, e.g., policies related to funding, prioritizing and implementing agricultural research Disseminating information/new knowledge, e.g., through networks, website and training, and advocacy | ARIs, universities |
| Agricultural Research Policy | Meta-level or sector | Trends and analyses of factors influencing investments in agricultural research (public and private) in developing countries, e.g., ASTI | IFPRI, ARIS |
| | | New understanding of agricultural research policy making and policy implementation processes | ARIs, universities |
| | | Meta-analyses related to the efficacy and impact of agricultural research (vis-à-vis other development investments). | WB, ARIS, FAO |
| | | Disseminating information/new knowledge, e.g., through networks, website and training Advocacy for promoting stronger commitments to R&D and implementing research reforms | IFPRI, universities/ARIs IFPRI, WB, RO/SROs, FAO |

- Private sector (advisory services, biotechnology, analytical work, best practices, training in research and innovation management);
- Large NARS, e.g., EMBRAPA, ICAR (advisory services, management tools and processes, training material development);
- National development agencies/donors (training material development, institutional development); and
- Others: CIHEAM, CIRAD, IDRC, IFDC, WIPO, CTA, IICD (many products and services).

There are many alternative suppliers of "ISNAR-type" products and services, emphasizing the need for careful assessment and definition of ISNAR's niche and comparative advantage. Although this list may create the appearance of a plethora of alternate sources of supply, a closer analysis would reveal that not all have the focus and mandate of a CGIAR center with its mission of poverty eradication, food security and environmental conservation.

2.4 Priorities for the New ISNAR Program

In the time available to the IRT, it has been possible to carry out only a cursory analysis of the demand for and supply of "ISNAR-type" products and services ¹¹. Table 2 summarizes this analysis, which indicates the relative strengths and coverage by the major classes of alternative suppliers, including ISNAR, under the three broad "ISNAR-type" products and services. The capacities of alternative suppliers may be summarized as follows: strong capacity for generating products and services related to improving **O&M** at the institute level, strong capacity for knowledge products and advocacy related to **research policy** and somewhat more limited to moderate capacity for generating and disseminating knowledge and service products related to **institutional change** within an innovation systems context. Universities and other ARIs are particularly strong in the latter.

Historically, ISNAR's major emphasis has been in the first two areas, O&M and research policy, but more recently has given serious attention to institutional change and innovation systems. Currently, ISNAR's capacity is considered good with respect to O&M, limited with respect to institutional development and weak in research policy.

Based on this assessment, the IRT concludes that the new ISNAR should focus on two major themes: **Institutional Change**, and **Organization and Management**. The primary one would be on institutional change within the context of innovation systems framework. This is an area where ISNAR has done some promising preliminary work both conceptually (in its strategic planning process) and empirically (most notably in MTP 2). It

¹¹ A more comprehensive assessment of both clients' demands and alternative suppliers' capacities including cost effectiveness must surely be a first priority activity of a new ISNAR program.

¹² The IRT notes the productive joint activity of ISNAR and IFPRI in developing the Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators database

¹³ A simple model for considering how these programs contribute to enhancing the contribution of agricultural research is sketched in Appendix G.

is also likely to be an area where informational demands from a range of clients and donor stakeholders are likely to rise rapidly.

Table 2: Capacity of Alternative Suppliers (AS) to Produce ISNAR-type Knowledge Products and Services

| Alternative Suppliers | Organization and Institutional Change Management | | Research Policy | |
|---|---|---------------------|-----------------|--|
| Focus | Organization | Innovation system | Sector | |
| IFPRI and other CGIAR Centers | Х* | XX | XXXX | |
| Universities and other ARIs | XX | XXX | XXX | |
| FAO | XXX | Х | XX | |
| Other UN agencies/WTO | - | - | XXX | |
| Multi-lateral development organizations (WB,IADB) | X | XX | XX | |
| National development organizations/donors | X | Х | - | |
| Large NARS and GFAR/Ros/SROs | XX | - | Х | |
| Private consultants/firms | XXXX | - | Х | |
| Others | XX | Х | Х | |
| AS Relative Capacity | Strong | limited to moderate | strong | |
| Current ISNAR Capacity | Good | Limited | weak | |
| New ISNAR Program Emphasis | reduce (to 20-30%) | strengthen (70-80%) | None | |

^{*}x limited capacity
xx moderate capacity
xxx good capacity
xxxx strong capacity

Changes in the organization and management of existing agricultural research agencies, as well as changes in the institutional arrangements in the broader agricultural innovation system, can together result in greater productivity gains from any given level of investment in research. Those productivity gains translate into higher real incomes and lower real prices for food, which eventually contribute to poverty alleviation. To the extent that the productivity of existing investment in research is enhanced by institutional change, there can be additional awareness or demonstration effects, encouraging policy-makers to increase the funding of research.

The IRT considers that it is precisely through enhancing the contribution of agricultural research to improved productivity that ISNAR can add value to the existing investments in national and international research; in short, complementing the investment of others to ensure it has the maximum possible impact on poverty alleviation.

¹⁴ For a striking example of the impact of institutional reforms on agricultural productivity growth see McMillan, John, John Whalley and Lijing Zhu (1989) "The Impact of China's Economic Reforms on Agricultural Productivity Growth." *Journal of Political Economy* 97(4): 781-806.

Institutional change is an exceedingly broad field where many other ARIs and universities are now intensively engaged, though perhaps not always as much in the developing country context, nor with the CGIAR focus on the poor. The challenge for the ISNAR Program will be to (a) build in-house capacity for analytical and action research in agricultural innovation systems applied to developing countries problems, and (b) form strategic alliances with ARIs, including top business management colleges (e.g., Asian Institute of Management), universities, key development organizations (World Bank and FAO) and with SROs in implementing a credible strategic research agenda in this area. In the future, The IRT envisages that this would constitute some 70 – 80 percent of the new ISNAR Program's effort. The growing complexity of the knowledge systems in agriculture and natural resource management increasingly calls for an integrated network approach rather than a traditional CGIAR Center approach.

The second major theme is O&M, specifically, in the production of management tools and guidelines and the development of learning and training material. This is widely recognized to be the current strength of ISNAR. But it is an area where there are many and growing numbers of alternative suppliers in universities, specialized management institutes, FAO, and, increasingly, in some of the larger NARS. The IRT considers that the impact of the O&M program would be achieved mainly through the delivery of services by these alternative suppliers, drawing on ISNAR's products in this field (e.g., management tools, guidelines, training materials). The IRT recommends that in the future, O&M activities would constitute a relatively smaller part of ISNAR's agenda (about 20-30 percent) and would concentrate its efforts in SSA where the need is greatest.

