Report of the Interim Review of the
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

(Agenda Item 3)

Information Note

The attached report is being distributed concurrently for TAC 59 and ICW'92. TAC's comments on the Interim Review will be presented by the TAC Chair when this item comes up for discussion at ICW'92.

September 1992
July 29, 1992

Mr. V. Rajagopalan  
Chairman  
Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)  
World Bank  
1818 H. Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20433

Dear Mr. Rajagopalan,

We are pleased to submit to you the report of the Interim Review of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The Review was commissioned in response to a decision taken by the CGIAR, during their discussion of the 1990 External Reviews of IFPRI, that a small panel should be appointed to conduct a follow-up review of the Institute prior to October 1992, as was recommended by the Review Panels and TAC.

The Interim Review Panel, chaired by Dr. William P. Gormbley, found that IFPRI has undergone major changes since 1990 in accordance with the 1990 External Review reports. This has come as a result of highly participative processes requiring significant input from IFPRI staff, Management and the Board. They merit recognition for a job well done. Currently a new strategic plan is being adopted, the research climate is infused with fresh energy, and morale at the Institute overall is positive.

The response of the IFPRI Board of Trustees to the Panel’s report is attached. This expresses broad agreement with the Panel’s findings. TAC will consider the Review report and IFPRI response at their 59th meeting in Washington, D.C., October 1992, and may prepare a commentary.

We are pleased to note both IFPRI’s progress in implementing the recommendations of the 1990 Review reports, and that the 1992 Panel and the IFPRI Board share a common view of how the Institute should move forward. In light of these positive developments, we conclude that IFPRI is a healthy and productive Institute, that warrants confidence and continued CGIAR support.

Sincerely,

Alex McCalla  
Chairman, TAC

Alexander von der Osten  
Executive Secretary, CGIAR
Response of the Board of Trustees
of the
International Food Policy Research Institute
to the Interim External Review
of May, 1992

The Board is pleased to note that the Interim External Review, designed to monitor IFPRI's progress in responding to the External Reviews in 1990, has found that "IFPRI is well placed and on the right track." The Board considers that important improvements have been made over the last two years in the program and management of the Institute, and in the organization and working processes of the Board. We are glad that the External Review panel concurs with our judgement.

Applying their familiarity with IFPRI gained in the reviews of 1990, the two members of the panel have made a number of valuable comments and suggestions, which will be helpful to the Board and to management. The panel has recognized the need for flexibility in responding to the issues it has raised. The Board concurs. The solutions offered and comments made are all pertinent and will be seriously considered as IFPRI moves forward under the incoming Director General.

In this light, the report does not call so much for a detailed response now, as for considered action over time. IFPRI's thinking on many of the questions addressed is well reflected in the report itself, and in its attachments, prepared by IFPRI, which specify, in detail, the progress made on the major recommendations of the 1990 review. It may nevertheless be of value to comment briefly on some of the principal points made by the panel.

1. The panel rightly points to the potential danger that management systems may come to be viewed as ends in themselves. Both the Board and management at IFPRI are very much aware of this possibility, and are committed to use the new systems, and those to be developed, to create a structure in which high quality and relevant research is nurtured with only the required minimum of administrative control.

2. The role and size of the Program Committee, and its relationship to the internal program review process, is a question currently on the Board's agenda. We understand that this is an issue
which is not confined to IFPRI but affects other centers in the CGIAR system, on whose experience we hope to draw. While a fully satisfactory answer remains to be developed for IFPRI, the Board considers that the establishment of a Program Committee was an important step forward, and intends to find the best way to make it work for IFPRI.

3. The panel restates, in strong terms, the recommendation for creation of a Director of Outreach position made in the 1990 reviews. That proposal, and the needs and opportunities that have brought it forward, have caused IFPRI to give a great deal of attention to the issue of outreach, which is after all critical for any research center, and particularly for one dealing with ideas as its product. As the report notes, IFPRI has taken a number of important steps to strengthen its outreach and training activities, although it has yet to make a decision on this particular position. As part of its evolving strategy for strengthening outreach, IFPRI is currently seeking a better appreciation of the capacity of developing country institutions for food policy research.

4. The panel recognizes the need to address the issue of a Deputy Director General, for which there is provision in the IFPRI budget plans, and his or her appropriate role. The Board concurs with the panel's view that this is best considered in the context of other issues of research management that will be reviewed by the incoming Director General. IFPRI has worked over the past two years to develop a more effective system for setting priorities, monitoring progress, and evaluating outcomes. The continuing development of this system is closely related to the question of the appropriate role for the Program Committee of the Board.

5. The role of restricted (or project) funding is addressed by the panel in knowledgeable terms. Such funding, under the constrained financial circumstances of the day, creates many problems; the difficulty of using it in large proportions in a priority centered and effective research program is exceeded only by the difficulty of getting along without it. IFPRI’s Board and Management will continue to seek ways to achieve the best mix of different types of funding, and would at this point underline the critical nature of strong unrestricted support for the health of IFPRI, and indeed for the CGIAR as a whole.

