

To:  
CO-SPONSORS  
CGIAR MEMBERS  
BOARD CHAIRS  
CENTER DIRECTORS  
TAC  
CGIAR COMMITTEES

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION GROUP (IAEG)  
1996 PROGRESS REPORT**

The IAEG has undertaken to keep members up to date with its activities and plans.

The attached report briefly reviews the IAEG charter, its broad strategy, the progress it has made during its 10 months of operation and an outline of our workplan. We provide a brief status report on each of the projects in the IAEG workplan endorsed at Centers Week. The report complements the verbal presentation made at Centers Week this year.

In that presentation it was mentioned that the IAEG is now under the umbrella of the UNDP as Co-sponsor with Dr Roberto Lenton taking responsibility for us. Initially the World Bank took charge of our affairs but recently has handed over to the UNDP. We are pleased that Dr Lenton has indicated that UNDP wishes to take more than a passive role as Co-sponsor. We will formally link to the Centers through the Priorities, Impact Evaluation and Strategies sub-committee of the Director's-General, chaired by Grant Scobie. We will continue to interact with the Inter Center Working Group on Impact Assessment and Evaluation.

We are only three part-time people with a limited budget. It is thus important that we are careful to balance our activities between strengthening evaluation capacity throughout the Centers and selectively commissioning ex post studies which examine the impact of CGIAR research. The IAEG is conscious of the need to produce results for members as quickly as possible.

The key to the IAEG's own impact will be the collaboration we build with Centers and members in pursuing our activities. The IAEG hopes you will agree that the program we have underway will have achieved the initial objectives we have set ourselves for the next two years.

The IAEG welcomes comments from members and Centers on any aspects of the program.

W James Peacock  
Chair, IAEG

## CGIAR IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION GROUP (IAEG) 1996 PROGRESS REPORT

### THE IAEG CHARTER

The Terms of Reference of the IAEG are to :

- strengthen ex post IA&E capability,
- guide IA&E activities in the CGIAR, and
- commission evaluations which document the impact of the CGIAR System

This charter comes down basically to two things: helping the members of the Group, the Centers and their associated NARs to become more skilled in the areas of evaluation and impact assessment; and commissioning some impact assessment studies, documenting the effect of the work that the CGIAR has carried out.

### IAEG STRATEGY

Given its size and budget and the twin aspects of its charter, the IAEG has developed the following strategy.

- Concentrate on its system-wide charter
- Focus on key elements of CGIAR activities and build, together with studies conducted by Centers and Members, an evaluation of the fabric of CGIAR work
- Develop common protocols for use across Centers and encourage an evaluation mindset throughout the System
- Work collaboratively with Centers and NARS in conducting impact assessments, while maintaining objectivity and quality
- Encourage parallel studies by centres with their NARS partners
- Link skills enhancement activities in conjunction to project design activities where possible

### PROGRESS DURING 1996

1996 has been an establishment and planning period. The IAEG met 9 times - four times in-person. We have regular phone discussions as we develop projects. Our activities have included:

1. Establishing rapport with Centers and representatives of members and NARS
2. Setting up interactions with the ICWG on Impact Assessment and Evaluation
3. Collaborating with the ICWG in a survey of the status of IA&E through the system
4. Conducting an IA&E workshop for the CGIAR designed to:
  - make working contact with Centers, NARS and Members
  - consider a range of IA&E methodologies which could be appropriate for studies in the CGIAR program
  - discuss our draft workplan and identify priority elements
5. Designing, and conducting consultations about, our workplan and initiating the resultant projects.

When it first met, the IAEG set out to develop a number of products which would be useful to evaluators in the CGIAR Centers. So far these have included:

- an annotated bibliography prepared for a CGIAR workshop on impact and evaluation
- an assessment of the status of impact assessment and evaluation in the CGIAR
- a record of the IA&E workshop sessions.

## **THE IAEG WORKPLAN**

There are nine projects in the IAEG's program at the moment. They are aimed at enhancing evaluation skills and/or assessing the impact of CGIAR work. They are grouped below under these strategies. We will establish operational links with the Centers involved in each project and will keep other Centers, members and TAC informed about the progress of projects as they develop.