The IRT wishes to stress that two proposed themes (Theme 1: Organization and Management; and Theme 2: Institutional Change) are not separate entities, but rather parts of an integrated research-based strategy.

Given the many alternative suppliers with considerable disciplinary expertise in research policy—the third "ISNAR-type" product and service class, and given ISNAR's current capacity in this area, the IRT feels that research on research policy should not at this point be part of the new core ISNAR Program. The opportunity cost, in terms of foregone investments and attention to the other areas seems, in the IRT's view, too high. There are other suppliers, including IFPRI, universities and other ARIs, that are better positioned to take up researchable issues in this area.

Recommendation 1: Program

The IRT recommends that a restructured ISNAR Program is built on two major themes.

- a. The primary theme should be to produce new knowledge, with strong international public good characteristics, which contributes to *institutional change* for enhancing the impact of agricultural research.
- b. The secondary theme should be to enhance the performance of agricultural research institutions through attention to their *organization and management*, with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.

3 Restructuring Options

3.1 Governance Options

There are two broad classes of governance options: whether to remain as a free-standing CGIAR center (as in the present structure of ISNAR) or whether to seek some type of merger.

The IRT considered that, in the light of:

- a. the EPMR's conclusions that a complete re-building of staff, management and board would be necessary to ensure effectiveness;
- b. the clear directive the CGIAR had given that "business as usual was not acceptable";
- the current center with a likely total budget in the range of US\$6-8m per annum could not expect to carry the overhead costs typically associated with a stand-alone CGIAR center and remain efficient; and
- d. the availability of competent institutions, within and outside the CGIAR, with whom ISNAR could enter into a programmatic and administrative alliance with,

remaining as a free-standing (i.e., self-governing) center was not a viable option.

It was therefore deemed necessary that some type of affiliation with another organization would be needed to ensure that the essential programmatic issues could be sustainably addressed.

In broad terms, the IRT first considered whether such an affiliation should be sought with an organization outside the CGIAR or with another CGIAR center. Clearly there exists a wide range of possible candidates for affiliation outside the CGIAR, and the IRT made no attempt to canvas a comprehensive set of options. However two obvious possibilities

arose: with FAO and with GFAR. The IRT noted that GFAR was not an executing agency, and furthermore its legal structure would not easily lend itself to a formal relation with an ISNAR Program.

The case for an affiliation within FAO has some immediate appeal, given their historical ties to ISNAR and the broad mandate of FAO, which arguably encompasses many of the potential thematic areas of an ISNAR-type program. Additionally, FAO hosts the GFAR secretariat in Rome, and provides support to regional organisations of NARS (AARINENA, APAARI and FARA).

However, in the judgement of the IRT, the research based nature of ISNAR's work would not mesh easily into the organizational culture of FAO, and a merger with FAO could lead to a loss of the unique identity of the ISNAR Program. Instead, the IRT proposes a biannual joint planning session with FAO and GFAR in order to benefit from complementarities in the programs and avoid duplication. Based on these considerations, the IRT concluded that an affiliation would be more appropriately sought within the CGIAR. Furthermore, many of the other centers have an involvement with matters related to institutional change and the IRT considers that the new ISNAR Program should develop and maintain strong connections with the work in other centers.

3.2 Potential Partners for an Alliance

Table 3 sets out the overall structure of decision-making that was adopted by the IRT. In considering affiliation with a CGIAR center, three types of possible relationship were identified.

The first, denoted *Unification* involves the complete merger of two institutions and the creation of a new center. The merger of ILCA and ILRAD leading to the creation of ILRI is an example of such a merger. This option was not considered as appropriate because it would have taken the IRT outside its Terms of Reference, which explicitly instructed the Team that the option of phasing out ISNAR was not to be considered.

Table 3: Governance Options

| | | B. Affiliation with another Organization | | |
|-----------------|----------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| | B.1 With a Non | B.2 Merger with another CGIAR Center | | |
| A. Freestanding | e.g. FAO | Type of Merger | Examples | |
| CGIAR Center | | a. Unification | ILCA + ILRAD = ILRI | |
| | | b. Acquisition | IBSRAM acquired by IWMI | |
| | | c. Alliance | CIAT + TSBF | |
| | | | IPGRI + INIBAP | |

A second type of affiliation identified by the IRT was *Acquisition* by another center, as was the case of the absorption of IBSRAM into IWMI. Again this would have implied a complete loss of identity of ISNAR and could have been interpreted as not consistent with the Terms of Reference of the IRT.

The IRT concluded that it would be possible to preserve the identity of an ISNAR Program while achieving greater cost-effectiveness by forming an *Alliance* with another center. This would preserve for the ISNAR Program the advantages of being part of the CGIAR.

Recommendation 2: Governance

The IRT recommends that:

- a. ISNAR should not remain as a free standing CGIAR center; and
- b. governance of a restructured ISNAR Program be undertaken through an alliance with an existing CGIAR center.

In considering the potential alliances within the set of CGIAR centers, the IRT focussed on three main options. These options, which emerged as the most promising during the course of discussions with stakeholders, including the CGIAR centres themselves, were alliances with IPGRI, IFPRI or ILRI.

In seeking to narrow down these options and provide a structure for the deliberations, the IRT initially posed three questions:

- Is the existing mandate and mission of the potential "host" center sufficiently broad to reasonably encompass the mandate of the ISNAR Program?
- Given their mandates and missions, to what extent do the actual programmes of the potential host involve activities that would have a reasonably close relation with those envisaged for the restructured ISNAR Program?
- What is the extent of existing collaborative activities?

A simple ordinal scaling of these criteria for three potential hosts is summarized in Table 4. It must be stressed that the scaling is purely relative amongst the three centers selected for this comparison and does not in anyway pretend to be an absolute measure.¹⁵

The results of this broad screening suggest that IPGRI and IFPRI appear to have a stronger basis for building a potential alliance with an ISNAR Program than does ILRI with its more specific focus. However, the IRT would stress that given the broader innovation systems perspective of ILRI's new strategy and the proposed location of the ISNAR Program in SSA, then we see considerable merit in the new ISNAR Program building

¹⁵ A ranking of High (***) does not necessarily mean that there is a high degree of collaborative activity for example, but merely the extent of collaborative activity with one center is, in the judgement of the IRT, greater than with the others.

strong linkages with CGIAR centres and in particular those whose work focuses in major part on Africa.