6. The commitment of IFPRI to the importance of gender issues in food policy research has been firmly enunciated in its strategy document and remains very clear. The desirability of establishing a formal mechanism to pursue agreed objectives in this sphere has been considered at length within IFPRI over the past two years, and will be reviewed further in the light of the panel's comments.
7. The panel notes the need to sharpen priorities and define appropriate sequences in the implementation of the IFPRI strategy for the 1990s. The Board agrees and looks forward to working closely with the incoming Director General to these ends. It also shares the panel’s view of the centrality of excellence in research. The Board interprets the criterion of excellence to include the critical element of policy relevance.

The report of the panel is admirably clear and brief. This response has sought to emulate these characteristics. The Board wishes to thank William P. Gormley, Alain de Janvry and Elizabeth Field for their approach to their task, and for the substantial contribution they have made in this process to the future effectiveness of IFPRI.
May 15, 1992

Dr. Alex F. McCalla
Chairman
Technical Advisory Committee/CGIAR
University of California
Davis, CA 95616

Dr. Alexander von der Osten
Executive Secretary
CGIAR
1818 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20433

Dear Alex and Alexander,

We are pleased to submit to you the report of the Interim Review of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

In reflecting upon the changes made at IFPRI since 1990 we had a distinct advantage - one of us was Chairman of the 1990 EMR and the other a member of the 1990 EPR panel. We returned to IFPRI in 1992 to discover a lively intellectual environment in an institution where positive change has occurred. We are pleased to report that, based on our assessment, IFPRI is well placed and on the right track.

We've also returned to IFPRI to find that, as in 1990, the Institute is in a transitional phase and poised for change - on July 1 the next Director General will assume his appointment and IFPRI will relocate to new space a few blocks away. The new Director General will assume office in an IFPRI that has crossed major hurdles and achieved much in two brief years. Notably there have been Board reforms, the formulation of a long-term strategy, development of a system of personnel management, and decentralization of research management. Further changes and refinements will be called for, but overall an administrative framework will be in place for the incoming Director General. He, therefore, will be able to focus on key programmatic matters.

Our assessment of this progress, and the processes used to achieve it, is presented in the attached report. This begins with an "Overview", followed by two main sections: an "Introduction", and "Today at IFPRI" -- which is divided into sub-headings that parallel the chapters of the 1990 EMR and EPR reports. This is followed by two appendices, prepared by IFPRI for this Review, which outline their progress on implementing each recommendation of the 1990 EMR and EPR.
Five days was a very brief period in which to make our assessment. Our task was greatly facilitated by the collaborative spirit in which IFPRI’s Director General and staff worked with us. The process ran smoothly. Special thanks are due to Curtis Farrar who organized the review from IFPRI’s end, and Bernadette Cordero who typed our work and provided administrative assistance. We are grateful to Ingrid Hagen of the CGIAR Secretariat who put the report into final form, as well as Elizabeth Field of the Secretariat, who worked closely with us as a member of the team.

In closing, we commend IFPRI staff and management for working together to accomplish a great deal since the 1990 reviews - the process was difficult but IFPRI clearly emerges a strengthened Institute. We hope that our Interim Review report will provide some guidance to the Institute in meeting future challenges.

Yours sincerely,

William P. Gormley

Alain de Janvry

Attachment

cc: Dr. Gerry Helleiner, Chairman, IFPRI Board of Trustees
    Dr. Just Faaland, IFPRI Director General
THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND CGIAR SECRETARIAT

REPORT OF THE

INTERIM REVIEW

OF THE

INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

(IFPRI)

Panel: Dr. William P. Gormley, Jr. (Chairman)
        Dr. Alain de Janvry
        Ms. Elizabeth Field (Panel Secretary)

CGIAR SECRETARIAT

THE WORLD BANK

May 1992
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Appendix 1: IFPRI’s Report on 1990 EMR Recommendations
Appendix 2: IFPRI’s Report on 1990 EPR Recommendations
OVERVIEW

IFPRI Management and the Board have carefully reviewed and debated the 1990 EMR and EPR reports and the recommendations therein. They defined priority areas and acted on these; we endorse the choices they made. Next they assiduously worked, together with staff, to implement changes rational to IFPRI's needs.

The processes were highly participative. Given high involvement and sensitive issues, the course was not always smooth. The Institute has learned from its experience and emerges strengthened through the process.

Areas where marked change has occurred, in accordance with recommendations of the 1990 EMR and EPR include:

**Governance.** The Board has:

- mounted a search process and selected a long-term Director General who has the confidence and support of the Board and staff;
- reviewed and revised its by-laws and, in particular, established committees to bolster its oversight and policy-making capabilities in all areas of Board responsibility.

Significant improvements have occurred in Board operations. As the Board recognizes, further consideration must be given to the composition and approach the Program Committee takes to meet its responsibilities. In the view of the Panel, the Committee is too large and is not yet operating at a strategic level.