### **1. PROJECTS AIMED AT ENHANCING EVALUATION SKILLS AND CAPABILITY**

#### **Project 1: IAEG role and evaluation strategy**

The purpose of the evaluation strategy is to develop a brief statement which explains the role of the IAEG to CGIAR Centers and members and propose the elements of an evaluation and impact assessment culture for the CGIAR. The need for an overall strategy was identified at the IA&E workshop in April 1996 and confirmed by the CGIAR at its mid-term meeting in Jakarta and in the Annual Report.

A number of members and Centers commented on an earlier draft. We are in the process of redrafting the strategy in line with advice given to us in Washington. The document will now contain a statement on the modes of operation of the IAEG. The strategy will be completed and distributed soon.

#### **Project 2: Methodological review and synthesis of existing CGIAR ex post impact assessments**

The project arose from a strong recommendation of the IA&E workshop that the IAEG should 'first examine what we have already done'. The project will provide feedback to the System on the quality of its assessment efforts and will provide some perspective on the impact of the System since 1980.

The project aims to :

- identify and collect studies conducted by the CGIAR on the impact of their work since 1980
- determine which of the studies can be classified as impact evaluations
- identify the substantive focus of the studies
- assess their methodological quality
- determine whether there are enough studies to support a synthesis
- carry out a synthesis across studies if possible.

We asked Centers and donors in July to forward studies to us. We have collected close to 200 studies to date and have commissioned Prof Leslie Riggan from Florida State University to conduct the methodological review. This phase of the project is scheduled for completion by the end of April next year. At that stage we will be able to decide whether a cross-study synthesis is feasible. We intend providing feedback to Center analysts in a manner useful to them

**Project 3: Impact of CGIAR germplasm improvement on food production**

[See next section]

**Project 4: First methodological workshop in Case Studies for Impact Assessment**

The IA&E workshop identified case study methodology as potentially one of the more useful evaluation methods for assessing impact which could be used by CGIAR evaluators. Better understanding of the adoption process will enhance the extent to which CGIAR-generated innovations might be developed more in response to actual rather than perceived need. Case study methodology is a useful technique to gain a better understanding of the factors influencing the adoption process.

We are organising a workshop aimed at gaining familiarity with the use of case study for impact assessment, developing protocols for use across Centers, and establishing plans for the studies to be conducted in Project 5. The workshop will be for those people directly involved in these studies. The present plan is to hold the workshop during February 1997 at FAO in Rome. (See Project 5 for further details).

We have commissioned Professor Lee Sechrest from the University of Arizona to lead the workshop and the component case studies of the project.

**Project 5: Assessment of the adoption of CGIAR agricultural innovations**

[See next section]

**Project 6: Assessment of the effects of CGIAR innovations on groups of poor people**

[See next section]

**Project 7: Provision of advice on methodology for impact assessment studies submitted by centers**

The IAEG is very conscious of its role in helping to build evaluation capacity in the CGIAR. The aim of this project is thus to assist the development of the quality of Center impact assessment studies by providing advice on proposed methodologies for Center-sponsored studies, when requested to do so. We will do this with the help of independent evaluators.

Three Centers are currently developing proposals and will receive advice in this way.

**Project 8: Compilation of list of evaluation specialists**

One of the requests from Center participants at the Hague workshop was for access to evaluators outside the CGIAR, who are available to provide advice to Center evaluation staff. Eleanor Chelimsky has compiled an initial listing which we hope will be distributed before the end of 1996. We intend keeping the list up to date to ensure its usefulness to Centers.

**Project 9: Essential data for evaluation**

The objective of this project is to identify the data essential for evaluation needs of the CGIAR to demonstrate outcomes. We will identify common data needs for different types of projects. Data collection can be expensive but is essential for establishing baselines, tracking diffusion of technology and for monitoring purposes. Especially in the natural resource management area, considerable attention needs to be given to the development of long-term data sets.

We have started to think about data needs at the project level but have not done much more than identify a possible consultant to help us and determine that we need to build on work already done. We will interact closely with TAC and Centers as we develop the project.

**2. PROJECTS COMMISSIONED TO ASSESS IMPACT OF CGIAR RESEARCH**
**Project 2: Methodological review and synthesis of existing CGIAR ex post impact assessments**

The 'synthesis' phase of this project may provide a perspective on the impact of the System since 1980 if a cross-study synthesis proves to be feasible. We will make a decision on this phase in April 1997.