Table 4: Relation between the ISNAR mandate, program and activities and potential host centers within the CGIAR

| Potential Alliance with: | How compatible are the mandates? | How close is the programmatic "fit"? | What is the extent of existing collaborative activity? |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| IPGRI | ** | ** | ** |
| IFPRI | *** | *** | *** |
| ILRI | * | * | * |

^{***} High **Moderate *Low 0 None

Underlying the summary tabulation in Table 4 are more specific considerations with respect to these centres as possible hosts for a new ISNAR Program. In addition to carefully examining complementarities between mandates missions and current programmatic foci of the three centers, the IRT also considered more specific issues including the orientation of the center (research or service), resident intellectual capital, relevant partnerships and linkages to ARIs and NARS, and geographic focus. Table 5 summarizes the apparent advantages of each of the proposed alliances.

Table 5: The Advantages of an ISNAR Alliance with IPGRI, IFPRI and ILRI

| IPGRI | IFPRI | ILRI |
|--|--|--|
| Service-oriented center | Strong research and IPG focus | Research focus with HQ and major operations in SSA |
| | Excellent track record and relevant intellectual capital | |
| Highly decentralized | Strong linkages with universities and other advanced research institutes | Good partnerships with regional NARS and private sector |
| | Institutional change focus falls easily within the overarching objective 'Food Systems Innovations'; 3 of 4 IFPRI's research divisions have strong 'institutional research' components | Innovation systems an area of increasing emphasis would bring in a 'sector' perspective to research system innovations |
| Compatibility with IBS/IPR; could easily house CAS | Significant past and on-going joint project activities with ISNAR: ASTI, priority setting, IBS/IPR; HIV | Some collaboration with ISNAR thus far |
| Capacity building is a major emphasis; mutual benefits in training | Explicitly identifies capacity strengthening and strengthening of research institutes within its Mission | Emphasis on strengthening livestock research capacity in SSA |
| Could provide governance and administrative support in a cost effective manner | Establishing a Pretoria regional office – one of the principal candidate locations for the new ISNAR Program | Offer to set up ISNAR HQ in Adis Ababa – immediate and very cost effective administrative and governance support structure |
| Experience with the managing an affiliated program (INIBAP) | Increasing focus on SSA, but retains global mandate | Primarily SSA focused |
| Other: | New strategy envisages much greater | |

decentralization – presents an ideal opportunity for IFPRI

Close links to FAOMinimal legal issues

On the basis of this analysis, the IRT concludes that the strongest case for an alliance is with IFPRI, followed (at a distance) by IPGRI and ILRI. The formation of such an alliance does not preclude the possibility that the ISNAR Program of IFPRI could not be established at the ILRI Addis Ababa campus. The IRT has endeavoured to maintain a clear separation between a co-hosting role and a governance role. This issue is further explored in Section 4.

In considering the alliance with IFPRI, it is instructive to reflect briefly on the evolution of the CGIAR system. The first generation centers (IRRI, CIMMYT, CIAT and IITA) were focused primarily on addressing biophysical constraints to the output of selected commodities. A second set of centers (ICRISAT, ICARDA, CIP, and ILCA) were added to address agricultural systems more broadly, and the sustainable management of natural resources. In addition, it was recognized that even if the underlying constraints to increasing agricultural output were removed and sustainable resource management systems established (reflected in the subsequent creation of CIFOR, IPGRI, ICLARM and IWMI), there was still no assurance that impact on agricultural output and poverty alleviation would automatically follow.

In the first place the underlying capacity of the national agricultural research systems in many cases was limited, and second, the policy settings within the agricultural sector and more broadly of national economic policy were not necessarily conducive to the uptake and dissemination of the technological changes that the combined efforts of the CGIAR centers and their national partners were capable of generating.

The incorporation of two further centers into the CGIAR was designed to address these constraints: ISNAR on the one hand to strengthen national agricultural research capacities, and IFPRI on the other to contribute knowledge that would lead to more favorable policy settings. In the course of the development and evolution of programs in these two centers increasing attention was paid to the broader contexts in which the agricultural research and policy issues are addressed. This led inevitably in both cases to a greater focus on institutional change and development, resulting in a growing area of common interest to both centers. The IRT considers that bringing the ISNAR Program into IFPRI would be a logical step in exploiting this evolving complementarity.

As noted in the 4th EPMR for ISNAR, while the center has indicated its intentions to structure its activities around knowledge systems, the current mix of staffing capacities and linkages to other research agencies are unlikely to be adequate to achieve that aim. By linking more closely with the intellectual capital and networks of IFPRI, the IRT considers that the ISNAR Program would be in a much stronger position to address the new challenges that it confronts (as outlined in Section 1 of this report) and take advantage of strong thematic complementarities (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Potential linkages between IFPRI's 12 Research Themes and ISNAR's Themes

IFPRI

Global food situation and scenarios of policy risks and opportunities

Globalization, retail food industries and trade negotiations related to food and agriculture

Managing natural resources of particular importance to food, nutrition, and agriculture corresponding to climatic change

Food system in disaster prevention and relief, and rebuilding after crises

Appropriate roles of state, market, and civil society in food, agriculture, nutrition, and natural resource management policy

Food and water safety policies

Policies addressing hidden hunger, enhanced food and diet quality for poor people, and the nutrition transition in developing countries

Policies and interventions for sustainable poverty reduction and nutrition improvement

Cross-cutting research on country and regional food, nutrition and agricultural strategies

Food - and nutrition-related science and technology policy serving poor people

The future of smallholder farming in efficient and equitable food systems

Urban-rural linkages and non-farm rural development

ISNAR

International public goods that contribute to institutional changes which enhance the impact of agricultural research

Organization and management of agricultural research institutions, with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa

Research policy for agriculture and related sectors



Under the proposed alliance, the entire governance of ISNAR would be transferred by its Board to the Board of Trustees of IFPRI. The ISNAR Program would retain its identity in a manner analogous to TSBF's relationship to CIAT. It would be under the leadership of a Program Director who would report to the Director General of IFPRI.

To facilitate the operation of the ISNAR Program within the IFPRI structure it would be useful to create a high level program advisory committee (PAC) on ISNAR. This would provide direct oversight of the Program and advise IFPRI's Board on ISNAR matters. The IRT considers that this PAC should be chaired by a member of the IFPRI Board. The membership could include some members of the current ISNAR Board to provide continuity, together with other external stakeholders as appropriate. Consideration should be given as to whether the historical link between ISNAR and FAO could be maintained by having a FAO observer as a member of the PAC.