**Management.** We are pleased to report that:

- the position of Director of Administration and Finance was reestablished and an individual appointed who has assumed a leadership role in these areas;
- a highly capable Personnel Manager has been appointed who has taken the lead in developing a comprehensive and rational set of personnel policies and procedures.

A few policies remain to be formulated and others require refinement. In addition, many newly established policies -- such as the system for staff appraisal -- are in process of being adopted and are not yet fully operational. The Panel is impressed by IFPRI's progress. We caution that it will be an ongoing task of Senior Management to ensure that the new systems - which aim to achieve greater accountability, equity and transparency -- remain "means", as they were conceived to be, and do not become bureaucratic trappings.
Program. Despite the environment of change at IFPRI and the time demands this has placed on all staff, researchers have continued to be productive and performance continues to be strong. Institution-wide advances include:

- formulation, through a highly participative process, of an IFPRI Strategy;
- realignment of the research divisions and decentralization of authority from the Director General to the Division Directors.

The strategy is a major achievement. Within the context of this strategy, the next step -- which we feel should be foremost on the agenda of the incoming Director General -- will be to establish clearly delineated priorities for IFPRI's research and outreach activities. Another item high on the agenda of the incoming Director General will be to develop effective mechanisms for the integration and coordination of institutional priorities across program divisions; this, in our view, is the essential next phase of an evolutionary process that began with decentralization of authority.
1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1. Authority and Purpose

The 1990 External Management Review Panel suggested in its report to the CGIAR that the Secretariat "may wish to consider having an Interim Review in about two years. This, we believe, would be useful to the Board and the Management of IFPRI and to the Group, given the changes that we anticipate would be made in IFPRI operations over the next several years."

The CGIAR concurred and authorized that a small panel should be appointed to conduct a follow-up Interim Review of IFPRI prior to October 1992. The TAC and the CGIAR Secretariat agreed "that the review should be undertaken by a two person panel, preferably chaired by the Chairman of the 1990 EMR with a member of the 1990 EPR as the other panel member."

As stated in the letter appointing the panel members, "the primary purpose of the Interim Review is to assess IFPRI's progress in dealing with the recommendations of the 1990 EPR and EMR. Therefore, the team is not expected to conduct a comprehensive assessment of IFPRI's programs and management, as in regular reviews. Nevertheless, since the recommendations of the 1990 reviews are wide ranging and cover many areas, the panel should not refrain from making suggestions it feels are important for the future effectiveness of the center, regardless of whether the 1990 reviews have specific recommendations in these areas."

1.2. Conduct of the Review

The Panel, Dr. Alain de Janvry and Dr. William P. Gormley, Jr., met in Washington, D.C. on May 10, 1992 to establish final plans for the Interim Review and on the following days, joined by Ms. Elizabeth Field of the CGIAR Secretariat, held a series of group and individual meetings with the Management and staff of IFPRI. Dr. Gerry Helleiner, Chairman of the Board, came to Washington to meet with the Panel. Dr. Gormley had, in the week previous, arranged to meet with Dr. David E. Bell, a member of the Board residing in the USA. Time for interviews with individual staff members was limited, as the Review was scheduled for five days with provision that a draft report would be made available to the Management on Friday afternoon, May 15, and a final report would be ready to be mailed to the IFPRI Board prior to their meeting in early June.

The Panel was able, however, to meet individually with all Research Directors and Administrative Managers. Several lengthy sessions were held with the Director General, the Director of Administration and Finance, the Senior Policy Advisor (also Chairman of the Research Advisory Committee) and the Chairman of the IFPRI Board.

The Interim Review Panel also benefitted from the 1990 EMR recommendation that the Board restructure and strengthen its internal operating procedures. The minutes of meetings of the Board and its various committees proved to be a font of information concerning the development of IFPRI policies and procedures and their implementation. The Board's desire to fulfill its oversight responsibilities has required the preparation of numerous position papers and operational reports which were made available to the Panel. Their availability made it possible for the Panel to complete in the five days what would have otherwise taken many more.
1.3. IFPRI – 1990 to 1992

The 1990 EPR and EMR were conducted during a very stressful period in IFPRI's history, which was referred to in the review reports as "a period of crisis". Uncertainty was the watchword as Management and staff responded to review panel questioning and probings. The EMR Panel described the malaise, then impacting IFPRI, as one that could only be cured by greater decentralization of decision-making, operational and planning procedures that permitted active participation by the staff, and a large infusion of transparency in the setting of goals, policies and procedures for the conduct of IFPRI affairs. The morale of staff was low and "hope for the future" was written in small letters.

The 1992 Interim Review Panel is pleased to report that there have been significant improvements in the work culture and atmosphere at IFPRI. The two intervening years have not, however, been without stress for the Board, Management and staff, as they set about implementing the EPR and EMR recommendations.

The determination of Management and staff concerned with the design and implementation of new or revised administrative and research policies and procedures was to have full staff participation so that there would be no lack of transparency when final decisions were taken. It was also their goal in installing the new systems and procedures to insure that wherever possible, authority and responsibility would be placed at the lowest practical and effective level in the institution.