**Project 3: Impact of CGIAR germplasm improvement on food production**

This topic has been chosen because it will elucidate the impact of a large proportion of the past research effort (the CGIAR has 25 mandate crops and a major proportion of the effort has been on germplasm improvement) and because it will utilise the evaluation expertise already in the System. The design also reflected the IAEG strategy of project selectivity. The study is to focus on the economic impact of CGIAR germplasm improvement programs of the last 15 years and aims to:

- develop a minimum set of ideal data standards for this type of study
- determine the availability of existing data
- conduct a series of studies using a cross sectional design

The preliminary scoping for the project was subjected to a critique by a small thinktank held in Melbourne at the end of August (taking advantage of the GASP Conference). The revised project to be undertaken during 1997-98 has now received endorsement from the IAEG and the scoping and design phase of the project is commencing under the

supervision of Prof Greg Traxler from Auburn University. Partners for the studies, designs of the individual studies, data collection, coding and analysis, and dissemination of results will be firmed up once the study design is agreed. Crops chosen for the study, and hence the collaborating Centers and countries to be involved, will be decided in close consultation with Centers and their NARS partners. Our aim is to report progress at ICW'98.

**Project 5: Assessment of the adoption of CGIAR agricultural innovations**

The case studies are aimed at obtaining a better understanding of the factors influencing the uptake of CGIAR innovations and developing recommendations which lead to improved performance and impact of CGIAR research. We hope the project will lead to guidelines which will help Centers improve awareness of the results of their research and so improve the rate of uptake of CGIAR innovations. The studies to be undertaken, the people involved and the requisite logistics will be firmed up at the workshop detailed in the previous section as Project 4.

We are at the stage of discussing innovations for the case studies with CIMMYT, ICRISAT, CIAT, IRRI and ILRI. We hope to commission four or five studies and will be encouraging other Centers to undertake parallel studies using the same protocols. The IAEG will provide support in the form of external advice for those studies. Again, we aim to report progress at ICW'98.

**Project 6: Assessment of the effects of CGIAR innovations on groups of poor people**

This project aims to determine whether there is evidence of a decrease in poverty levels among different groups of people in those situations where there has been a demonstrated improvement in production level as a result of an introduced CGIAR innovation (germplasm or technology). Reduction of poverty is a major objective of the CGIAR and it is important to develop a better understanding of the links between CGIAR innovations and their effects on poverty levels.

The project is in the initial scoping phase. We have considered an approach to a poverty study elicited from Professor David Cordray at Vanderbilt University and have now commissioned him to develop a proposal for the design phase of such a project. The IAEG will be seeking advice from members, Centers and TAC on innovations where there is an *a priori* reason to believe that the poverty of intended populations has been reduced. We will also be holding consultations on the proposed approach. Hopefully, we will have a feasible design and be able to commission the work later next year.

### **3. INCUBATOR PROJECTS**

The IAEG currently has a number of projects on our 'incubator' list. These are projects which have been suggested to us and which we think would be useful to do. They will be commissioned as resources permit. The projects are concerned with:

- Biotechnology or science impact
- Natural resources management

- Institutional strengthening
- Post harvest technologies
- Integrated pest management
- Biodiversity

**IAEG**  
**December 1996**

**EVALUATION PRINCIPLES FOR THE CGIAR  
A STATEMENT FROM  
THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION GROUP (IAEG)**

**Purpose**

1. This statement proposes broad principles of evaluation for the CGIAR, building on the considerable evaluation effort already being undertaken. We also outline the modes of operation of the Impact Assessment and Evaluation Group (IAEG).
2. The CGIAR is aware that ultimately its success will be measured by the extent to which the outcomes of its research reduce poverty, improve food security and protect or ameliorate the environment without compromising the capacity of future generations to meet their needs. The critical task facing the international agricultural research system (including the CGIAR, its stakeholders and partners) is to focus on the areas of greatest potential impact and to utilise resources as effectively and efficiently as possible.
3. Evaluation and impact assessment analyses provide measures of achievement and accountability. These analyses should also provide feedback for priority setting and strategy formulation, generally assisting institutional management development and improvement of decision making.

