

ICW2000 Parallel Session II CGIAR Africa Strategy: An Update

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Preston Auditorium, The World Bank

Chair: Hans Binswanger

Rapporteur: Adama Traore

Secretary: Mohamood Noor and Sarwat Hussain

The Session was chaired by Hans Binswanger, Director Rural Development, Africa Region, the World Bank and Chairman, SPAAR. It was addressed by Hank Fitzhugh, Director General, ILRI and Chairman, CGIAR Centers' Subcommittee for SSA and Joseph Mukiibi, Chairman, FARA and Director General, NARO, Uganda. Adama Troare, Chairman, CORAF/WECARD and Chairman, CNRA, Mali, was the Rapporteur for the session.

The Chairman, in his opening remarks indicated that the African scientific community is moving forward in its reform at national, sub-regional and regional levels and has become self-guiding. The maturity of the sub-regional research organizations (ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD and SACCAR) have led to the establishment a new regional mechanism, FARA.

CGIAR Strategy on SSA

Hank Fitzhugh, presented CGIAR's SSA Strategy and the participatory process that led to its formulation. The process, in series of meetings, brought together key stakeholders such as the African NARS, SROs, SPAAR and FARA. The group jointly developed partnership goals for African agricultural research to contribute to:

- food security and poverty alleviation;
- competitiveness of African agriculture; and
- enhancement and sustainability of the natural resource base.

The Strategy is centered on four principal elements:

- Germplasm and natural resource management technologies;
- Technology dissemination and farmer empowerment;
- Policy research;
- and Capacity building.

To operationalize the Strategy, the IARCs have started to:

- Focus on the research-development continuum;
- Enhanced collaboration with African partners; and
- Improved coordination among CGIAR Centers.

The initiatives underway to implement the Strategy include:

- The consolidation of program and administrative support to achieve costeffectiveness and efficiency. This involves WARDAJICRISAT/IITA in West Africa and ICRAF/ILRI and East Africa;
- An inventory of Centers activities; particularly in collaboration with ASARECA and SACCAR in East and Southern Africa and with CORAF/WECARD in West and Central Africa; and
- Regional planning and priority setting in collaboration with NARSs and SROs.

Views of Leaders of African NABS

Joseph Mukiibi, presented a synthesis of the views of the African NABS leaders on the structure, governance and organization of the CGIAR. The report is the result of a series of internal discussions within the three SROs - ASARECA, CORAF, SACCAR - and FARA over the past five years. The outcome of these discussions were synthesized by a Task Force from the three SROs, which met in Entebbe, Uganda, on 16-17, October, 2000. The Synthesis proposed ten propositions, namely:

*1. **The CGLAR system and the LARCs it superintends should be structured and organized taking cognizance of the level of technological development of the different regions of the world From the African perspective, the structure **should facilitate and catalyze the goal of African NARSs and countries to increase agricultural productivity, as well as natural resource management and achieve much higher growths in agricultural production than was achieved in the 1960s to 1990s. In other words, Africans have got to run while others are walking.*****

*2. **The structure of the system should be such that the IARC scientists add value to what the NABS are doing. The centers should be reorganized to ensure that their role in the different regions is clearly defined and the two systems (i. e., LIM and NARSs) complement each other. It should also avoid overloading the NARS with competing partnerships. If possible NARSs should deal with much fewer centers than the current sixteen.***

*3. **The structure and objectives of the CGLAR centers in Africa should be such that they enable the NARSs and other technology development and transfer institutions operating in the sub-region and/or region to become efficient and effective institutions and organizations serving the farmers of the region to increase productivity and production not only to meet national and regional food demands but also to increase production of export crops to increasingly competitive global markets.***

Such a role for the IARCs can best be achieved by having an integrated regional center which helps the NARSs and farmers in the sub-region/region to identify and exploit technical and economic opportunities for increased agricultural production and thus leading to poverty eradication through economic growth.

Further, the IARC in a sub-region/region should provide specialist and technical services in areas in which it is uneconomical to establish such facilities at national level. This can be done for a fee or gratis.

4. In considering the structure of the CGAR, it is important to factor in the role which the private sector will play in the development of proprietary products for agricultural production. *Many of these products being developed by the private sector will need to be tested and/or licensed to ensure maximum environmental and human health safety. Further, there is also need to ensure that the private sector does not unfairly expropriate the natural resources of these regions and turn them into proprietary products. Given the complexities of all these issues and technologies, and the expensive nature of the facilities required the NARSs in SSA will be greatly facilitated if they have a nationally and internationally accepted public center within the region to undertake these tasks. This will also be to the benefit of the private sector.*

5. The structure of the CGLAR should provide for a limited number of global centers, which should deal with advanced, globally cross-cutting issue/factors on their own or in collaboration with the regional centers and advanced research institutes. The principal of subsidiarity should be observed in deciding what they should be doing.