As one might expect, progress was not always as smooth or easy as more time and experience might have permitted. But morale has stayed well above average, Hope can be spelled in caps, and there is the collective feeling of having accomplished much of lasting value.

The staff is enthusiastic with the choice of Dr. Per Pinstrup Andersen as IFPRI's next Director General. There is confidence that he is a man of high professional standards, with a warm and very human personality, who will continue and build upon the hard work of the past two years. The Interim Panel is convinced that Dr. Andersen will inherit an Institute considerably advanced from that reported upon by the 1990 Review Panels.
2 - TODAY AT IFPRI

MANAGEMENT

2.1. Governance

The Board of IFPRI has moved with alacrity to fulfill its role in strengthening IFPRI. Its handling of the design and implementation of the search for the long term Director General of the Institute was well done.

The Board, under the able leadership of its Chairman, should also be congratulated for its efforts to understand and conform to the responsibilities the CGIAR places on CG Boards. The Board has taken steps:

- to completely review and revise Board by-laws and to establish procedures to ensure their adherence during Board deliberations and decision-making;
- to establish procedures for the exchange of ideas and information between the IFPRI Management and Board;
- to establish committees to assist the Board with its responsibilities for Institute finances, program, and administration as well as its needs for advice on Board appointments and executive functions.

While it was not possible to attend a Board meeting during the course of the Interim Review, the minutes of recent Board and Committee meetings give every evidence of a dynamic, questioning, interested and far from complacent Board. The Panel was not aware that the Board had overstepped that fine line between what are its responsibilities and what are those assigned to the Management of the Institute. The relationship between Board and Management has been effective and collegial.

A potential problem or challenge for the Board will be to impart to new members, who have not had the experience of the redesign of the Board, the lessons learned -- particularly the nature of involvement required -- to maintain the high level of effective Board involvement. As an active and involved Board is a must for superior Institute performance, it will be important for both the Chairman and the Director General to see that Board members are fully informed and aware of Institute developments, progress and achievements.

Evidence available suggests that of the newly organized Board committees, the Program Committee has yet to find its place in Board affairs. Because of its large meeting attendance (members augmented by other interested Board members), Program Committee meetings -- of which there have been two: one in October 1991, another in February 1992 -- have been primarily informational, for Board members to learn about research underway and indulge in professional discussions.

The Board has recognized that the current modus operandi of the Program Committee is not effective. Some Board members have suggested that the Program Committee be dissolved and that the Board return to its former practice of handling program matters as a committee of the whole. The Panel would suggest that the Board experiment with other changes in the structure, membership and agenda of the Committee before entertaining a decision to eliminate it.
The Panel's experience would suggest that the Committee is too large for effective policy discussion and for achieving the level of insight into Institute program matters that is required. For purposes of Board oversight and planning, the Committee should be present during the Institute's annual internal program review. In addition, we advise that the Program Committee, via its Chairman, should have a close working relationship with the Executive and Finance Committee and be involved in advising both that Committee and the Board on budgets for program matters.

2.2. Senior Management

IFPRI has made significant progress over the past two years towards satisfying the concerns of the 1990 External Review Panels concerning the Senior Management structure. In this context it is worth noting that Management, together with staff, have carefully reviewed and analyzed the 41 recommendations of the 1990 EMR and EPR and adapted these to IFPRI's needs. Thirty-three recommendations have been implemented. Eight recommendations, not yet fully implemented, have not been neglected or ignored, but have been the subject of much discussion by Board, Management and staff. Implementation has been delayed either to permit greater clarifications of needs and design specifications or because of the conviction that delay until the new Director General arrives will insure more effective implementation. The Interim Review Panel believes that the delays are warranted. We trust that the remaining recommendations will be implemented once the new Management cadre is in place. For an item by item report prepared by IFPRI on the implementation of the 1990 EMR and EPR recommendations please refer to Appendices 1 and 2.

Since 1990, many changes have been implemented throughout IFPRI to decentralize responsibility and authority. Three are of major importance.

- The five research divisions are now managed by Division Directors who have responsibility and authority for divisional research agendas and operations.
- A Research Advisory Committee (RAC) has been created to provide a forum for the discussion of research interests and to assist both Director General and research staff in the task of sorting out questions and concerns about the research program.
- A Director General's Advisory Committee (DAC) has been created to provide a forum for discussion of general management questions and concerns and to provide advice and counsel to the Director General.

The first two points are discussed more fully in this document under the heading Research Management.

The DAC is currently composed of the Director General, Senior Policy Advisor, Director of Administration and Finance — a position reestablished in accordance with the 1990 EMR — and the five research Division Directors. The Division Directors are included as a consequence of the decision not to appoint a Deputy Director General at this time. Given this composition, the DAC has assumed a role in more details of the Institute's research activity than had been envisioned by the EMR/EPR when they recommended that such a committee be formed. The 1990 Panels envisioned that the Research Advisory Committee would be the primary forum for internal research discussion under the leadership of the Director General and/or Deputy Director General and that DAC would review outcomes from such discussions that required integration with general management activities or decisions by the Director General concerning research policy and direction. DAC, therefore, would be able to spend the majority
of its time on concerns such as external developments, finances, fund development, human resources, donor relations, etc. This configuration would relieve the Division Directors from participation in two committees to concentrate in the RAC, allowing the DAC to be much smaller (DG, DDG, and Director of Administration and Finance) with a narrower and less duplicative agenda.