**Scope of Evaluation in the CGIAR**

4. The achievement of the goals of the CGIAR depends to a large extent on the policy and institutional environment and impacts are the cumulation of effects achieved throughout (and beyond) the research process. To understand how and why the impacts occurred (or did not occur), it is necessary to understand what happened at different stages of the research, technical development and adoption continuum. Impact assessment will be most meaningful for mature programs. But evaluations of different parts of the research process can be made and are needed, along with impact assessments. Evaluation plays a critical role in understanding the linkages between research and the ultimate goals of the CGIAR.
5. We believe that evaluation in the CGIAR should encompass the entire research continuum: from ex ante (planning), choosing what to do (priorities), planning how to do it, linking of projects and programs to System goals (outcomes), tracking progress (performance assessment) and making adjustments, through to ex post assessment of outputs, outcomes and impacts. The process and the results of evaluation helps decision making at all levels.
6. Evaluation thus encompasses aspects of strategic planning, priority setting, research management, performance assessment and extends to assessment of research outcomes and impacts and includes the contributions made by a wide variety of individuals and institutions. We recognise that institutions other than the CGIAR will be involved in most impact assessment analyses. The IAEG is aware that assessment of impacts on poverty, food security and the



environment present major conceptual and methodological challenges, particularly in the areas of natural resource management and institutional development.

### **Center Evaluation Strategy**

7. One of the major responsibilities of the IAEG is to help build the evaluation capability of the CGIAR. The IAEG encourages each Center to develop its own evaluation strategy and incorporate evaluation components into Strategic and Medium-term Plans, particularly planned measures for documenting indicators of performance and the achievement of objectives and outcomes.

8. The Center strategy should incorporate evaluation activities at all stages of the research process, focussing on assessments of processes, outputs and outcomes as well as impacts within a systems framework. Although different types of evaluation analyses will be applied to different parts and levels of the research system in strengthening System-wide evaluation, the project is the basic unit of analysis. Projects need to incorporate sound design and data collection principles from their beginning and evaluation components to assess project achievement or progress need to be built into project design. Thus, the logic by which the expected change will be measured is an important part of that design. Baseline data will need to be collected in cases where the measurement of impact is envisaged. Collaborative efforts across projects, Centers and national programs will be best able demonstrate impact if they use similar designs and data collection instruments. Commonality of design is desirable to enable the aggregation of subsets of data across Centers and programs to make System-wide analyses on selected topics feasible. Data requirements and the method of collecting data are thus prime considerations in project and program design and form an important part of the strategy for each Center.

### **Cost effectiveness and credibility**

9. The IAEG is conscious of the need to ensure that evaluation processes are appropriate and useful to each level of the CGIAR's structural spectrum: for individual researchers, for projects, for programs at both the Center and System level, for Centers, and for the System as a whole. Since credible evaluations bolster accountability and institutional development, as well as learning, quality control over both the research process and the evaluation process is important. Peer reviews are needed to assess research quality, and internal and external reviews to assess performance and identify areas for improvement.

10. The focus on accountability as a major purpose of evaluation activity means that accountabilities of different components and levels of the System must be clearly understood. The evaluation program thus needs to be kept manageable, targeted and appropriate to the level of decision making so that benefits clearly outweigh the effort involved.

11. The IAEG encourages a strategy of improving scientists' capability to conduct evaluation analyses, including collaborative studies between Centers and with national programs, and to integrate Center studies and System-wide studies so that they are complementary. Commissioned studies will also be needed. In building the evaluation capacity of the System,

training components should be built into the design phase of evaluation projects, involving both Center and national program scientists. Since strengthening the capability of national programs is a key CGIAR strategy, it is important that evaluation and training activities include participants from national programs.

### **Communication**

12. Unless the purpose, objectives and the target audience for evaluations and impact assessments are clear, the chance of evaluations contributing to better performance is small. As with research projects, the means for communicating the results and assessing the success of that communication is important. Ex post evaluations should be disciplined to emphasise the use of their findings in planning and priority-setting, their conclusions couched in terms of future trends, and their recommendations targeted to those stakeholders and decision-makers who can do something to make them effective. A communication strategy should be an integral part of the planning process for evaluation activities, and evaluation components should contain a clear definition of the purpose of the activity and the means of ensuring effective communication of the results to the targeted audience.

