



**Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)**

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**Durban, South Africa**

**Charting the CGIAR'S Future – Change Design and Management**

**Synthesis Report of the FARA/CGIAR Consultation**  
**On Agricultural Research in SSA: Meeting of the Minds III**  
**Towards a Common Ground**

This is the background paper for the Sub-Saharan Africa Agricultural Research Day on the FARA/CGIAR strategy.

**This item is for**      Information       Discussion       Decision

**Proposed Action:** Indication of the Group's response to the strategy as outlined in the attached paper.

# **FARA/CGIAR Consultation on Agricultural Research in SSA Meeting of the Minds III – Towards A Common Ground**

**Nairobi: 19 – 20 March, 2001**

## ***SYNTHESIS REPORT***<sup>1</sup>

### **Executive Summary**

Recognising the FARA vision for agricultural research in sub-Saharan Africa and acknowledging that there is an approved CG Strategy for sub-Saharan Africa, the FARA/CGIAR consultation concluded that:

- The CGIAR Centres and their partners are committed to integration of research activities in SSA based on work currently undertaken in the two-subregions of WCA and ESA.
- Programmatic integration will be developed in the context of established sub-regional priorities.
- Programmatic integration must be based upon partnership between NARS/SROs and the Centres.
- Appropriate final modalities for implementing integration will depend on evolving circumstances, and options need to be fully examined.
- Consensus was reached on steps to be taken and a timetable to move the whole process forward in a manner that ensures congruence between the subregions.
- It is expected that this process of integration will lead to increasing convergence in the visions and future research agenda of the NARS, FARA and the Centres to better serve national and regional needs in Africa.

### **Background of the meeting**

The global agricultural research community is involved in wide ranging discussions on how the CGIAR Centres (the Centres) are to evolve to better serve the needs and priorities of their NARS partners. One factor driving this process is a perceived need among all stakeholders for the Centres to be more effective and efficient, as well as improve cooperation and coordination with their principal partners in each region. There have been calls for regional planning and priority setting, consistency in methodologies, programme coherence, and integration of Centre activities in the sub-regions in order to achieve more operational efficiency and programmatic effectiveness.

In SSA, the NARS have taken the lead towards regional coordination. A two-tier process of institution building and regional planning and priority-setting has been pursued to achieve better collaboration – first through the formation and development of sub-regional research

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<sup>1</sup> This document incorporates changes and revisions of an initial draft that was discussed with the participants in the last plenary session and a subsequent draft that was circulated to all participants for comments. The term « integration » refers to programmatic integration (research activities/research support) in its broadest sense.

organizations (SROs) for coordination, and more recently through the development of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), a region-wide research coordinating body. This institutional development has created the need for more effective integration and coordination with Centres and more conducive conditions for this to occur include:

- Many African NARS have evolved substantially and are becoming better organized and more effective.
- The three sub-regional bodies coordinating research in SSA, ASARECA, CORAF, and SACCAR, have developed visions, strategies, and plans.
- SPAAR/FARA has developed a Vision for African Agricultural Research.

Many of the Centres active in SSA already collaborate through ecoregional programmes, systemwide programmes, and networks, but acknowledge that more needs to be done. They have responded to this challenge through a series of consultative meetings starting with NARS partners in 1999 (Meeting of Minds I and II) and resulting in the development of a “Strategy for the CGIAR in sub-Saharan Africa”. Although a well-articulated document whose key elements respond to the priorities in the SPAAR/FARA Vision, it has remained as a framework for collaboration rather than a strategic Action Plan.

It is important to recognise that the Centres implement global research programmes, and that their research activities within the region have in most cases global significance beyond the region (concept of international public goods). At the same time it is necessary to acknowledge that all NARS in the region have research and development agendas that are necessarily wider in scope than those of the centres.

In this context, there are other stakeholders that play important roles in the region. These include international research centres that are not members of the CGIAR, advanced research institutions (ARIs), universities, farmers’ associations, NGOs, and the private sector. Many of these institutions are also developing innovative collaborative research modalities in SSA, and we can learn from each other. This broader context of regional collaboration also has a broader range of regional priorities that respond to the needs of the countries of the region.

