

Future Harvest Center Directors Committee
Report to the CGIAR
Washington, DC, October 27, 2000

1. CGIAR Renewal

At MTM00 in Dresden the CDC reported that it was heavily engaged in the participatory effort of the CGIAR to seek change and renewal.

In January 2000 the CDC met in Rome first among themselves, then with TAC on the proposed Vision and Strategy. In March, at TAC78, several Directors General pursued the exchanges with TAC and donor representatives. In April the CDC representatives participated actively in the deliberations of the Consultative Council in Rome.

At MTM00, where the TAC proposed Vision and Strategy was endorsed by the CGIAR, CBC and CDC met extensively among themselves and with representatives of other constituencies to launch the next phase of the renewal exercise, i.e. governance, structure and organization. CBC and CDC decided to hold a two-day retreat in September to reflect on these issues from their perspective.

In July 2000, the CDC met near London first among themselves, then for a full day with the new CGIAR Chair. The latter led to the launching of periodical, consultative and informative teleconferences.

In early September, the CBC and CDC met jointly for two full days in The Hague to reflect on the alternative structures and organization for the Centers and the CGIAR as a whole. This resulted in a proposal to develop codes of conduct and of practices for inter-center collaboration, and to create a federation co-owned by the CGIAR members and Centers that would ensure sustained enhancement of the effectiveness and efficiency of collaborative work among Centers. This proposal was aimed as an input into the deliberations of the Synthesis Group initiated by the Oversight Committee, and has since then been shared with the CGIAR as a whole.

In late September, at TAC79, several Directors General exchanged views with TAC and donor representatives on the CBC/CDC's and others' proposals.

In early October CBC and CDC representatives participated actively in the Synthesis Group Meeting in Sonning and contributed to the drafting of the Synthesis Group's report.

The CDC met on October 18-20 in Washington, in part jointly with the CBC. They endorsed wholeheartedly the report of the Synthesis Group, and urged quick action on the proposals embedded in the report. To that effect they strongly support the establishment of an Implementation Team with expert support, and stand ready to participate actively in these activities with a view on achieving effective changes in the

short and medium term. In parallel, the Centers stand ready to pursue the activities they have undertaken to streamline programmatic (particularly through integration of their regional undertakings) and administrative activities to enhance both effectiveness and efficiency of their common operations.

In advance of ICW00, the CDC pursued its exchange of views fruitfully with both the CGIAR and TAC Chairs.

2. PARC

At its meeting the CDC heard a report by Hubert Zandstra, Chair of PARC, on the meeting of PARC which was held on October 17 and which dealt mainly with the report of Finance Committee Working Group on Long Term Financing.

The CDC welcomes and supports the positive and constructive report of the Finance Committee Working Group. It considers that the proposed expansion of Future Harvest will provide a strong corporate entity to the CGIAR and is fully compatible with the federation proposal contained in the Synthesis Group report. The CDC feels that the first order of priority of the expanded Future Harvest continues to be to maintain and expand ODA support for the Centers through more effective marketing and communication.

The CDC supports the four main recommendations of the working group, i.e.

- Build and expand the Future Harvest organization;
- Continue the strategic marketing and communications assistance to the Centers;
- Explore major fundraising strategies (in the public and private sectors) and their impact on future revenues;
- Develop Future Harvest nodes at the national level.

The CDC urges to increase the 2001 resources of Future Harvest and decided to sustain support from the Centers at a level of \$490,000. In addition, the Centers will second virtually to Future Harvest up to a total of eight staff-years of their public awareness and resource mobilization staff. The CDC formally requested the Finance Committee to allocate \$500,000 mainly to expand Future Harvest's public awareness outside the USA and to acquire fundraising capacity. In addition, it calls on the CGIAR members to provide financial support to Future Harvest to expand its capacity building as recommended by the Finance Committee Working Group

The CDC supports in general the proposed structure of Future Harvest with its board, an executive director and capacities in resource mobilization, marketing and communications, capacity building, services to CGIAR members and to Centers, and support to national hubs

The CDC urges, once again, a more generalized use of the Future Harvest brand name.