The presence of this PAC will ensure that the programmatic continuity and integrity of ISNAR is not compromised while at the same time the Board of IFPRI would have the support necessary to provide both governance and programmatic oversight. Furthermore, through appropriate membership, the advisory committee can play a role in linking the ISNAR Program to its clients and partners. Figure 2 sets out the structure of the governance arrangements recommended by the IRT.

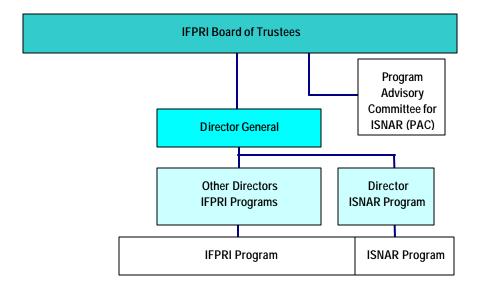


Figure 2: Recommended Governance for the Alliance of ISNAR with IFPRI

The IRT considers that this affiliation would contribute substantially to ensuring that the ISNAR Program remains viable. It envisages that it would represent a cost-effective way for a relatively modest ISNAR Program to operate. It would rely to a large extent on the existing structure of finance and administration, public awareness, communications, publications, etc, at IFPRI, that in large measure has the installed capacity to handle an additional program in a cost effective manner. The ISNAR Program would not require its

own staff in communication, information systems, web management, human resources, accounting and finance or auditing.

Recommendation 3: Alliance

The IRT recommends that:

- a. A re-structured ISNAR Program should be operated under IFPRI governance;
- b. The ISNAR Program should be maintained as an identifiable entity with a global perspective and strong integration between its two themes;
- c. The Board of IFPRI should be responsible for the oversight of the ISNAR Program;
- d. The IFPRI Board should be assisted in this task by a high level special Program Advisory Committee (PAC) for ISNAR. The PAC shall advise the IFPRI Board on the strategy, program of work and budget of the ISNAR Program. The initial composition of PAC should ensure some continuity from the ISNAR Board; and,
- e. For a period of at least 3 years, donors continue to identify funding for the ISNAR Program with the contribution for IFPRI, subject to the satisfactory evolution of the restructured ISNAR Program.

4 Location

Before addressing location questions, the IRT considered the **mode of operation** of the future ISNAR Program. The following emerged as the key features that should be taken into account:

- The mode of operation should be consistent with and supportive of activities aimed at producing IPGs.
- The mode of operation should be conducive to actively delivering products and services.
- An action research mode would be the principal norm in most activities, with learning as a major objective of service activities.
- Activities should reinforce the links among the two major ISNAR themes and between the ISNAR and IFPRI themes.
- Offer a clear portfolio of products at decentralized units.
- While the IRT considers that close working relations are necessary with the SROs to foster relevance and enhance delivery, decentralized units co-located with SROs must still retain autonomy and avoid becoming solely service units to the host agencies.

With the modest resources available to the program in the medium term, a conscious
effort will be needed to avoid an excessive number of locations that would leave few
effective researchers at any one site and result in a loss of critical mass, thematic
cohesion and ultimately output and impact.

With these principles in mind, the IRT took into account the following additional factors in considering the location options:

- The importance of Sub-Saharan Africa as a region demanding increased attention
- The need to develop close relations with partners
- Facilities for communication and transport
- Attractiveness for staff recruitment and retention
- Proximity to other centers of excellence, universities, think-tanks and agricultural development agencies.

In the first instance the IRT was cognizant of a need for increased attention to SSA, which had been widely signalled both within the CGIAR and more broadly in the consultations that the IRT held. On this basis, it was concluded that the headquarters and directorate of the ISNAR Program, with the nucleus of staff needed for both program themes, should be located in SSA.

Three possible locations were considered: Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Pretoria (South Africa) and Nairobi (Kenya). ISNAR had received formal invitations from institutions that could host ISNAR in Addis Ababa and Pretoria.

- All have headquarters of pan African or international institutions
- All have access to communication and transport facilities
- All have advantages for internationally recruited staff.

An important advantage of these locations is that existing host country agreements granting privileges and immunities are in place. In the case of **Pretoria**, ISNAR has already an office in Pretoria and is operating under a full host country agreement with the Government of RSA. No further legal requirements are needed to expand the operations in this hub. Furthermore, the National Department of Agriculture has extended a very welcoming invitation for the headquarters the ISNAR Program to be based there. It is making provision for expanded physical facilities at its headquarters campus to accommodate planned expansion of international activities by a number of organizations. In addition, IWMI, which has an office in RSA has offered to collaborate with ISNAR in terms of co-location and administrative support.

Similarly, at **Addis Ababa**, ILRI has a comprehensive host country agreement with the Government of Ethiopia, which allows it to locate affiliated international Organizations on its campus and extend to them the full privileges and immunities associated with an

¹⁶ Furthermore, given the appointment of a Kenyan national as Director, it was generally seen as advisable to avoid, if possible, placing a host country national as director of the program.

international agreement. The headquarters of two of the most important African policy institutions are located in Addis Ababa, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). NePAD, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, will be implemented through AU. Addis Ababa's sphere influence also encompasses the Middle East and Northern Africa as well as Sub-Saharan Africa, thus providing an appropriate platform for an institute with a mandate going beyond SSA. The IRT understands that the GoE has indicated its enthusiasm for having the headquarters of the ISNAR Program located here.

In addition, the following CG centers have staff based at the ILRI campus in Addis Ababa or are considering placing staff as part of joint collaborative research activities: CIMMYT, ICIPE, CIAT, IWMI, IFPRI and ICRAF. These arrangements are transforming the campus into a multi-institutional venue for collaborative research. The Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization has its headquarters adjoining the ILRI campus with whom excellent cooperation exists.

The ILRI campus has extensive facilities, which would be available immediately and would minimize the establishment costs at a new location for the ISNAR Program. ¹⁷ In discussions with the IRT, ILRI indicated that it would make all facilities available on a shared costs basis and provide a range of other services such as accounting, communications and purchasing at the standard CGIAR inter-center overhead rate.

With respect to **Nairobi**, the headquarters of two CGIAR centers are already located there, which is a major plus (although this could be seen by some as a minus). A major advantage of Nairobi is that the ISNAR Program could be made part of the administrative alliance that already exists between ILRI and ICRAF. Also, Nairobi (like Pretoria) offers an advantage in terms of the synergies that could be generated from the availability of significant complementary sources of knowledge (including the two CGIAR centers). A disadvantage of Nairobi is that it would not allow a wider spread of the CGIAR System's resources among developing countries.