The Interim Review Panel is inclined to believe that the EMR/EPR recommendations concerning the roles of these two committees would be more effective than the current arrangement. However, until the role of a DDG has been determined and a revised management structure empowered, the current configuration of the two committees provides useful assistance to the Director General and the senior administrative and research staff and should be continued.

2.3. The Management of Human Resources

With the hiring of an experienced Personnel Manager in January, 1991, IFPRI was ready to begin the process of building a human resources department and putting in place the policies and procedures recommended by the EMR Panel.

2.3.1. Human Resources Manual

The development and issuance of a human resources manual, which would combine in one document the policies, rules and regulations governing the employment practices of the Institute and the procedures by which they are applied, was placed high on the list of recommendations made by the EMR/EPR.

The Panel was delighted to review the work that has been done, which is considerable. The proposed manual has been reviewed by staff committees, the Institute’s lawyers, the Management and the Board. A few sections remain unfinished. Expectations are that the final version of the manual will be presented to the Board at its October 1992 meeting.

The Board and Management will undoubtedly be happy to see this topic disappear from its agenda, as producing the manual has been a very time consuming task. However, experience has shown that a human resources manual is never completed, considering the dynamics of the work-a-day world, and will require regular periodic attention to remain current and effective.

2.3.2. Compensation

A major task was the development of an equitable salary system and related components. IFPRI now has a comprehensive and unified system of job descriptions, job evaluation, titles and salary grades and ranges for all senior and support staff classifications. This system has been reviewed and approved by the Board. Salaries have been set for all grades based on a market survey of comparable institutions with comparable positions and comparable qualifications. Staff have been assigned to an appropriate grade and their salaries adjusted accordingly with the aim of achieving both external and internal equity. Increases will, from now on, be based on job performance and contribution to the achievement of IFPRI’s targets and goals.

The adoption of the salary system has also provided Management with the opportunity to regularize a number of employment arrangements, which in 1990 were the cause of some inequities and difficulties. These are in the process of resolution.
The classification of staff has highlighted the need for IFPRI to review in detail the role and career prospects of its Research Analysts and Research Assistants. This was a concern of the 1990 EMR Panel. While some steps have been taken and staff in this category are pleased with the progress made thus far, the need for further refinements should not be overlooked nor should the need to address new issues as they surface.

2.3.3. Performance Appraisal

The system was revised, adopted, and used for the first time in 1992. Not unexpectedly it was not a total success as the concept is quite new to most staff. It will take considerable explanation and assistance from the Personnel Manager and practice by managers and staff before it is an accepted part of Institute routines. This system should but currently does not link with the Institute's rewards system and staff planning and professional development programs; this is planned for the upcoming performance review cycle.

2.3.4. Recruitment

To insure that appointees to senior staff positions are selected from a broad cross section of highly qualified candidates, the EMR recommended that all vacancies be "well advertised" and that candidates should be reviewed and screened by internal committees of staff with knowledge and experience in the subject on which the appointee will work. The Panel is assured that this is now the accepted practice, confirmed in the new personnel manual. Experience to date has been limited, as not many senior staff have been hired, but the procedures adopted appear to work well and have the full support of staff and Management.

2.3.5. Conflict of Interest

There is now a clear and definitive statement concerning what constitutes a conflict of interest and how it is to be handled, in Board documents and the Institute's human resources manual. The decision has been made to place the responsibility for compliance on each individual. A number of organizations, especially those organized under U.S. law, require written annual statements from Board members and managerial staff, a practice IFPRI may wish to consider.

2.3.6. Staff Composition and Balance

TAC's commentary on the 1990 external reviews urged that the Institute seek to achieve greater diversity of training cultures among senior scientific staff, noting the high portion of such staff who were U.S. trained. Recent recruitment has reinforced this pattern, we urge that IFPRI strive to change this. In addition, as an international institution, it would appear advisable that IFPRI achieve a better balance of nationalities among its senior (and support) staff. Currently, IFPRI has staff from 26 countries; of these, three countries provide 61% of the Senior Staff and 79% of the Support Staff.

The TAC commentary also urged IFPRI to increase the proportion of women in senior positions. Since the 1990 reviews, IFPRI has not increased the number of women research fellows but has increased the number of women senior administrators. Although recruitment has been limited, one of the two senior research fellows in a just completed recruitment is a woman who will join the Institute later in 1992. We urge Management to continue to improve this balance.
The Panel is aware that IFPRI's status as a U.S. institution with limited international privileges makes it difficult to recruit specific categories of staff and still comply with U.S. employment laws. IFPRI has reopened the subject of its status in the U.S. with the appropriate government officials. The Panel hopes that IFPRI's views will prevail.