### **Roles**

13. The role of TAC concerns priorities and resource allocation and the quality and relevance of science being maintained at appropriate standards in Centers. The IAEG's emphasis is on ex post impact and thus examines whether the science achieved what was wanted. In assessing the intermediate products of the research/adoption spectrum TAC and the IAEG may overlap and will need to work closely together if that occurs.

14. The IAEG has a dual purpose role and our modes of operation will reflect these roles:

- For enhancing evaluation skills in Centers the IAEG will:
  - communicate with Centers and the stakeholders of the CGIAR so the IAEG can modify and fine tune it's operational plan in response to discussion;
  - comment on ideas and problems brought to IAEG attention by Centers;
  - conduct methodological workshops eg case studies, natural resource management;
  - provide advice on impact assessment proposals developed by Centers; and
  - integrate Centers and NARS in IAEG projects whenever possible.
- When commissioning studies:
  - For IAEG originated projects,
    - the IAEG will partially fund Center involvement where the Center is a partner in the study; and
  - For Center originated projects associated with IAEG projects,
    - the IAEG will contribute, usually by supporting external specialist involvement.
- For impact assessment proposals from Centers:
  - the IAEG will provide comment on Center proposals with respect to design and importance;
  - where Centers undertake studies that are consistent with the IAEG workplan, the IAEG will provide expert consultants where appropriate; and

- where Centers are competitively selected to undertake studies, the IAEG will contribute resources to the work of those Centers.

15. In summary, the IAEG will:

- concentrate on its system-wide charter;
- focus on key elements of CGIAR activities;
- develop common protocols and encourage an evaluation mindset throughout Centers;
- work collaboratively with Centers and NARS;
- encourage parallel studies by Centers; and
- provide training for evaluators throughout the CGIAR.

W James Peacock  
Chair  
IAEG

December 1996

# IAEG CASE STUDIES OF FACTORS AFFECTING ADOPTION OF CGIAR INNOVATIONS

## PROJECT UPDATE

I thought I should briefly summarise the list of studies, contacts and Centers. I will also provide an outline of the next steps in the project. In the Progress Report the case studies are covered by Projects 4 and 5.

The five studies chosen for the project are:

### 1. Maize

Convening Center	CIMMYT
Contact	Prahbu Pingali

### 2. Cassava

Convening Center	CIAT
Contact	Douglas Pachico

### 3. Groundnut

Convening Center	ICRISAT
Contact	Cynthia Bantilan

### 4. Market-oriented small-holder dairy

Convening Center	ILRI
Contact	Phillip Thornton

### 5. Axial flow thresher (AFT)

Convening Center	CIAT
Contact	Boru Douthwaite

Centers are invited to participate in the project by carrying out parallel studies using the same protocols. The studies should involve a NARS partner. The aim is to increase the extent to which conclusions about impact can be drawn across the System and to increase the size and range of the 'lessons' pool. These will contribute to the production of guidelines for use by Centers in increasing the uptake of their work. Centers will also be invited to contribute a two-page 'most successful' campaign story which details successful practices in promoting technology uptake. We have two possible parallel studies at this stage.

### 1. Rice

Convening Center	WARDA
Contact	Thomas Randolph

### 2. Sorghum

Convening Center	ICRISAT
Contact	Cynthia Bantilan

I would be grateful to hear from Centers who would either like to develop parallel case studies or who already have studies planned which would be suitable.

The first milestone for the project will be to hold a workshop at FAO in Rome from 18-20 February 1997. The workshop will be for those people who will be leading each of the studies (a Center person and a NARS partner). The workshop will familiarise study leaders with the use of case study for impact assessment, develop case study protocols and commence planning each study. Centers undertaking parallel studies are invited to participate in the workshop. However, the IAEG will not, at this stage, be contributing to the direct costs of their participation. Obviously, the sooner I get to hear about nominations, the easier planning will be.

Post-workshop, I think it would be a good plan if we gave some publicity to the project to improve awareness of the activity among staff of the Centers and the CGIAR member community.

Tim Healy  
23/12/97