In addition to the headquarters location, it is envisaged that ISNAR would have other nodes associated with SROs in Africa. The location in Pretoria could be a base for the Southern region, while ASARECA in Entebbe would constitute a most viable partner, and has indicated its willingness to have an affiliated ISNAR group. The possibilities in West Africa should be further explored. The IRT notes that an invitation has been extended by INRA in Morocco and urges the new management of the ISNAR Program to consider this.

The IRT has not formed a specific recommendation concerning the extent of ISNAR activities in Latin America, Asia, and CWANA. It considers that both ISNAR themes would have a global focus, but place highest priority on Africa. The coverage of the other regions may need to be gradual, depending on resource availability and opportunities. IFPRI's

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¹⁷ The ILRI campus offers offices, library, information/communications infrastructure, IVDN connections large and small auditoria, meeting rooms, 57 hostel rooms and 20 staff houses, cafeteria, sports facilities (swimming pool, gym, tennis and squash courts), health clinic and banking facilities.

vision of how it would expand its presence and activities in the various regions would also affect the pace with which ISNAR could develop its activities outside SSA. In any event, it is our judgement that both the principal themes of ISNAR would benefit from drawing on developments in all developing country regions, especially from the larger countries, and the IRT notes the invitation from China in that regard.

The IRT believes there would be substantial synergies from continuing to operate the IBS activities out of IFPRI in Washington, D.C. and transferring CAS to IPGRI in Rome.

Finally, the IRT notes that a vibrant program on Institutional Change will require a significant broadening and deepening of the human capital available to ISNAR. Not all of this capacity can be expected to be housed in one small program, and the ISNAR Program will need to build strong linkages to ARIs, including top business management schools who work on research management and non-profit organisations. ¹⁹ In the same manner as other CGIAR centers engaged in biological research strive constantly to ensure they are linked to frontier science in areas with application to their work, ISNAR needs to strengthen similar links with academic and research institutions in public sector management, institutional development and change, organizational theory and behaviour and institutional A constant stream of PhD students, post-doctoral fellows and visiting economics. researchers from ARIs in these fields is essential to enhance and replenish the program's stock of intellectual capital. Location is an important factor to ensure this flow and the interchange necessary to foster an atmosphere and culture of intellectual activity and scholarship, which ultimately must provide the foundation of sound policy advice. The IRT considers that this should be one of the key factors considered in comparing the suitability of the three prime SSA locations (Addis Ababa, Pretoria, and Nairobi) for the hub of the ISNAR Program.

Recommendation 4: Location

The IRT recommends that:

a. The ISNAR Program be conducted in a decentralized manner; and,

b. Headquarters and directorate be established in Sub-Saharan Africa, either in Addis Ababa or Pretoria.

¹⁸ "Despite a number of highly competent and dedicated staff, the Panel believes that ISNAR does not have the types of skills and quantity of human resources to implement its new strategy" (4th ISNAR EPMR, 2002, p.53).

¹⁹ In this regard, the IRT notes the significant advances ISNAR's Board has made in establishing strong ties with Wageningen University in the Netherlands.

5 Transition

The IRT considered a number of transition issues and comments on these below. An overriding objective of the transition phase should be to have it completed quickly so that the uncertainties faced by the ISNAR staff are not prolonged. There are many specific matters that need addressing, which can best be done by the principal parties themselves, assisted by specialists. Our observations, therefore, relate to the main elements of framework for the transition, rather than specific details. They include the following:

- estimated costs;
- transition team;
- transfer of governance;
- continuity of funding; and
- timetable.

5.1 Estimated Costs²⁰

The total costs of winding up the current operations on **December 31, 2003** in The Hague have been estimated by ISNAR at **US\$4.15** million (US\$3.77 million plus 10% contingency). If the closure date is **April 30, 2004**, then the costs of winding up operations (not including salaries and operating costs between January 1 and April 30, 2004) will be **\$3.24** million ((\$2.94 million plus 10% contingency). Both scenarios are based on the assumption that all ISNAR staff contracts will be broken, and therefore indemnities will be paid in all cases. This assumption is based on the scenario that ISNAR would cease to exist legally, and the entity that would absorb any ISNAR staff will NOT assume any associated liabilities, such as length of service conditionality for severance payments.

If ISNAR would somehow continue as a legal and independent organization, then some severance indemnities would be saved, because some staff would transfer to the eventual new location for ISNAR's headquarters.

The following is a detailed description of the various components of winding up, under the assumptions mentioned above:

1. Termination of office lease. (a) If ISNAR leaves at the end of 2003, but can give notice no sooner than November 1 (end of AGM) the cost to break the lease will be \$790,000. If ISNAR was able to give notice of departure from The Hague on December 31, 2003 to the landlord in September 2003, the cost to break the lease will be \$635,000, This amount includes the agency fees for a new tenant. (b) If ISNAR leaves on April 30, 2004, but is able to provide at least a six-month notice period, the cost to break the penalty will be \$400,000, also including any agency fees for a new tenant.

²⁰ The information herein on the cost of terminating ISNAR operations were kindly provided by ISNAR Management.

- 2. Termination of computer and copier leases, various insurances, and other service contracts: It will cost approximately \$120,000 to break the leases with COMPAQ (computers) and with OCE (copiers and printers), at the end of 2004. The amount will be slightly less if ISNAR leaves in April 2004. The cost of breaking all other contracts will be approximately \$65,000.
- 3. Indemnities for nationally-recruited staff: (a) Assuming a settlement date of December 31, 2003, termination indemnities for 27 NRS at an average cost of \$23,000 per NRS, results in a total cost of \$621,000. Re-employment support through a placement agency for 27 NRS at an average cost of \$5,000 per NRS, will cost a total of \$135,000. Total NRS costs therefore would be \$756,000. (b) Assuming a settlement date of April 30, 2004, the total cost would be \$581,000.
- 4. Indemnities for internationally-recruited staff: (a) Assuming a settlement date of December 31, 2003, termination indemnities for 25 IRS at an average cost of US\$80,000 per IRS, including repatriation, results in a total cost of \$2,000,000. (b) assuming a settlement date of April 30, 2004, the total cost would be \$1,763,000.²¹
- 5. **Removal costs** of archives, publications stock, furniture, etc is estimated at US\$100,000, regardless of the moving date.