2.4. General Administration

2.4.1. Financial Management

While not a concern in the 1990 Review reports, we did review the financial reports of the Institute. IFPRI continues to be given a clean audit by its external auditors, KPMG Peat Marwick. We also were provided a copy of the May 5, 1992 auditors' management letter to the Board. This raised no matters of material financial concern.

In 1990 the EMR indicated its concern with the growth of IFPRI's restricted or special project funding as a proportion of the total. The 1990 Panels were aware, as is the Interim Panel, that this funding pattern was becoming the norm for many CG centers and one that gave little indication of changing. One disturbing consequence of this trend in 1990 was that the research staff were under pressure to raise funds or possibly leave IFPRI, if unsuccessful. The Interim Panel was pleased to learn that a change in budget procedures and program planning processes has reduced this concern significantly. We believe that Management must continue to make a conscious commitment to fully regularize this situation.

Management continues to face the challenge of funding more than 50% of its program on restricted money. To be more effective here, IFPRI will need to develop an institutional approach -- consolidating the efforts of Management and staff -- to mobilize resources.

2.4.2. IFPRI's New Address

Moving to new space was a matter of some importance during the 1990 crisis. Fortunately, the arrangements that had been made were rescinded and IFPRI did not lose any money (other than the costs associated with seeking the arrangement).

Aware of the concerns in 1990 about the prospective move, the Interim Review Panel reviewed the process leading to the decision to move to new space in July 1992. The process has been carefully and professionally orchestrated by the Director General and the Director of Administration and Finance. Competent real estate brokers and lawyers were engaged. Staff committees were established and detailed reports were issued to the Board every step of the way. Questions of location (i.e. Washington, D.C., outside of Washington, elsewhere in the U.S.A., elsewhere in the world) all were carefully explored and discussed and ultimately decided by the Board. Costs of various Washington sites were considered as well as the needs and preferences of staff. Every question that the Panel could raise was not only answered satisfactorily but written data was presented as back up. The final decision to move and where was thoroughly reviewed and discussed by the Board before approval was given. The Panel was as convinced as the Board that the move was appropriate and in IFPRI's best interest.
2.4.3. A Final Caution

IFPRI has evolved from an institution with minimal management systems, where most decisions were centralized at the top, to an institution with a number of management systems which permit significant decentralization and require concomitant communication and monitoring systems. Under these circumstances staff will naturally find the new systems somewhat burdensome. It is, therefore, important that Management constantly ask itself, "Is what I am asking managers and staff to report on, fill out, or keep track of, essential to the effective operation of the required systems?" Too often systems develop a life of their own and exist for their own ends rather than as support for institutional goals. There is a great difference between "nice to know" and "required to know". Management must continue to support the latter and strongly resist the former, as it has been doing.

PROGRAM

2.5. Strategic Plan

A high priority of the 1990 EMR and EPR was that IFPRI develop a strategic plan. This was done and we congratulate the Director General (DG) for the process that was followed in developing this document: it involved widespread participation by IFPRI staff, Board members, collaborators, and many scholars and practitioners in the development community. This provided an important opportunity to stimulate creative dialogue and to build a consensus around a set of central ideas. Inevitably, when a document is so widely open to a participatory process, sharpness in priorities gets somewhat eroded. Nonetheless, the document is well rationalized and lays out a broad strategy for research and outreach, providing flexible guidelines for IFPRI’s work in the 1990s.

2.6. Research Program

As recommended by the EPR, the Food Data Evaluation Program was phased out. We briefly review developments in the other programs and how they relate to EPR recommendations.

2.6.1. Environment and Production Technology

This is a new division that was created by subdividing the former Food Production Policy Program into two divisions (an EPR recommendation), and combining one of these with new activities in the field of natural resources and the environment. Instead of creating a separate division for the environment (as recommended by the EPR), IFPRI chose to associate work on the environment with work on production. While this may, at first, appear as an insufficient response to the decision to pursue research on the environment, it likely is a safe transition strategy that may lead, in the future, to a full blown division on the environment after the initiative has established its credentials.

Due to its origins, the Division combines work on production issues carried out in the former Food Production Policy Program with new projects in the field of environmental policy. The process whereby the research program on the environment was established involved widespread participation by IFPRI staff and consultations with other agencies and experts (an EPR recommendation). Two conferences were organized as part of this process: an International Workshop on Forestry Policy Research and an International Seminar on Agricultural Sustainability and Poverty Alleviation. Lessons derived from these conferences prompted the decision to link IFPRI's entry into the field of
environmental research with its comparative advantage in the area of production technology and with the CGIAR's new thrust in agroforestry. Recruitment of an agroforestry economist was successfully completed and the position of Division Director has been advertised. Once this position is filled, the Division will consist of a Director and six research fellows.