3. Future Harvest Global Conservation Trust

Geoffrey Hawtin, chair of the Task Force on the Trust, briefed the CDC on progress made with regard to the establishment of an endowment fund for the maintenance of genebanks.

A study – jointly financed by Future Harvest, the Finance Committee and SGRP -- is currently being undertaken by Community Counseling Service (CCS), under the leadership of John Connelly, consultant to the Task Force. The study will assess the feasibility of attracting endowments in the amount of some \$200 million. The study will identify potential sources, how they can be accessed, and how the trust should be marketed. It is expected that, while the study will focus on the genebanks endowment, it will produce a spillover of a more generic nature that will benefit the expanded Future Harvest.

The CDC expressed its full support to this undertaking under the leadership of Geoffrey Hawtin and is looking forward to review and discuss the outcome of the feasibility study at its May 2001 meeting in Durban.

4. Gender and Diversity Program

The CDC heard reports from Meryl Williams, Chair of the program Steering Committee, and from the CDDC which benefited from a full presentation of the program recent developments.

The CDC reiterated its support to program, while asking the Steering Committee to sharpen the focus of the program, particularly on servicing the Centers. It agreed to provide financial support to the program as a manifestation of that support and with the expectation that other donors will act accordingly.

5. Integrated Natural Resource Management

Jeffrey Sayer, Chair of the CDC Task Force on INRM, reported on the very successful meeting conducted in early September at ICLARM's headquarters in Penang. It was attended by thirteen Centers' NRM staff and 50 participants, including six Directors General.

A report on the meeting was made available at ICW00 and Jeffrey Sayer made a presentation in plenary on the conclusions of the meeting.

It was agreed that the Task Force would consult electronically and establish plans for follow-up during the coming year. Joachim Voss offered to host a follow-up INRM meeting at CIAT in the second half of 2001.

6. Climate Change

Pedro Sanchez, Chair of the Inter-Center Working Group on Climate Change, reported on the achievements and recommendations of the Working Group. The first phase of the undertaking tackled the effects of the Green Revolution on climate change and concluded that it had delivered significant achievements in carbon sequestration. The second phase deals with adaptation – i.e. the need to develop germplasm adapted to expected climate changes -- and mitigation that calls on active participation of the CGIAR in international conventions. Eleven research projects were elaborated and constitute the Centers' providing the scientific and training backbone to the UNFCCC's efforts to link carbon sequestration with poverty alleviation in the tropics.

The CDC endorsed the recommendations of the Inter-Center Working Group.

7. The FAO International Undertaking on Genetic Resources

Geoffrey Hawtin briefed the CDC on recent developments with the FAO International Undertaking following the Teheran meeting and preceding the November 12-17 meeting in Switzerland. Important issues to be discussed will include the status of the CGIAR in the Undertaking and the scope of multilateral system.

The Center Directors expressed their concern that all key crops of importance to the Centers be included within the scope of the International Undertaking. To that effect a resolution was unanimously accepted by the CDC, urging the negotiators to include all the main crops dealt with by the CGIAR in the Undertaking.

8. Revised Guidelines on IPR

In the framework of the CGIAR renewal it was agreed that the CBC and CDC would update the IPR Guidelines. This was done in late July and went through a process of consultation beyond the Centers. It was pointed out, however, that the proposed new guidelines did not depart from the guidelines in existence since 1996 with respect to the designated germplasm.

However, it was noted that certain misinterpretations of the guidelines were circulating, and that these had the potential to hamper the on-going re-negotiation of the International Undertaking.

Thus, the CDC adopted a resolution (attached) clarifying its position and requesting that the issue be resolved within the appropriate framework of FAO and stating that no new Guidelines would be adopted, pending resolution of the outstanding issues.

9. SWIM

Frank Rijsberman submitted a proposal to the CDC to reorganize SWIM into an inter-center undertaking, with a joint research agenda and joint management, which would focus on a comprehensive assessment of water management for agriculture, credible for all stakeholders including NARS, CGIAR members and the environment community. A first step would consist in holding a "Dialogue on Water for Food and Environmental Security", scheduled to take place in Colombo in December 2000.

The CDC welcomed the proposal and endorsed it.