Operational (recurrent) costs depend on the specific location and configuration of the headquarters and field offices of the decentralized operation. For simplicity, three staffing scenarios could be looked at to estimate the likely additional costs of implementing the ISNAR Program: (1) small ISNAR component (6 hub-based IRS, 10 field IRS); (2) medium-sized ISNAR component (9 hub-based IRS, 15 field IRS); and (3) fully-fledged ISNAR component (12 hub-based IRS, 18 field IRS). Assuming an operational cost per IRS staff of US\$270K (the average figure applicable to ISNAR), the estimated annual operational costs would be roughly as follows:

Small ISNAR US\$4.3 m
 Medium-sized ISNAR US\$6.5 m
 Fully-fledged ISNAR US\$8.1 m

5.2 Transition Team

The IRT considers that, while ExCo and the CGIAR consider the recommendations contained in this report, there is much value in having the Boards and Management of ISNAR and IFPRI form an exploratory transition team, assisted by the CGIAR System Office, to explore the full range of issues that would be involved in such a transition. This is necessary because the IRT is more familiar with the concerns of ISNAR than of IFPRI, given that two members of the ISNAR Board served as members of the IRT. While the IRT does not wish to pre-judge the decision of the CGIAR on the restructuring of ISNAR,

²¹ The cost of ISNAR salaries for the period January 1 to April 30, 2004, is \$1.15 million. Assuming modest operating costs for the period January-April 2004, should ISNAR remain in The Hague past the end of 2003, a rough estimate of comparative costs shows that there would be an approximate \$750,000 total additional cost for the April closure option.

early dialogue between IFPRI and ISNAR would help generate useful information on key issues of implementation and enable the CGIAR reach a more informed decision. The transition team should focus on operational issues and concerns (such as existing agreements with the host countries and donors and contracts with staff) and issues of financial and legal liabilities of ISNAR.

5.3 Transfer of Governance

Once the CGIAR endorses the restructuring arrangement recommended here, the next order of business would be to formally transfer the governance of ISNAR from the Board of ISNAR to the Board of IFPRI. The Transfer of Governance Agreement should also spell out the conditions of the transfer, such as those outlined among the recommendations of the IRT.

5.4 Continuity of Funding for ISNAR

This restructuring would provide ISNAR an opportunity for a new beginning, with an exciting vision, new leadership, and significant new staff. The IRT is convinced that the reconfigured ISNAR Program has the potential to contribute in significant ways to the achievement of the CGIAR's goals. However, its success will depend in part on the confidence donors express in the new program, as reflected by levels and sustainability of funding. The restructured program should be given a fair chance to prove itself. At the same time, IFPRI, as the "foster parent" of ISNAR, should not have to assume undue financial risk by having to finance funding shortfalls in the ISNAR Program. This could be achieved by asking CGIAR members to earmark their contributions to the ISNAR component for an initial period of three years subject to the satisfactory evolution of the restructured ISNAR Program. During the transition period, donors should continue to provide the financial support needed for a successful transition and program redevelopment.

5.5 Timetable

The IRT recommends a tight timetable for the restructuring, as reflected in Recommendation 5, below. While pragmatic considerations could call for some adjustments to the suggested timetable, every effort should be made by both centers and the CGIAR, to ensure a speedy transition.

The restructuring suggested here opens a new chapter in the CGIAR in the formation of alliances among centers. The model proposed is somewhat different from previous merger and alliance experiences within the CGIAR. The CGIAR should capture the lessons from this experience. ExCo should monitor closely the transition and the

²² Clearly, success of the program will largely depend on its leadership, management and the ability to attract and retain appropriate new staff.

functioning of the alliance, both for the purpose of CGIAR oversight and for drawing lessons from the experience.

Recommendation 5: Transition

The IRT recommends that:

- a. Given the importance of refocusing and sustaining the program activities of ISNAR and minimising the costs of uncertainty to staff and stakeholders more broadly, there is an urgent need for a rapid resolution to the restructuring;
- b. The Boards and management of ISNAR and IFPRI establish a transition team to address key issues involved in implementing the recommendations of the IRT and for achieving a transfer of governance;
- c. The transition team should address such issues as financial and legal obligations of ISNAR;
- d. The ISNAR and IFPRI be invited to brief the CGIAR on the process and plans for the transition at AGM 2003;
- e. The transfer of governance be completed as soon as possible after the CGIAR reaches a decision on the restructuring (expected to be at AGM2003);
- f. The CGIAR through the Executive Council should establish a process to closely monitor the transition and evolution of the restructured ISNAR Program including periodic briefings by the transition team; and,
- g. During the transition period, donors should continue to provide the financial support needed for a successful transition and program redevelopment.

Appendix A: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

- a. Develop a restructuring plan for ISNAR, as follow-up to the CGIAR decisions taken at AGM02. The team should examine at all innovative options, including operating as a virtual network. The option of phasing out ISNAR will not be considered. The Restructuring Team should interact with ISNAR's stakeholders and others as necessary.
- b. Report its recommendations to the CGIAR, through the Executive Council.

Supplementary Terms of Reference

Summary of ExCo report from meeting in Paris, May 16-17, 2003

Grant Scobie, Chair of the ISNAR Restructuring Team (IRT) appointed by ExCo, presented the report of the Team. His main points were:

- The team interprets the Group's request that ISNAR should not be phased out as a directive that an ISNAR program—but not necessarily an ISNAR center—should be preserved.
- To ensure programmatic continuity, the team recommends that a distinct ISNAR program should be operated through an alliance with IPGRI.
- ISNAR should not function as a free standing CGIAR center, and the governance responsibilities of Sinner's Board of Trustees should be transferred to the IPGRI Board.
- The IPGRHSNAR program should have its headquarters in Addis Ababa or Pretoria.
- These arrangements are analogous to those agreed by the CGIAR for the merger of INIBAP with IPGRI.

At the request of Ian Johnson, Ravi Tadvalkar briefed ExCo on the financial status of ISNAR. In 2002 ISNAR was the smallest CGIAR center (about US\$8 million in total contributions). It had spent about 60 percent of its resources on personnel and had closed the year with a deficit of about US\$1 million. Its reserves were equal to about 14 days operating expenses. ISNAR had started 2003 in financial difficulty and the prospects for much improved funding did not look bright.