Research projects on the production side cover problems of development and diffusion of technology, fertilizer use, irrigation, and determinants of supply response. The environmental dimension of these problems is addressed via the agroecological determinants of technology diffusion, the environmental externalities created by fertilizer use and irrigation, and the sustainability of productivity growth. Plans for forestry research include issues of watershed management, income effects of agroforestry schemes, and resource use as it relates to land tenure and common property rights.

This Division has made excellent progress in defining its research agenda in the vast and complex field of environmental policy. As a note of caution, however, the fact that IFPRI chose to enter into the subject via the angle of production economics should not lead one to underestimate the need for specific methodological skills associated with resource economics, which are quite different from those of production economics. This includes the need to deal with dynamic and highly non-linear processes, the economics of public goods and public finance, the rationality of alternative institutions and systems of property rights, structures of authority and the determinants of cooperation in decentralized organizations, and the linkages with the biological base and the difficult measurement problems which this involves. Either production economists moving into this field will need adequate retraining, or the appropriate research skills will have to be sought in new appointees.

2.6.2. Markets and Structural Studies

This Division is the other product of splitting the former Food Production Policy Program. It includes four senior research fellows in Washington and six in the field. The research covers such themes as decision-making by households and income strategies, the performance of product and factor markets, the developmental impact of infrastructure, and the role of property rights. Some of these projects are very large-scale undertakings involving extensive primary data collection which are starting to yield results. Important work has been done on regional integration in West Africa, credit schemes in Pakistan, market liberalization in Southern Africa, and agricultural diversification in Bangladesh. With several large projects terminating, the Division is under some financial strain, creating a difficult juncture to maintain continuity of research personnel, but prospects are good that this will be resolved.

Research pieces are generally good and some excellent. As noted by the EPR, it would be beneficial if more attention were paid in the analysis of: market performance -- to the mechanisms of price transmission between product and factor markets and the resulting growth and income effects; public goods -- to the public finance aspects of projects; and structure -- to the vast new literature on the economics of agrarian institutions.

2.6.3. Food Consumption and Nutrition

This Division was performing excellently at the time of the 1990 review and has continued to do so. New research priorities have been defined to include: the performance of labor and credit markets; intra-household inequalities and the position of women; micronutrient deficiencies and their linkage to health; urban malnutrition and specific forms of intervention; approaches for monitoring food security and nutrition; and analysis of the implementation of projects such as public food distribution, famine relief, and labor intensive public works.
In assessing the Division's nutritional research, the EPR cautioned on the difficulties isolated researchers at IFPRI would face to produce high quality work on such measurement-demanding topics as micronutrient deficiencies and response to dietary energy stress. A recommendation was made that "collaborative arrangements with centers of excellence in nutrition and health" be developed "rather than trying to build up this expertise at IFPRI with isolated specialists". In answer to this suggestion, collaborative research has been developed with nutritionists at the School of Hygiene and Public Health of Johns Hopkins University, the World Bank nutrition team, and the Indian Institute for Nutrition in Hyderabad.

While covering a broad array of topics, the Division's research is heavily policy oriented and results have been neatly cumulative. Effective fund-raising has increased the Division from nine to 12 fellows, with between three and five outposted in the field. While the Division relies on project funding for two-thirds of its budget, sustaining this budget over time has apparently neither strained research productivity nor compromised research quality. This suggests that the optimum ratio between core and special project funding can vary over a wide range, depending on subject matter and management's fund-raising abilities.

2.6.4. Special Development Studies

As observed two years ago, this Division continues to host a wide array of projects. This includes work on: linkages (the excellent book on the direct and secondary effects of the Green Revolution in Tamil Nadu and new research in South Africa); food security and poverty in China; the economics of coarse cereals in the Middle East, the role of remittances in rural development in Egypt; the grain-livestock sectors' interactions; and human capital development in Pakistan. Some of these projects have yielded outstanding publications, but projects generally do not address the core of the Division's subject and continue to have little in common.

This leaves important meso-level research themes -- located between the macro-trade level and the consumption-production-market-environment levels on which the other divisions focus -- insufficiently addressed. The EPR recommended that the Division should "focus its research on the main themes that pertain to the role of agriculture in economic development". The recommendation remains valid and it has not been sufficiently implemented. Central topics should relate to the themes identified in the Strategic Plan and at the IFPRI conference on "Agriculture on the Road to Industrialization". This includes: the dynamics of linkage creation; the genesis of rural non-farm activities and the sequences of their development; the determinants of decentralization of economic activity; the role of subcontracting and other institutional arrangements to reduce transaction costs in regional development; and the roles of an active industrial policy toward the rural areas and decentralization of governance.

2.6.5. Trade and Macroeconomics

After the departure of its Director, and in spite of a new hire, this Division has been left with minimum research staff. Contrary to EPR recommendation, the Division still lacks new priorities. In addition, it has not generated adequate external funding to hire research fellows beyond core support and engage in large-scale research as it did in the past. Despite these constraints, some important pieces of research have been concluded and quality has been superior. This includes innovative analyses of the impact of price policy and public goods expenditures on supply response in Chile, the Philippines, and the Punjab. Some new research projects are in preliminary stages, including on the political economy of policy reform and the regional trade effects of lifting the trade embargo on South Africa.
Search for a Division Director is currently underway. This individual will have a crucial role to play in redefining the mission of the Division. He or she will have to define a research agenda with well focused priorities that build upon and go beyond the successful past research agenda.