10. Central Advisory Service

Stein Bie reported on recent developments with CAS. The Steering Committee, which includes three Directors General, had met in The Hague in early September to review CAS' work program.

The CDC took note of the proposed program. It asked Stein Bie to ensure that CAS activities are well focused, particularly on servicing the Centers.

11. Information Communication Technology

Stein Bie reported on recent developments in ICT which includes a meeting, held in September in The Hague, of Center staff involved in ICT and knowledge sharing (KS). On behalf of the CD Task Force on ICT, Stein Bie made a number of recommendations striving at streamlining, strengthening and diversifying the Centers' ICT and KS services.

The CDC endorsed the recommendations, provided agreements can be reached with individual Centers on local solutions. The CDC reaffirmed its strong interest for having IVDN-like services. The CDC also requested the ICT Task Force to build up an executive capacity particularly with regard to issues related to KS.

12. AIARC

The association, a vivid example of Centers pooling common services, held its annual membership meeting on October 17. In March 2001, Lukas Brader will step down as Board Chair and Meryl Williams will succeed in the position. The CDC expresses its appreciation to Lukas Brader for having served as Board Chair with great dedication to the Centers.

13. Welcome and Farewells

The CDC welcomes hereby formally Ian Johnson as new chair of the CGIAR. As indicated earlier in this report, the CDC has established already an excellent positive working relationship with the Chair, and appreciates greatly his interest in pursuing it.

In July 2000, the CDC welcomed Frank Rijsberman as Director General of IWMI. The CDC wants to reiterate this welcome at the plenary meeting of the CGIAR. The CDC wants also to wish David Seckler well in his retirement and to thank him for his contribution to the CGIAR as Director General of IWMI

The CDC wishes Alexander von der Osten well in his retirement from the World Bank. The CDC has known Alexander for over 20 years in different capacities at GTZ, ISNAR, the TAC Secretariat and the CGIAR Secretariat. The CDC welcomes Francisco Reifschneider in the position of CGIAR Director and is looking forward to a fruitful collaboration.

The CDC wishes also to express its best wishes to a good friend, Roger Rowe. Roger has been a man of many Centers, and of all seasons as he coped with various types of crises to the resolution of which he was remarkably effective. His dedication to the CGIAR has been unsurpassed and greatly appreciated.

**Centre Directors' statement on the Guiding Principles on Intellectual Property
Rights Relating to Genetic Resources**

The Directors General of the Future Harvest Centres, supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, in their meeting of 19 October 2000, considered proposed new text for the Guiding Principles on Intellectual Property Relating to Genetic Resources. In doing so they reaffirmed their full commitment to upholding the Agreements signed with FAO in 1994 that recognized the trusteeship status of the Centres with regard to the plant genetic resources collections, and placed the collections within the FAO International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections.

Furthermore the Centre Directors reaffirmed that, in accordance with the Agreements, they:

- 1) will continue to safely conserve, maintain, study and distribute this germplasm world-wide for use in agricultural research and development,
- 2) recognize the intergovernmental authority of FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in setting policies for the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections, of which the designated germplasm is part,
- 3) confirm that they will not seek legal ownership nor seek intellectual property protection over the designated germplasm or related information and ensure, through the use of material transfer agreements, that any recipient of the material is bound by the same conditions.

The Centre Directors recognized, however, that there have been different and conflicting interpretations concerning certain aspects of the Agreements, in particularly with respect to intellectual property protection, and that these need to be resolved as soon as possible. The lack of such resolution risks seriously hampering crop improvement work for the benefit of developing countries.

Under the terms of the 1994 Agreements with FAO, it is not within the power or authority of the Centres to set policies unilaterally on matters concerning the designated germplasm. Such resolution is to be provided by FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. However, the Centre Directors also recognized the difficulties faced by the FAO Commission in attempting to provide such resolution in the short term, especially prior to concluding the renegotiation of the International Undertaking. They thus call upon FAO, and the international community in general, to use whatever offices are appropriate to bring this issue to an expeditious conclusion.

The Centre Directors have decided that, pending resolution of these issues, no new guiding principles on intellectual property relating to plant genetic resources will be adopted.