GFAR can play several roles in this process, including further development of the Strategic Action Plan for the CGIAR in SSA. GFAR will continue to support this process in several ways. It will help to strengthen the participation of various stakeholders through supporting their participation in the relevant meetings. It will provide a link with broader regional priority setting exercises, including those of other stakeholders. It will support the strengthening and coordination of the NARS by supporting the exchange of experiences within Africa and with other regions. Finally, it will help identify potential areas of synergy within the broadest context of institutions and programmes in the region.

Prof. Mukiibi, the Chairman of FARA, and Dr. Nwanze, the Chairman of the Centre Directors Committee (CDC) Sub-Committee on SSA, jointly chaired the meeting.

## **Objectives**

The present meeting is another step in this consultative process to achieve greater integration and coordination. The meeting provided a forum to discuss on-going Centers’ activities and obtain

the input of FARA and the SROs, as principal partners into the on-going integration process, including how to improve and develop further the Centre's strategy and translate this strategy into action. Representatives of GFAR, TAC, NGOs, and farmer organizations also participated and contributed fully to the discussions.

This meeting was the first formal consultative meeting between DGs of the Centers and the FARA Executive Committee to discuss issues of mutual interest at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Specific objectives were to:

- Help define the Centre's niche in helping to accomplish the shared SPAAR/FARA Vision
- Identify elements of a coherent strategy and action plan in SSA
- Build consensus and identify steps to develop/implement a Strategic Action Plan, including a framework for regional planning and priority setting
- Identify new operational modalities for integration among Centres and their cooperation with FARA and the SROs
- Achieve convergence of African position and Centres' perspectives on the regional integration process.

Expected outputs of the meeting included:

- Elements for a coherent Strategic Action Plan for the Centres in SSA
- Steps needed to move from a framework to Strategic Action Plan -- steps forward to the Mid-Term Meeting in Durban in May 2001 and beyond.
- Endorsement of the integration process

It was clarified that the Centres' Strategy for SSA is region-wide, and it will be implemented in the two sub-regions: Western and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa. Thus implementation can go ahead on the basis of the three SRO's existing strategies. ASARECA and SACCAR are independent SROs with unique histories and functions, but there will be a need for them to coordinate a regional approach in joint FARA/Centre planning. Eco-regional zones will be used in the implementation of specific programmes and activities.

### **On-going Developments**

Dr. Hank Fitzhugh, Director General of ILRI, and Dr. Romano Kiome, Director of KARI, welcomed the participants. Prof Mukiibi, the Chairman of FARA, reported on the transformation from SPAAR/FARA to FARA. The need to establish FARA as a legal entity has been recognized and options for hosting FARA in Africa are being explored with FAO. The development of FARA's strategy and plan will be done as soon as the Secretariat is functional.

On behalf of the Centre Directors Committee (CDC), Hank Fitzhugh presented the milestones that have been achieved since MoM1. The 1998 review of the CGIAR system chaired by Maurice Strong provided a critical impetus to regional consolidation, by suggesting stronger regional programmes and a renewed focus on sub-Saharan Africa. These principles were

incorporated into the new CGIAR Vision and Strategy at the Mid Term Meeting in Dresden in 2000. At International Centres Week in 2000, the CDC and the Centre Board Chairs Committee (CBC) agreed to move the process forward and assigned regional responsibilities to Centres.

A concern was expressed whether there is convergence or divergence actually taking place in the sub-regions. It was agreed that it is not necessary that there be complete convergence between the Centres and the NARS and SROs, as long as there is significant intersection of priorities leading to the need for improved integration and cooperation.

The meeting received a report from South Africa on the plans for events and meetings surrounding the Mid Term Meeting in Durban in May. It was agreed that further discussions will take place, and that the final decisions will be made at the SPAAR/FARA meeting in early April.

The CG proposal on HIV/AIDS and agriculture was presented by Dr. Kanayo Nwanze for feedback from stakeholders. Concern was expressed that the initiative must not be donor driven, and questions were raised about the comparative advantage of the Centres. HIV/AIDS cuts across many sectors, and many institutions with diverse expertise and experience are addressing a wide range of issues. The initiative was endorsed and it was agreed that the starting point should be on documenting the implications of HIV/AIDS on agriculture, and on identifying areas where the Centres can contribute. These may include labor-saving technologies, increased food production, research on medicinal plants, erosion of indigenous knowledge, promotion of nutritious foods, and research on coping and decision mechanisms in households headed by women and children.

