

## **Summary Record of the First Meeting of the CGIAR Task Force on Programmatic Alignment**

The CGIAR Task Force on Programmatic Alignment (TF1) held its first meeting on May 27 at GTZ, Eschborn, Germany. Participants were Per Pinstруп-Andersen (Co-Chair), Paco Sereme (Co-Chair), Akin Adesina, Ruth Haug, Romano Kiome, Hamid Narjisse, Onesmo ole-MoiYoi, Ola Smith, and Manuel Lantin (Resource Person). Jim Godfrey (Chair of CBC Task Force on SSA) and Dennis Garrity (Chair of CDC Task Force on SSA) participated as observers.

### **Opening Statements**

Mr. Stefan Helming, Head of Planning and Development Department, GTZ welcomed the meeting participants. Acknowledging the similarities of concerns and goals between GTZ and the CGIAR particularly in SSA, he expressed interest in the work of the task forces and wished the participants a successful meeting.

In their opening remarks, the TF1 co-chairs emphasized the importance of the group's task. They pointed out that there are a lot of ideas from stakeholders which should be solicited as important inputs to the task force's work. The first meeting essentially sought to have further clarity on the objectives of TF1 and to develop a detailed workplan.

### **TF1's Terms-of Reference and Approaches to Programmatic Alignment**

The task force reviewed the TF1's terms of reference (TOR). Some members felt the need to elaborate more on the TOR, add a paragraph describing the context of the assessment, and specify clearly the approaches and outputs. It was pointed out that the TOR as presented has been endorsed by the Executive Council (ExCo) but has yet to be approved by the CGIAR. The following points were raised in the discussion:

- The work of the task force should not be constrained by the current CGIAR strategy.
- Clear definition of programs, the kind and scope of analysis to be made, and what does re-alignment entail.
- In defining the primary approach, the TF should start with the assessment of needs and priorities identified by SSA institutions, i.e. national agricultural research systems (NARS) and sub-regional organizations (SROs), and not with the existing CGIAR programs in the region.
- There is a need to clarify the range of clients, i.e. not only the national research institutions and the SROs but also the farmers' organizations, private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); The complementarity of their work with the CGIAR and the synergies created in cooperative programs should be looked at as well.

- Issues other than science and research programs should also be considered. Development of agricultural markets, for example, is also an important objective in SSA.
- The CGIAR should clearly position itself within the research-extension continuum.
- Defining the problems (and not simply re-alignment) is a critical task. CGIAR priorities should be defined based on common problems, making the sub-regional level as the unit of analysis.
- TF1 should map out (in conjunction with TF2) the institutional environment that constrain the CGIAR to achieve impacts. It should examine not only the current programs but also analyze the strategic aspects of the CGIAR's future engagement in SSA.
- The issue of enabling environment was considered vital.
- Shouldn't realignment of CGIAR's work also consider other international /regional initiatives?
- A key reason for the limited impact of CGIAR research in SSA relates to how its business is done. The institutional structure has in some cases driven the programs. This is an important issue to be discussed with TF2.
- One basic approach that may be adopted for the TF work is to look at the whole agricultural research system and determine how CGIAR could best contribute to it.
- TF should learn from signals coming from both internal and external sources. It should determine what the CGIAR as a system can do in SSA, not simply as a Center working on crops, forestry, or livestock.

In summing up the discussion, Per Pinstруп-Andersen suggested that the TOR should: 1) consider a broader context including the role of policies, markets and other constraints that limit impact of scientific research, and 2) start with a thorough description and analysis of priorities and programs defined at the sub-regional level and supplemented by those drawn up at the national level of selected countries (e.g. South Africa, Nigeria, etc.). With international public goods research as its primary business, the CGIAR should continue to focus on solving problems that transcend national boundaries.

### **Joint Meeting with the Task Force on Structural Alignment (TF2)**

The co-chairs of TF1 and TF2 summarized the discussions in the earlier meetings of their respective task forces. They outlined the key elements of their approaches and workplans. TF2 has adopted a plan to carry out its work in five phases: 1) compiling relevant information, 2) identifying guiding principles and criteria, 3) comparing structural options for the future; 4) assessing operational implications of structural options; and 5) preparing recommendations.

