

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS OF THE NEW CGIAR VISION AND STRATEGY^a

Proposition No. 1

The CGIAR as an institution dedicated to agricultural research has served humanity well.

Measurable impact on:

- enhancing food security – increased food supplies/lower food prices for poor consumers in developing countries;
- conserving the environment – land savings, i.e. more forests and grasslands cultivated were it not for increased yields;
- developing national capacity for agricultural research – strengthening of NARS.

Proposition No. 2

The CGIAR deserves the continuing support of the international community as a global instrument:

- to help alleviate poverty;
- to help meet the food security challenge in the 21st century;
- to enhance sustainability of natural resources on which agriculture depends;
- to catalyse and steer the evolution of a global agricultural research system which will address the future needs of developing countries.

Proposition No. 3

To meet the challenge of the 21st century and to further enhance its institutional efficiency and effectiveness, however, the CGIAR needs (and has adopted) a new vision and strategy and improved structure and governance.

Vision: A food secure world for all.

Goal: To reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition by sustainably increasing productivity of resources in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Mission: To achieve sustainable food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through scientific research and research-related activities in the fields of agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, policy and natural resources management.

^a Presentation at Synthesis Group Meeting organized by the CGIAR Oversight Committee at Sonning, England, 4-8 October 2000

Proposition No. 4

That the CGIAR's "best" strategy in the next decade for attaining its mission is a two-pronged approach with seven elements or planks.

Approaches:

- increasing global food supplies thereby moderating food prices (food security);
- complementary, targeted approach to alleviating poverty with agricultural technology and related instruments (alleviation of poverty).

Strategy Planks (see elaboration in TAC paper):

- people and poverty focus;
- modern science;
- geographic priorities;
- regional approach to research;
- new partners in science and development;
- task force approach;
- catalytic role.

Proposition No. 5

The seven planks of the new strategy have *investments, programmes, structure and governance* implications. But the planks which have the most implications for structure and governance are (1) the people and poverty focus; and (2) bringing modern science to bear on the CGIAR objectives.

Proposition No. 6

The following features of CGIAR structure and governance deserve to be conserved:

- independent international centre as the basic organizational unit with a sovereign charter, independent board, and internationally recruited management and senior scientific staff;
- autonomous investors;
- legitimizing international umbrella provided by the Cosponsors;
- leadership of the World Bank to link the System to international aid strategies for development and poverty reduction;
- collective and participatory decision making;
- independent technical advice.

Proposition No. 7

The CGIAR has a dynamic, relevant but evolving research agenda. TAC affirms their continuing programmatic relevance, value and quality.

However, in each of these programmes there are opportunities for re"organizing" the work to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness such as through reformatting from brick-and-mortar to virtual mode, mergers, task forces, devolution to NARS, outsourcing, redistribution of assignments, etc. TAC has considered some of these options, but they require further detailed studies.

Five outputs in the CGIAR logframe (see elaboration in TAC paper):

- germplasm collection, characterization and conservation;
- germplasm improvement;
- sustainable production systems through integrated natural resources management;
- socioeconomic and policy research; and
- enhancing institutions.

Proposition No. 8

The people and poverty focus strategic plank requires that some centres be given clear geographic regional responsibilities.

The CGIAR Research Agenda is currently organized along commodities, resources, disciplines and agroecology lines. These axes of organizational design enabled the old CGIAR to deliver the outputs which led to increased food supplies and lower food prices — the original and first prong of the strategy. Thus, they continue to be relevant and valid.

However, these global frameworks are unlikely to fully capture the heterogeneity of poverty. While these axes of organizational design are good for organizing science, they have not been as effective for delivering impact particularly in the so-called "hard" areas — the objective of the second prong. Hence the call for a regional, decentralized approach to research planning and priority setting.

Thus in evaluating the structural implications of the research agenda, the debate gravitates towards the appropriate balance between global versus regional, decentralized approaches and their successful integration.

The centre assignments for some regions are obvious. But for some regions, further study and deliberation are needed. (TAC proposal for exploratory regional planning exercises in Central America and West Africa).

Proposition No. 9

The strategic plank on mobilizing modern biophysical and social sciences to bear on the CGIAR objectives drives the System in opposing directions as far as structurally locating this work.

The INRM and participatory approaches call for more effective integration of commodity and agroecology-orientated programmes, greater regionalization and "customization" of technologies for the poor.

The integration of focused social and economic research that will help guide biophysical research toward the most important aspects of alleviating poverty is best done at the regional level.

For INRM, TAC does not see the need for a new stand-alone structure. Neither does TAC see the advantage of stand-alone social science units. The capacity for poor-farmer related social science research should be closely articulated with INRM and germplasm work.

On the other hand, some aspects of the new fields of genomics, bioinformatics, GIS and management of information, justify some centralization and consolidation (globalization).

The new technologies need to be integrated with the conventional approaches. TAC concurs with the Duvick panel analyses on the synergy between conventional plant breeding and biotechnology.