Discussion

The Chairman and several speakers commended the Restructuring Team for a wellargued, clear report. Following a rich discussion by ExCo members, several recommendations of the report were endorsed by ExCo, while no consensus was

- reached on the others. The agreed recommendations are noted in the Conclusions section below.
- CBC Chair John Vercoe reported to ExCo he had been informed that ISNAR had just received funding for a \$15 million program with NARS on biosafety. Franklin Moore clarified that this funding was for a very specific purpose over a five-year period and will not solve ISNAR's financial problems. Mr. Vercoe noted that the ISNAR Board should have been given an opportunity to provide a response to ExCo on the IRT report and that the Board response and the IRT report should form one document. The Chairman remarked that the ISNAR Board actively participated in the work of the IRT, having its Board chair and another Board member on the Team.
- CDC Chair Adel El-Beltagy commented that the IRT should not have considered an
 option that amounts to dissolving ISNAR, given the conclusions reached at AGM02.
 He also inquired why ISNAR had not been invited to the ExCo meeting. He urged that
 decisions on ISNAR be taken swiftly in order not to prolong uncertainty and suffering
 by staff.
- Ms. Bongiwe Njobe noted that South Africa's headquarters agreement with ISNAR
 applies to ISNAR as a separate legal entity, and not as one that is to be subsumed
 under another center. The agreement would need to be re-negotiated under another
 governance arrangement.
- Several speakers expressed concern about the proposed merger with IPGRI. They
 noted that there was little in common in the missions and programs of the two
 centers. Also, the IPGRI-INIBAP arrangement had stronger programmatic rationale
 than the one proposed for ISNAR because of the programmatic synergy that exists
 between INIBAP and IPGRI.
- Concern was raised also about the location of the hubs of the two proposed program themes: the program on Organization and Management from the headquarters in SSA and the program on Institutional Change from Rome. If ISNAR is to be rebuilt, it would have a greater chance to succeed if it starts from a single location, preferably in SSA, but with a global mandate and operating in a decentralized, network mode. Given the expected small size of the future ISNAR program, critical mass considerations would also dictate operating from one headquarters location. Grant Scobie commented that the Institutional Change program would need to be built from the ground up, requiring ease of interaction with people at the cutting edge in the area of innovation systems, which Rome was better suited for. But other options could be considered.
- Several members agreed with the IRT that alliance with another organization is the only feasible option for ISNAR. However, other alliance arrangements, such as the CIAT-TSBF merger which preserves the programmatic integrity of TSBF, should also be considered. CAPRi presents another model that is worth examination.
- Some members inquired why Nairobi was not considered as a headquarters location for the program. Grant Scobie responded that the CGIAR already has significant presence in Nairobi, that the DG-Designate comes from Kenya, and that ILRI's Addis Ababa (old ILCA) campus or a Pretoria location would bring a great number of other advantages.

- Mohamad Roozitalab stressed that the Regional Organizations would like ISNAR to maintain its identity and have it operate with close links to ROs and SROs, including those outside Africa. Grant Scobie noted that this is precisely what the IRT had in mind. An Africa base would not limit Sinner's coverage. Luis Arango stressed that ISNAR should continue to have a global mandate.
- Sam Dryden noted that in the private sector you cannot always pick your merger partner. Also, preserving assets, such as Sinner's key people and the ISNAR brand name, should be looked at separately from dissolving the corporate entity.
- John Vercoe argued that, as the ISNAR Board has the legal responsibility for the organization, it should be asked to propose a transition plan in view of the ExCo views, for consideration by ExCo and the CGIAR. Others countered that, for all practical purposes, ISNAR was in "receivership" and that the CGIAR had expressed less than full confidence in the Board and management of ISNAR with its decision at AGM2002 to appoint an external restructuring team. It would therefore be more prudent for ExCo to seek further advice from the same external team.

Conclusions

- ExCo commended Grant Scobie and the IRT for its work.
- ExCo reached consensus on some of the recommendations of the IRT; there was no
 consensus on the others. The recommendations endorsed by ExCo were the
 following (including am endments to the original text):

Recommendation 1: Program

The IRT recommends that a restructured ISNAR program, with a global mandate, is built on two major themes.

- The primary theme should be to produce new knowledge, with strong international public good characteristics, which contributes to **institutional change** for enhancing the impact of agricultural research.
- The secondary theme should be to enhance the performance of agricultural research institutions through attention to their organization and management, with a particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.

Recommendation 2: Governance

The IRT recommends:

- that ISNAR should not remain as a free standing CGIAR center; and,
- that governance of a restructured ISNAR program should be undertaken, as an identifiable entity, through alliances with one or more organizations.

Recommendation 4: Location

The IRT recommends

that the ISNAR program be conducted in a decentralized manner

- that headquarters and directorate be established in Sub-Saharan Africa, either in Addis Ababa or Pretoria
- that the program on Organization and Management, on global matters, be led from the headquarters in SSA with appropriate linkages to ROs and SROs.

Further Terms of Reference

- ExCo agreed to ask the IRT to take on board ExCo's concerns and prepare a revised draft by mid-August 2003, focusing, in particular, on the recommendations on which there was no consensus in ExCo (i.e., Recommendations 3, 4.d and 5).
- ExCo encourages IRT to revise its report in consultation with ExCo and the CGIAR
 members, in particular with the major donors of ISNAR. The Board of ISNAR is also
 encouraged to do creative thinking, keeping in mind the conclusions reached by ExCo,
 and share its thinking with IRT through the ISNAR Board members who serve on the
 IRT.

ExCo agreed to discuss the revised IRT report through a virtual meeting as soon as it is available and forward ExCo's recommendations for consideration by the CGIAR at or before AGM2003.

Appendix B: Restructuring Team and Resource Persons

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Appendix D: Glossary

AARINENA Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North

Africa

APAARI Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions

AATF African Agricultural Technology Foundation

AGM Annual General Meeting

AKIS Agricultural Knowledge Information System

ARI Advanced Research Institute

ASARECA Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central

Africa

ASTI Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators

BMZ German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development

CAS Central Advisory Service on Intellectual Property

CGIAR Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research

CIAT International Center for Tropical Agriculture (Centro Internacional de

Agricultura Tropical)

CIHEAM Centre International de Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes CIRAD Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le

développement

CTA Center for Technology Assesment

CIMMYT Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo

EMBRAPA Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária
EPMR External Programme and Management Review

ExCo Executive Council

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GFAR Global Forum on Agricultural Research

