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**Mid-Term Meeting 1998
May 25 to 29
Brasília, Brazil**

Mobilizing Science for Global Food Security

Impact Assessment and Evaluation Group (IAEG)

Report on Activities

Attached is the Impact Assessment and Evaluation Group (IAEG) report on its activities. This report is issued as background for Agenda Item 8 (vi): “Recommendations from CGIAR Cosponsors and Committees—IAEG.”



**IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION GROUP
(IAEG)**

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

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This report provides an update, since ICW97, on the progress made in the IAEG projects and reports on recent developments in the IAEG.

Terms of reference and strategy

- 1. Facilitate the strengthening of the CGIAR's ex post impact assessment capabilities.*
- 2. Provide guidance and oversight to impact assessment activities and recommend appropriate actions by the CGIAR and/or Centers.*
- 3. Ensure the design and conduct of evaluations that document the impact of the CGIAR as a System.*

This charter comes down basically to two things: (1) 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 (2) commissioning impact assessment studies which document the effect of the work that the CGIAR has carried out. The CGIAR members have also requested the IAEG to produce an annual report on the impacts of the CGIAR.

We have developed the following strategies: to focus on key elements of CGIAR activities and build, together with studies conducted by Centers and Members, an incremental evaluation of the fabric of CGIAR work;

- to develop common protocols for use across Centers so that System-wide impacts can be determined;*
- to encourage the use of a range of evaluation methods throughout the System*
- to work collaboratively with Centers and NARS in conducting impact assessments, while ensuring objectivity and quality*
- to enhance credibility through the use of independent evaluators and peer review*
- to encourage studies by Centers with their NARS partners to provide training for evaluators throughout the CGIAR, linking skill enhancement activities with actual impact studies wherever possible to encourage Centers to develop evaluation strategies for themselves*

Our operational credo comprises:

- (1) working as closely as possible with Centers (we provide some financial support);*
- (2) using outside independent consultants to provide technical oversight to the projects, increase the credibility of the studies and introduce new methodologies;*
- (3) involving NARS partners in all studies; and*
- (4) a member of the IAEG taking an oversight interest for each project.*

IAEG membership

Two new members of the IAEG were recently approved by the CGIAR: Dr Cristina David (Philippines) and Dr Frans Leeuw (The Netherlands) – one additional member still needs to be appointed. We had a telephone meeting in which new members took part and had initial discussions about oversight responsibilities. There will be an in-person meeting of the IAEG in June.

Establishment of a Secretariat at UNDP

The Secretariat is still in the process of being established at the New York offices of UNDP. The appointment of Dr Guido Gryseels as Executive Secretary has been approved by the UNDP appointment board and a formal request for his secondment has been sent to FAO. It is hoped that he will take up duties in New York during August this year. Dr Carlos Zulberti is on loan from UNEP to the CGIAR and is working with the IAEG until September this year

Operational matters

We are pleased with the developing interaction between Centers and the IAEG although we are still concerned about the amount of time that Center staff can devote to IAEG projects. Attention is still needed to developing mechanisms for funding IAEG activities.

IAEG WORK PROGRAM

The status of the elements of the IAEG portfolio are detailed below:

Annual report on CGIAR impacts

The decision that the IAEG should assemble an annual report on CGIAR impact was taken at MTM97. The IAEG produced a pilot report for 1997. It was assembled from the most recent Center annual reports available to the IAEG (usually 1995) and from material forwarded from a number of Centers. Feedback has been positive.

The 1998 report is currently being prepared. We have received material from 10 Centers and several others have indicated that they will have material available. We have an active interaction with contributing Centers once their initial drafts are received.

Methodological review and synthesis of existing CGIAR ex post impact assessments

The project arose from a strong recommendation of the IA&E workshop at The Hague that the IAEG should ‘first examine what we have already done’. The report was circulated after ICW last year. The project aimed 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; and determine whether there were enough studies to support a synthesis across the

studies. The analysis pointed to the need for systematic collection and reporting of information on intermediate products and indirect outcomes as well as on adoption and direct outcomes. It also raised the issue of the quality of reporting studies with respect to the linkage of Center activities to observed effects, detail on scope and methodology and the context within which conclusions are presented. The Consultant also found that Centers have concentrated on applied research activities and direct effects (such as yield increase). Basic research and intermediate effects and longer-term outcomes were given much less attention.

The IAEG will discuss this report with the intent of developing best practice guidelines for reporting impact assessment and evaluation studies.

Impact of CGIAR crop germplasm improvement on food production

This topic was chosen because it will elucidate the impact of a large proportion of the research effort in the past 15 years (the CGIAR has 25 mandate crops and a major proportion of the effort has been on crop germplasm improvement). It will depend largely on evaluation expertise already in the System.

