

## **Terms of Reference for an Analytic Review on *Partnerships and Research: Lessons for the CGIAR*<sup>1</sup>**

### **Proposition**

The CGIAR Consultative Council (CC) requested the TAC Chair to present MTM99 with terms of reference for an analytic review on "Partnerships and Research: Lessons for the CGIAR."

### **Background**

Partnerships have had a long history in the CGIAR. Early on they were the vehicle through which improved plant materials were distributed, tested, and further improved. As well they were vehicles through which information and better practices were disseminated. In time they became avenues for two way interactions, with information and physical products flowing among the participants.

The partnership approach was emphasized by the CGIAR Ministerial-Level Meeting held at Lucerne (Switzerland) on February 9-10, 1995, which urged the CGIAR to:

- establish partnership committees with NGOs and the Private Sector,
- develop a more open and participatory system with full South-North ownership,
- complete its transition from a donor-client approach to equal partnerships of all participants from the South and North within the CGIAR System.

Action has been taken in all areas. As the CBC has pointed out (in a submission for the Consultative Council), "it is important to identify four levels of partnership activity" at this time: (a) definition of the global research agenda (b) definition of the CGIAR agenda and research priorities (c) definition of the research agenda at each centers and (d) definition of research activities. **Some 2000 partnerships are now in existence, covering all four areas.**

The third System Review said that "broadening and deepening partnerships and collaboration with other actors in the research-development continuum is of utmost importance to the future of the CGIAR."

Reviewing this objective, the Consultative Council proposed the addition of a Science Partnership Committee to the two existing partnership committees (with NGOs and the Private Sector), and noted that it would be appropriate for TAC to conduct an analytic review of partnership and research by 2000 or 2001. Such a review, the Council felt, would enable the CGIAR to draw lessons from experience on which to base future action.

### **Terms of Reference**

The overall purpose of the analytic study would be to:

- evaluate center experience with research and research related partnerships,

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<sup>1</sup> This note was prepared jointly by TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat, which have been jointly studying this subject for over a year, and organized a consultation with experts in July 1998.

- determine the relative importance of various types of partnership,
- assess the degree to which different factors contribute to the success of partnerships, and
- suggest which types of partnerships might be most effective in the future.

A study in the following three stages is proposed:

**Stage 1. Clarification of concepts and development of typology.** This would mainly involve a desk study of relevant literature, interaction with specialists, and contributions of centers.

**Stage 2. Inventory of current partnerships and measures of success.** This would feature a survey of centers using the typology developed in Stage 1, case studies of the most important types, and, based on the case studies and other experience, an analysis of the criteria for assessing success. Center, CGIAR, and partner costs would be estimated. Operationally, this stage would feature a study team under the direction of specialists and selected center staff for the survey and for the case studies.

**Stage 3. Evaluation and recommendations.** The measures of success developed in stage 2 would orient the evaluation of a systematic sample of center partnerships. This would include an analysis of the benefits and costs of partnerships. Rules of thumb and “best-bet” practices would be inferred from the evaluations and the case studies. Again, execution would be in the hands of a study team with contributions from selected center staff.

There is value added from each of the three phases, directly and as input to the succeeding stage. Along the way, perhaps at ICW99, we propose to invite partnership managers, say three, from representative sectors and milieus to share with the Group their agency’s experience with partnerships, in particular about what has worked and what has not worked.

### Timetable

The study would be conducted over an 18-month period following MTM99. The deliverables would be targeted to the three successive CGIAR meetings as follows:

Stage 1: Development of typology.....ICW1999  
 Stage 2: Inventory of current partnerships.....MTM2000  
 Stage 3: Evaluation and recommendations.....ICW2000

The CGIAR would be informed of the progress with the study at the completion of each stage.

### Organization

The study would be coordinated by TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat. A small (5-7 person) advisory panel of experts would provide guidance on study design and review the outputs. An authority on the subject (e.g., Professor Walter Powell of University of Arizona, one of the participants in the consultation held last year) would be approached to chair the advisory panel. Other panelists would be drawn from institutions with prominent track record on research, from the centers, and from NARS (through the regional or sub-regional forums).