GMO Genetically Modified Organism

GTZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

IADB Inter-American Development Bank

IAC Inter-Academy Council

IBS ISNAR Biotechnology Service

IBSRAM International Board for Soil Research and Management

ICAR Indian Council for Agricultural Research

ICIPE International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology

ICRAF World Agroforestry Center

IICD The Institute for International Cooperation and Development

IFDS International Fertilizer Development Center

IFPRI International Food Policy Research Institute
ILCA International Livestock Center for Africa

ILRAD International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases

ILRI International Livestock Research Institute

INIBAP International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain

INRA Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (Morocco)

IPG International Public Good

IPGRI International Plant Genetic Resources Institute

IPR Intellectual Property Rights
IRS Internationally Recruited Staff
IRT ISNAR Restructuring Team

IWMI International Water Management Institute

ISAAA International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotechnology Applications

ISNAR International Service for National Agricultural Research

IWMI International Water Management Institute

LAC Latin America and the Caribbean

MTP Medium Term Program

NAIS National Agricultural Innovation System
NARI National Agricultural Research Institute
NARO National Agricultural Research Organization
NARS National Agricultural Research System

NEPAD The New Partnership for Africa's Development

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NPG National Public Good
NRS Nationally Recruited Staff

O&M Organization and Management

RO Regional Organization
RSA Republic of South Africa
S&T Science and Technology

SPIA Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

SRO Sub-Regional Organization

SSA Sub-Saharan Africa

TSBF Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility Programme+

UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNEP United Nations Environment Program

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

WB World Bank

WHO World Health Organization

WIPO The World Intellectual Property Organization

WTO World Trade Organization

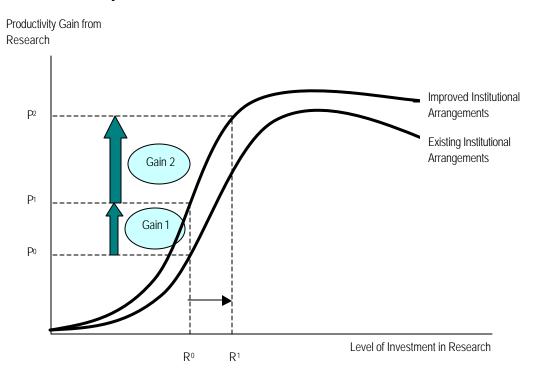
Appendix E: An Expanded Set of Options

This appendix lists the complete set of options that were developed by the IRT, drawing on proposals from the EPMR and from ISNAR. Details of each of the proposals are available on request.

| Option 1 | A free-standing rejuvenated ISNAR [EPMR Panel's Option 1] |
|-----------|--|
| Option 2a | A Decentralized ISNAR with full portfolio of research [ISNAR Option 1] |
| Option 2b | A Decentralized ISNAR with analytical research conducted by IFPRI, and action research + services conducted by ISNAR [EPMR Option 2] |
| Option 3a | Intra-CGIAR Mergers: IFPRHSNAR Merger |
| Option 3b | Intra-CGIAR Mergers: IPGRHSNAR Merger |
| Option 4a | A network of regional mini-ISNARs |
| Option 4b | A network of networks on institutional development |
| Option 4c | A research-based network of networks on strengthening the management of agricultural innovation systems |
| Option 4d | A "virtual" network of change agents |
| Option 5 | ISNAR as a "franchise" operation |
| Option 6 | A Global Challenge Program on Institutional Development |

Appendix F: The Potential Contribution of ISNAR

Appendix Figure 1: A Simple Model Showing the Impact of Enhanced Institutional Arrangements on the Contribution of Agricultural Research to Improved Productivity



This model is a stylized representation of the potential role of ISNAR-type activities on the contribution of agricultural research to productivity growth. At any given point in time, there is some level of investment in research, denoted R_0 . Under the existing set of institutional arrangements, this level of research is expected to generate improvements in productivity performance corresponding to P_0 .

Now suppose that as a result of improved institutional arrangements, the same level of investment in research (R_0) now generates an expected gain in productivity of P_1 . This first step from P_0 to P_1 is labelled Gain 1. It results from some combination of:

- a. Improved performance of existing institutions (eg; improved priority setting, better motivation of scientists, improved management information systems); and
- b. Improvements in the institutional arrangements themselves (e.g., a better system of allocating public research funding, new alliances with the private sector, better articulation with client groups to specify their needs, a new regulatory regime for GMOs).

These two sources of the first gain correspond to the two major programmatic themes s for the restructured ISNAR Program recommended by the IRT (refer to recommendation 1); viz:

Program 1: Organization and Management

Program 2: Institutional Change

There is a potential indirect gain from these programs. The direct effect is to raise the contribution of the existing level of research funding (R_0) . The indirect gain arises if, as a result of the first gain, which demonstrated enhanced contribution from existing funding, political decisions are then taken to increase the level of funding for research from R_0 to R_1 . The gain in productivity would now be P_2 rather than P_1 . In other words

Productivity Gain =[Direct Effect]+ [Indirect Effect]

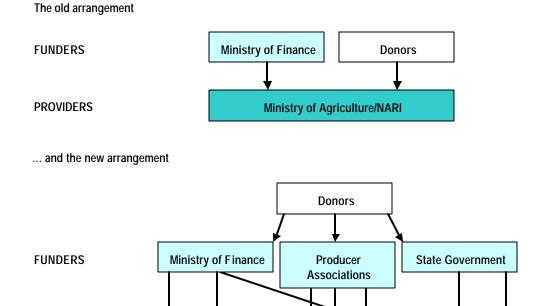
$$P_2 - P_1 = [P_1 - P_0] + [P_2 - P_1]$$

The Direct Effect (labelled Gain 1) is the result of providing services which improve the **Organization and Management** of research together with generating new knowledge which leads to **Institutional Development** new knowledge; i.e., the two major programmatic themes recommend for the new ISNAR Program.

The Indirect Effect (labelled Gain 2) is one that is sometimes characterized as the result of "advocacy". However, rather than specifically devoting resources to advocacy per se, the IRT believes that the major effort should be on generating Gain 1 to demonstrate the improved efficiency and effectiveness of existing investment in research. This is seen as a necessary condition in order to build a case for greater investment.

Appendix G: Public Agricultural Research Funding

Appendix Figure 2: Changes in Patterns of Public Agricultural Research Funding



Source: Byerlee, Derek and Gary Alex (2003) "National Agricultural Research Systems: Recent Developments and Key Challenges." Note prepared for the CGIAR nterim Science Council.

National Agricultural

Research Board

Competition and Contracting

NAROs, Universities, Private

FUND ALLOCATION/

COORDINATING

BODIES

PROVIDERS

Local Agricultural Research

Board