The Committee, therefore, proposes the establishment of collaboration groups, Systemwide initiatives and/or task forces and outright outsourcing instead of new stand-alone structures for the new biophysical sciences. Specifically, TAC proposes the creation of two major task forces 1) for genomics/informatics and 2) for GIS, agroecological characterization and knowledge management.

Proposition No. 10

Task forces in the broad sense are composite working groups whose members are drawn from different parts of the organization and/or from outside the organization to perform specific high-priority time-bound tasks. There are many examples of task forces in the CGIAR both at Centre and System levels.

Task forces as proposed by TAC are *specific composite teams*, which will be mobilized to address high-priority problems cutting across centre mandates, which need greater focus and additional expertise and resources.

These task forces will have clear objectives, sunset clauses, sustained finance and quantifiable outputs with flexible, nevertheless agreed upon, financing, implementation and accountability arrangements.

Potential task force topics include:

- genomics, bioinformatics;
- GIS, agroecological characterization and knowledge management;
- regional approaches to research planning for poverty alleviation;
- control of tick- and tsetse fly-borne livestock diseases.

Proposition No. 11

The CDC/CBC proposal for a Federation of Centres merits consideration. (See elaboration in TAC paper)

For purposes of inter-centre coordination of programmes, for the provision of common services, for resource mobilization and servicing the needs of the centres, the Chair and the investors, the Federation and its secretariat could very likely fulfil these requirements.

However, the System governance functions of strategy and priority setting, resource allocation, assessment of science quality and impact cannot be delegated exclusively to the Federation because of self-interest. The interests of the investors, the ultimate beneficiaries, and of the centres themselves will be best served by the CGIAR receiving technical and scientific advice from an independent organ.

Proposition No. 12

The size, composition, qualifications, manner of selection, terms of reference, and modalities of operation of that independent organ, presently constituted as TAC, should be reviewed.

In the light of the proposal for a Federation of Centres, and its implications to the functions of the various organs of the CGIAR, particularly the CG Secretariat and TAC, as well as TAC's own recommendations for Task Forces and the establishment of a Competitive Grants Scheme, TAC had begun to review its own terms of reference, constitution and modes of operation.

Plans are underway to evaluate the current review processes (EPMRs, CCERs, Stripe Reviews) early in 2001 with the objective of streamlining them, reducing time and costs and obtaining more value added from these exercises.

And to adjust modalities by which TAC develops CGIAR priorities and resource allocations in light of new global/regional dimensions of the research agenda.

Proposition No. 13

There is a place for competitive grant funding in the CGIAR as a potential additional source of support as well as a supplement to the existing instruments to enhance quality of science, to improve inter-centre coordination, to bring in new expertise, and for other purposes.

In order to be effective and considering the circumstances of the CGIAR Centres, TAC proposes that:

1. the individual centres be assured of stable core support;
2. the competitive grant funds be consolidated into a common pool to reduce transactions costs, and for equity and transparency;
3. the purposes and the priorities of the grant funds be determined by the investors with independent technical advice;
4. peer evaluation and actual resource allocation be made by expert panels (organized into a formal Research Council should the grant fund become substantial); and
5. grant administration be by the CGIAR Secretariat and/or the proposed Federation.

Proposition No. 14

In order to continue to operate effectively as a System, the financing of the System must be amended. The continuing decline of unrestricted funding is distorting individual centre and System priorities, increasing transaction costs, diminishing flexibility to operate and undermining confidence in the long-term viability of the centres.

TAC submits the following for consideration by the investors (Code of Conduct for Donors?):

- that share of unrestricted contributions should be at least 75%;
- that the need for Task Forces, fund for competitive grants and other specific purposes be met by restricted contributions which should not exceed 20% of the total;
- that all members share in the costs of System governance and administration.

Possible Breakdown of Individual Member Contributions:

Unrestricted	at least 75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System operations • Centre operations 	
Restricted	not more than 25%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task forces • Competitive grants • Other purposes 	
System governance and administration	not less than 2%

Proposition No. 15

In addition to its direct research supplier role, the CGIAR has a vital catalyst, convenor and mobilizer role. The future research needs of the developing countries will have to be met by a global agricultural research system involving NARS, the universities, NGOs, the private sector, the regional research networks and consortia, and research organizations in developed countries. The establishment of GFAR was a major step in this direction.

The CGIAR and its members, in their collective and individual capacities, and through their multilateral and bilateral agencies, should promote, encourage and support these partners in the global agricultural research system.

Proposition No. 16

Ultimately the responsibility for providing their own agricultural research and development needs rests on the NARS. Strengthening and instituting mechanisms for their sustainability continues to be a major challenge as well as ensuring the supportive policy and institutional environment for technology adoption.

Eighty percent of the current world's poor live in 11 countries. The CGIAR and its centres will have more time to look after the needs of the smaller countries with less capabilities if the NARS of the bigger countries could be further strengthened and made more self-reliant.