A presentation from the TAC by Dr. Oumar Niangado focused on the impact of genetic materials distributed through the Centres in SSA. It showed substantial, but highly variable adoption. It was acknowledged that impact associated with the Centres depends on a wide range of partnerships, which should be improved and expanded. It was suggested that a range of methods be used to assess multiple impacts of research on production, livelihoods and the sustainability of natural resources. It was noted that in many cases, “good” technologies are not adopted because of a range of problems in technology transfer and delivery. The most effective roles of the Centres in catalyzing innovative delivery methods with various partners need to be clarified and documented.

### **Progress Towards Programmatic Integration**

The state of and progress made in Centre integration and SRO coordination in the sub-regions was highlighted in two presentations. Dr. Ndiaga M’baye of CORAF presented on progress made in WCA in a recent meeting with the three principal Centres (ICRISAT, IITA, WARDA) operating in WCA sub-region and the mechanisms and steps agreed to be taken to move the process forward. Dr. Goeffrey Mrema presented on behalf of ASARECA and SACCAR on the on-going collaboration and cooperation with the Centres operating in ESA sub-region, especially through networks.

The facilitating Centres in WCA (IITA) and ESA (ICRAF) then presented progress made towards coordination and consolidation in the two sub-regions. Both presentations clearly indicate directions towards a collaborative agenda. While it was recognized that the integration

processes in the two regions are at different stages and may differ to reflect different conditions and cultural differences, it was clear that instruments and processes are in place and are consistent in essential aspects.

The presentations highlighted progress already made in identification of potential areas of research and research support integration. It was agreed that research issues identified could form the basis of thematic areas, where synergies need to be created amongst Centres, through a greater integration of activities.

Inventories of Centre activities in WCA and ESA have been prepared to help identify potential areas for integration. They are meant to facilitate identification of synergies, gaps, overlaps and areas of complementarity as well as duplication – in short, to provide opportunities to harmonize, consolidate and/or integrate current programmes. Some of the results of preliminary analysis based on the data bases were presented to the meeting. The group agreed upon the potential usefulness of the data bases and the need to develop/refine them in order to realize their full value.

The meeting endorsed the stepwise process underway. This involves (1) identification of priority thematic areas where the Centres and their partners (international, regional and national) consider that a greater integration of activities will create necessary synergies and greater impact; (2) identification of pragmatic options for managing greater integration; and (3) development of implementation mechanisms for greater integration and synergies.

It was recognized that the next steps should involve wider involvement of CGIAR Centres in WCA. It was also recognized that in order to achieve the benefits of programmatic integration, i.e. better joint collaborative activities in WCA and ECA, further discussion is now needed at the senior scientist level to elaborate themes, set up task forces, etc. This step needs to encompass the NARS, IARCs, and other partners – NGOs, farmer organizations, women's groups, and the private sector as appropriate.

On operationalization of strategies, three aspects were discussed: time horizon, short term deliverables (time-bound including milestones) and long-term deliverables, including priority setting and possible structural change. The group recognized that integration activities need to be pursued in both the short term that can result in quick wins as well as long term improvements.

The reports reflect significant achievements in both regions in terms of:

- Inventory database of Centre activities in WCA and ESA
- Identification of areas of joint interest for programmatic and administrative collaboration/integration in
- Formation and operationalization of some task forces in WCA
- Consultation with CORAF/WECARD in WCA
- Inputs on mechanisms for integration and development of a frame of integration for ESA
- Participation of all CGIAR Centres in ESA in achieving consensus for the region
- Timeline to reach a synergistic collaboration and integration

It was recognized by the group that there is also now a challenge upon the individual NARS to push their own internal integration further. The accomplishment of this is a parallel process that will progressively contribute to increased efficiency and effectiveness. While progress has been made in some countries, further efforts still need to be made to bring about more inclusive NARS, and the SROs have a role to play to assist in this process. This would include universities and other partners who collaborate with the Centres, but are not necessarily represented in the SROs.

Finally, there was a strong consensus for greater integration among Centres in recognition of significant payoffs. The group recognized that every anticipated step in the integration process should be evaluated to make clear its value added in achieving the goals of the process itself.