6. In restructuring the IARCs, the long-term needs of the NARSs in a region (in particular SSA) should be considered. *Long-term, in this regard is beyond 40 years. The structure to be put in place should be such that the subregional and regional centers should evolve into permanent, not-for-profit, non-political research centers, which ultimately will be responsible for those activities which cannot be undertaken economically at national level.*

7. The structure should remain under one institutional and organizational umbrella and maintain its international features with the sponsorship of the World Bank IUNDPI FAO, whether for the regional centers or global ones

8. The structure to be instituted should factor in long-term sustainable financing of the centers in particular the regional ones. *Ultimately, such centers should be increasingly financed either directly or indirectly by those who benefit from the public goods and services produced by them. The key issue, in our opinion, is to design financing systems, which facilitate and enable counties in a region to contribute to the funding of the core budgets of the centers (e.g., create an endowment). Also, there will be need to ensure that such centers are seen to clearly add value to the work of the NARSs and demonstrate impact. A similar effort could also be initiated for the global centers.*

9. The CGIAR and LARCs in Africa should be reorganized into two regional centers - one for western and central Africa and the other for eastern and southern Africa. *Countries in these two sub-regions should be encouraged and facilitated towards contributing to a sustainable financing mechanism for a portion of the core budget of these two centers: Donor agencies should be encouraged to assist these two centers,*

and synergise their assistance such that the regional programs and the two systems complement each other. The centers should retain their non-political, not-for-profit and international character.

10. The structure should retain a central and coordinating apex mechanism or organ for the global and regional centers. It should be neutral and have a legal charter to operate globally and be inviolable. It should also be non-political, and not-for-profit.

In addition, the recommendations of the FARA group concerning the structural changes are, therefore, that:

- i. The system should consider and agree on the principles which should govern the structural changes - Clear indications are needed on the type of structure the system should aim for.
- ii. Despite of the competence and integrity of the senior managers of the IARCs (CDC&CBC), they may be too inward looking to recommend and effect the desired changes. Therefore there would be merit in appointing an independent management company/organization to design a new structure based on the principles agreed on in (i). It should be given clear ToR and be required to complete the task within 6 months. with very high respect. However, we feel that, based on our experience of operations of the IARCs on this continent and partnerships we have forged with them over the past 20 years,
- iii. An independent reference team should be appointed to superintend the process.
- iv. Within one year, agreement should have been reached on the new structure.
- v. A ministerial (if possible higher) level conference should be convened in 2002 to approve the new structure (second Lucerne conference).
- vi. Thereafter, restructuring of the system should take place and be completed within 2 years. Thus the whole process should take three years to complete.
- vii. Transitional and consequential measures should be put in place by the reference team (contractual obligations, etc.) as soon as the structure is agreed [i.e., (iv)].

Discussions and Conclusion

The presentations were followed by discussion. The Chairman summarized the outcome of the discussion. While acknowledging the CGIAR's effort to adapt to the evolving changes, he suggested that:

- The CGIAR Strategy does not adequately empower the clients;
- There is inadequate involvement of African universities, regional research centers and the international scientific system;
- Consolidation of the system is necessary, however, how to structure the system and the process need to be clarified;
- Need for global collaboration among NARS, SROs, ARI;
- There is need to assure public domain and the public good nature of research output;
- Empowerment of NARS and the farming community is needed to enhance their absorptive capacity;

- Empowerment comes from giving some the resources directly to the farmers, SROs, and NARS, so that they may commission or contract the CGIAR Centers and other Centers of excellence in the North and the South to address problems facing them.

He also share the outcome of a consultation among some of the staff of the Africa Region of the World Bank, concerning the empowerment of the client as a contribution to the ongoing dialogue. The group proposed the following funding arrangement for the CGIAR:

- A core fund for strategic research;
- A scientific empowerment fund, to enable scientists to carry out innovative research; and
- SRO empowerment fund to enable them to contract the CGIAR Centers and other centers of excellence to do research that addresses national and regional priorities within their sub-regions.

The Chairman, also suggested the continuation of the dialogue on the issues discussed in forthcoming meetings such as MTM in Durban, South Africa and the FARA/ SPAAR meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.