For their part, the TF1 co-chairs also outlined the steps that the task force has agreed to follow. The starting point would be a review of the needs and priorities identified and the strategies formulated by the SROs for their respective sub-regions and the role that the CGIAR centers should play. It will be followed by an analysis of the current CGIAR

projects/programs and how they relate with the sub-regional priorities and strategies. The analysis would look at gaps which CGIAR could fill as well as research areas which are better handled by others. The outputs would be recommendations for programmatic re-alignment, i.e. a basis for consolidating, integrating, or dropping current programs, and suggesting new areas of work.

In the ensuing brainstorm session, the issues raised covered both process and substance. The following were some of the key points made:

- Need for an inclusive approach in the consultation phase, both in terms of sector (crop, livestock, forestry, fisheries) and stakeholder groups (NARS/SROs, Centers, donors, CSOs (farmers, NGOs, private sector, consumer groups), other partners (ARIs, universities); use of AGM04 (stakeholder meeting) as a forum for consultation; sub-regional meetings/visits as components of the overall consultation process.
- It is important to identify priorities that both the NARS/SROs and CGIAR Centers can address together.
- Recognition that poverty reduction is the goal and that economic growth is a tool for pursuing it.
- Analysis should cover both horizontal and vertical alignment of programs/projects.
- The task forces should consider the question of whether SSA is better served by regional rather than global structures.
- What would be the impact of the programmatic and structural changes contemplated in SSA on the other regions?
- Problems in SSA go beyond what research could address; market development is one area needing critical attention. To what extent should CGIAR be involved in it?
- Should the CGIAR Centers be transformed into an agricultural innovations network?
- The existence of “alternative sources of supply” for products of the CGIAR provides a rationale to consider also the work of other research centers (non-CGIAR and ARIs).

The task forces agreed to work closely together, ensuring a free flow of information and ideas between them. The possibility of combined TF1/TF2 questionnaires will be investigated; a desk study on recent EPMRs by the CG Secretariat will summarize both programmatic and organizational recommendations; and a three-person combined consultancy (Mukiibi/Terry/Brader) will take place in August/September 2004. The key guiding principle that "form follows function" was reaffirmed particularly since it was recognized that form can also limit or constrain function. The TF report would be one document consisting of two parts, the first from TF1 and the other from TF2. The TFs agreed on the following timeline:

- Progress Report to be presented at ExCo7 and AGM04; TFs will take the opportunity to hold further consultations with stakeholders at AGM04
- Second meeting to be held on Dec. 15-16, 2004 in Entebbe, Uganda

- Final meeting to be held on March 1-2, 2005 in Brussels, Belgium (at the Africa Museum)
- Final Report to be submitted in April 2005

The Task Forces fully realized the importance and enormity of their tasks. The TF1 co-chair, who is also the SC Chair, felt that the SC should also take major responsibility for the programmatic alignment and would therefore suggest to the CGIAR Chairman and Director that TF1's work be a joint undertaking of the CGIAR Secretariat and the SC.

### **Next Steps**

After the joint meeting, TF1 discussed the next steps, focusing on activities that need to be undertaken immediately.

- The most urgent is the development of a data collection instruments (questionnaires) that would be sent to the Centers. It was agreed with TF2 that a single questionnaire would be sent out by late June. TF1 would comment on and add questions to the draft already prepared for TF2. Some of the questions were suggested during the meeting.
- The discussions provided the basis for formulating a more detailed workplan for TF1. The workplan would include a description of activities, the focal point or person(s) responsible for each, and the suggested timeline.
- The visits and field work to be carried out jointly by Eugene Terry, Lukas Brader, and Joseph Mukiibi should also be organized soon. The co-chairs and the CGIAR secretariat will develop TORs. A visit to 5-6 NARS was suggested; criteria for selection should include geographic balance and level of development ( a mix of weak and strong NARS). TF1 members were asked to forward their suggestions to the resource person (M. Lantin).
- Progress reports for AGM 04 will be prepared and sent to ExCo for the meeting on 13/14 September 2004

Jim Godfrey informed the group that DFID has set up a specific group to support the Blair Commission for Africa and that the Permanent Secretary of DFID would welcome an interaction between the Commission and the two task forces. The co-chairs said that they would also welcome such an interaction and requested Jim Godfrey to help in scheduling it.

Since many of the members expect to attend AGM04, it was agreed that holding a TF1 meeting during the AGM week would be explored. It was tentatively scheduled for the evening of May 26, 2004.