### **Towards Convergence on the CG Change Process**

Presentations were made on the African position on the CG change process. FARA reiterated its position that there should be two CG Centres in SSA, one for WCA and the other for ESA. It was agreed that further examination of all modalities of operation is required. The key elements of the latest Change Design and Management Team (CDMT) draft were presented. FARA and the CDC have concerns about the CDMT paper, and both plan to communicate these to the CDMT.

One key issue emerging from the presentations was the role of structural and evolutionary change in bringing about greater regional integration. It was agreed that, whether or not the ongoing efforts end in structural change, the meeting clearly endorses the integration process and agreed to work together to carry it forward.

### **The way forward**

In order to ensure that SSA builds upon the momentum acquired so far in the integration process, the meeting recognised the need to make a number of decisions concerning the principles to be followed in moving forward, the mechanisms for ensuring a constructive flow of information and full consultation among all stakeholders and the next steps to be taken.

#### ***Principles***

Several critical factors were identified to carry the integration process successfully forward. These are (i) the quality of partnership relations as a key to ensuring continuing progress, (ii) that issues concerning the substance of the agenda should drive discussions of options concerning structure, so that form should follow function in bringing about change, (iii) that regional programs should build upon existing activities, and (iv) that all activities/changes should be put to the value added test before being undertaken.

To ensure continuing progress, relevant principles of partnership identified by the meeting that should govern the integration process include but are not limited to: trust, confidence, mutual respect, and full attribution of credit.

### ***Mechanisms for monitoring integration process***

The meeting recognised a need for mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating collaborative efforts, including the integration process, among Centres, between the CDC SSA sub-committee and the SROs, and between the CDC SSA sub-committee and FARA.

- Among the Centres, the CDC SSA sub-committee is responsible for policy level decisions related to harmonization of programmatic activities and support services. Recognizing the time and financial constraints that exist, as well as ensuring that they add value, and building on existing mechanisms, the CDC SSA sub-committee should call regular consultation meetings of all stakeholders.
- The CDC SSA sub-committee should participate in the FARA General Assembly and the possibility of being represented on the Executive Committee of FARA will be explored. In addition, FARA and the CDC SSA sub-committee should explore other modes of consultation on strategic, programmatic and policy issues.
- In the SRO Annual Planning Meetings, it was agreed there would be a session dedicated to Centre activities to facilitate monitoring and evaluating progress in the short and medium term, get feedback, and in the longer term make more visible the global dimensions of the Centre agenda in the sub-regions.
- It was also agreed that there should be regional representation at relevant Centre planning meetings and that mechanisms for coordination among the Centres at the national level should be developed.

### ***Elements for a Strategic Action Plan***

- The SPAAR/FARA Vision for African Agricultural Research and the Strategy for the CGIAR in sub-Saharan Africa provide the necessary framework for an Action Plan.
- Based on four pillars identified in the CGIAR Strategy for SSA:
  - Germplasm and natural resource management
  - Technology dissemination and farmer empowerment
  - Policy research
  - Capacity building
- Comprehensive analysis of CG Centres activities in SSA with articulation of gaps, duplications and synergies
- Identification of partners, analysis of strengths, opportunities, added value and comparative advantages
- Roles/niches of partners
- Regional/sub-regional priorities
- Modes of collaboration and partnerships
- Ecoregional programs, consortia and networks and modes of operation
- Thematic research areas, areas of intersection, convergence and integration
- Human resources development strategy
- Options for managing regional integration
- Timeframe for items in the Action Plan

### ***Next steps, timelines and responsibilities***

The meeting endorsed the following next steps to continue with the integration process in SSA:

1. The draft Synthesis Report will be shared with all participants and revised based upon comments received (Action: Chair of SSA sub-Committee of CDC).
2. The report of this meeting will be presented to the SPAAR/FARA Annual Plenary in April 2001 at Addis Ababa to incorporate further feedback (Action: Chair of the SSA sub-Committee of the CDC).
3. By MTM 2001, further update, (including standardization) and analysis of the data bases will be carried out to flag any gaps, and identify what further needs to be done to address the gaps (Action: IITA and ICRAF).
4. By ICW 2001, the Action Plans for each sub-region will be prepared and submitted to the Chair of the SSA sub-Committee of the CDC and to FARA. (Action: IITA and ICRAF as facilitators in each sub-region, and in close collaboration with the other Centres, the SROs, the NARS, and other stakeholders active in SSA).
5. It was further agreed that in order to develop these Action Plans, IITA and ICRAF will facilitate meetings in each of the sub-regions with senior scientists from the Centres and NARS sometime between MTM and ICW 2001.
6. It was also agreed that these Action Plans should include the elements identified earlier in this report and in particular the following:
  - (i) Analysis of future regional research and development challenges, building upon existing regional priorities;
  - (ii) Identification of thematic areas for research and research support that represent intersections of regional interests and interests of the CGIAR Centres.
  - (iii) Identification of mechanisms and processes for implementing integration, such as formation of task forces, as well as the financial resources to carry out the research. Mechanisms for managing the consolidation of activities, from the regional to the national scales should be identified.

## **Conclusions**

There was agreement on the steps taken so far, and recommendations on how to improve and broaden the process as it is carried forward. The Centres are encouraged to carry forward the process, and to report regularly to FARA and the SRO Secretariats.

The meeting agreed that FARA, the SROs, and the Centres operating in the region will jointly carry forward regional programmatic integration. It is agreed that other partners will become involved in future steps.

All the parties involved in the meeting reiterated that a spirit of trust fostered by open, congenial, and productive dialogue is the critical element in achieving the benefits of regional integration and agreed to maintain and strengthen the spirit that was clearly manifest in this meeting.

**Annex 1**  
**FARA/CGIAR Consultation on Agricultural Research in Sub-Saharan Africa**  
**ILRI, Nairobi, March 19-20, 2001**

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*Agenda and Work Schedule*

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*Monday, March 19, 2001*

FARA/CGIAR Consultation at ILRI

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Chair/Presenter</b>
08:00	Registration	
08:45	Welcome address (host CG institute) Welcome address (host NARS) Opening address	Hank Fitzhugh Romano Kiome Joseph Mukiibi
09:00	<b>Setting the Stage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Objectives of the meeting</li> <li>● SPAAR-FARA Transition: From Gaborone to Addis</li> <li>● From MoM I to March 2001</li> </ul>	Kanayo Nwanze  Joseph Mukiibi  Hank Fitzhugh
09:45	Discussion	
10:00	Sub-Regional Strategies: SRO-CGIAR Consultations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ASARECA/SACCAR</li> <li>● CORAF/WECARD</li> </ul>	Geoffrey Mrema  Ndiaga Mbaye
10:30	Coffee Break	
11:00	Discussion	
12:00	Pre-MTM African Agric. Seminar 17/18 May, Pretoria	Shadrack Moephuli
12:30	Update on Systemwide Initiative on HIV/AIDS and Agriculture	Kanayo Nwanze
13:00	Lunch Break	

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Chair/Presenter</b>
14:00	<b>Towards Regional Integration</b> Inventory of CGIAR Research Activities in Sub-Saharan Africa and Status of Regional Consolidation and Integration of CGIAR Research and Services in Sub-Saharan Africa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● East and Southern Africa (ESA)</li> <li>● West and Central Africa (WCA)</li> </ul>	Anne-Marie Izac Lukas Brader
15:30	Coffee Break	
16:00	The African Position on Structure, Governance and organization of the CGIAR  Update on the CDMT/SG  Discussion	Joseph Mukiibi Hank Fitzhugh
17:30	Impact of CGIAR research in sub-Saharan Africa.	Oumar Niangado
19:30	Reception	

*Tuesday, March 20, 2001*

**FARA/CGIAR Consultation**

*Towards a Common Ground*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Chair/Presenter</b>
08:30	Recap of Day 1	Kanayo Nwanze
09:00	Working Group - Discussion on Thematic areas	Bruce Scott
10:30	Coffee Break/Group Photograph	
11:00	Working Group Reports	Bruce Scott
13:00	Lunch Break	
13:00	Synthesis Group and Chairs of working groups identify critical issues, major outputs and elements of Action Plan	
15:00	Report of Synthesis Group and Discussion	Bruce Scott
15:30	Coffee Break	
17:00	Closure of the meeting	Kanayo Nwanze

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