The scoping and design phase of the project was completed by Prof Greg Traxler from Auburn University. Prof Bob Evenson has now been contracted as the lead investigator and is planning a meeting of participants during August this year. Co-sponsors approved some funding in the current budget and we are hoping that these funds will be made available to get this project underway soon. Dr Cristina David will undertake the oversight of this project for the IAEG.

Assessment of the adoption of CGIAR agricultural innovations

This project had its genesis at the CGIAR impact assessment and evaluation workshop held at ISNAR in April 1996 when Centers and NARS identified case study methodology as potentially one of the more useful evaluation methods for assessing impact which could be used by CGIAR evaluators - they requested further training. The IAEG commissioned Prof Lee Sechrest from the University of Arizona to conduct a workshop in the use of case study for impact assessment and to provide on-going advice to participating Centers to ensure appropriate design and rigour is applied to their studies. A paper providing an overview of the study was circulated after ICW 97. The ten studies in the project are nearing completion and will be discussed at a synthesis workshop to be held in Hawaii at the end of June. The workshop will produce a cross-system analysis of the findings of the individual case studies. The workshop will also discuss draft papers on the case study methodology and technology adoption commissioned as part of the project. The project report is scheduled to be presented to the CGIAR at ICW in October this year.

The studies in the project are:

Study 1: Hybrid maize in Ghana

Lead Center : CIMMYT NARS partner: Ghana

Study 2: Cassava processing in Brazil

CGIAR Center: CIAT NARS partner: EMBRAPA, Brazil

Study 3: CGIAR and NARS post-production innovations in the Philippines and Vietnam

CGIAR Center: IRRI NARS partner: PhilRice, Philippines; Vietnam

Study 4: Comparative study on factors critical to the adoption of ICRISAT/NARS groundnut innovations in Vietnam and India

CGIAR Center: ICRISAT NARS partner: Oil Plant Institute, Vietnam

Study 5: Comparative study on factors critical to the adoption of ICRISAT/NARS sorghum germplasm innovations in India and Nigeria

CGIAR Center: ICRISAT NARS partner: Nigeria

Study 6: Small holder dairy technology in Kenya

CGIAR Center – ILRI NARS partner: KARI, Kenya

Study 7: - Crop descriptors lists (DL)

CGIAR Center: IPGRI

Study 8: International *musa* testing programme (IMTP) of INIBAP

CGIAR Center: IPGRI

Study 9: Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

CGIAR Center: CIFOR

Study 10: Strengthening planning, monitoring and evaluation in LAC

CGIAR Center: ISNAR NARS partner: Brazil

Impact of CGIAR innovations on poverty

This major project aims to determine whether there is evidence of a decrease in poverty levels among 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. We considered an approach to a poverty study elicited from Professor David Cordray at Vanderbilt University and commissioned him to develop a proposed design of the project. We have reached an agreement that IFPRI will be the lead organisation in the design and conduct of the study – Dr Peter Hazell and Dr Lawrence Haddad are the project leaders.

We have received a draft proposal for a two-year project and will be discussing it with members during MTM. We are delighted with the interest shown by Centers; nine have indicated their desire to be associated with the project. Subject to consideration by the IAEG at its June meeting and provided we have received funding for the project by September, it is planned to conduct the design workshop in October this year. The CGIAR members are clearly impatient for the results of this project. We plan an interim report in October 1999 and the final report in October 2000.

Essential data for evaluation

The objective of this project is to identify data essential for the evaluation needs of the CGIAR and to develop best practice guidelines for use by Centers. The IAEG has been participating with TAC in the development of the CGIAR Logframe and was represented at the preparatory meeting in Rome and at Feldfing 2. Some discussions were held with USAID, IFPRI and other agencies during ICW07 on the use of GIS in data assembly. The project is really still in its preliminary scoping phase. And will be discussed by the IAEG at its next meeting. Dr Frans Leeuw is likely to take oversight of the project for the IAEG as his main contribution to the IAEG will be in the area of institutional strengthening and capacity building.

Natural resources management

We have started the process of scoping a study in this area. The IAEG co-sponsored an international workshop at ICRAF on Assessing the Impact of Research in Natural Resource Management in Nairobi from 27-29 April 1998. Unfortunately no member of the IAEG was able to attend the workshop due to previous commitments. ICRAF did an excellent job in organising the workshop and attracted over 70 participants. The IAEG commends this initiative by ICRAF and believes that it is a useful model to pursue. When we examine the workshop report and consider its recommendations we hope to identify opportunities for an IAEG-sponsored project.

Incubator projects

We also have a number of projects that have been suggested to us and which form our 'incubator' list. These are projects that we think would be useful to do and will be commissioned as resources permit. The projects are concerned with:

- Biotechnology and science impact
- Institutional strengthening
- Post harvest technologies
- Integrated pest management
- Biodiversity

The IAEG would appreciate feedback on the priority of these areas.