2.7. Outreach Program

The EPR stressed the need to "reinforce the outreach and developing-country capacity building in policy research according to a well-defined strategy". During the last two years, IFPRI has intensified its collaborative research, currently involving some 100 foreign institutions. The proportion of outposted research fellows has grown from 15% in 1990 to about 20% today. Collaborative research with other CGIAR centers and international organizations has also increased. Every division has organized at least two conferences annually. We stressed in the 1990 EPR that IFPRI should be more involved in frontline policy debates and this has happened very successfully on several occasions. Also of note is that IFPRI has done important experimentation with different approaches to national capacity building, such as organizing and assisting research networks, preparing teaching materials out of research monographs, participating in formal teaching organized by other institutions, preparing outreach materials for conferences and policy debates, and engaging outposted fellows in training and policy advisory functions.

The full EPR recommendation has, however, not been implemented. A professional Director of Outreach has not been appointed. Perhaps this would not have been timely, given insufficient outreach program definition and the institutional priority assigned to administrative reorganization, but an effective outreach program is unlikely to exist without formal program leadership. Time pressures on individual researchers are too great for them to address this adequately and different skills are required. This is particularly true in the case of training, which is an explicit component of IFPRI's mandate that has, as of yet, not received adequate attention.

A Director of Outreach should be appointed and a well-defined integrated outreach strategy should be defined that enhances the quality and purposefulness of IFPRI's research. In order to achieve this, lessons should be extracted from IFPRI's experimentation with alternative forms of outreach: Where are the highest payoffs? Which clientele should be targeted? What works best for whom? Where is effective demand? How much formal training should be done and under what form?

In addition, we suggest that, contrary to the current organizational structure, outreach should not be subsumed under Administration and Finance. It is a professional activity that deserves to be a Division of its own, on par with the research divisions and reporting to the Director General or DDG. It could well incorporate Information Services, which is currently an important outreach facility.

The EPR recommended that IFPRI should "design and implement a strategy for post-research project follow-up activities". This has been partially implemented in a decentralized fashion, for instance through training of national researchers in the use of data banks and policy models developed by IFPRI, and through the availability of outposted fellows. This remains a suggestion that is both important and difficult to handle. It should be on the agenda of a future Director of Outreach.

2.8. Research Management

Research management has been extensively decentralized to the Division Directors. Their functions now include recommendations on hiring of research personnel, performance review of staff, definition of program content and priorities, and formulation of budgets for the corresponding division. This very important development marks a sharp contrast with research management prior to the current DG.
Research activities are coordinated by the DG with the assistance of the Senior Policy Advisor and Research Advisory Committee (RAC). RAC serves as a restricted forum for new initiatives; it is chaired by the Senior Policy Advisor and composed of three Division Directors and three research fellows. While decentralization of research management, constitution of a research committee, and involvement of a Senior Policy Advisor are positive achievements, implementation of EMR/EPR recommendations for research management remains incomplete.

It is evident that IFPRI needs to have well defined research priorities, integrated across divisions. Indeed, practically all divisions work on such topics as behavioral responses to price incentives, sources of household income, food security, and public investment in infrastructure, but each does it from a specialized angle. Difficulty with the present research management system is best exemplified by anticipated implementation problems with the proposed set of research priorities in the draft Medium Term Plan (MTP). This draft proposes that IFPRI will pursue 10 research topics that cut across most research divisions. Cross-cutting research syntheses were formerly defined as Research Areas, with a research fellow responsible for the coordination of synthesis in each area. This matrix approach to research management was criticized by the 1990 EMR/EPR and its elimination was recommended (and implemented). Matrix definition of research priorities inevitably reappears in the draft MTP, but without an adequate decision-making structure to implement it. This points to the need to adjust the current research management structure.

There are many alternative solutions to this problem and one will have to be devised under the new DG. A possible arrangement which corresponds to the spirit of the EMR/EPR recommendations would include the following features: a committee composed of the Director General, the designated individual appointed as the DDG or a Senior Policy Advisor, and the Directors of the research and outreach divisions. Together, these committee members will have the authority to approve new research projects within the confines of the major thrusts approved by the DG and Board, and to allocate and coordinate use of budgeted resources to priority research topics that cut across divisions. As seen fit, the Committee can seek the advice of selected fellows and external experts.

The main source of program advice should, however, remain the intellectual input of IFPRI staff at-large. This should be obtained through Institute-wide seminars where new areas for research are collectively explored and new project proposals are submitted for open discussion. Responsibility for these seminars should be with the DDG, the Senior Policy Advisor, or a Division Director on a rotating basis.

The committee should also be in charge of setting up and managing internal program reviews as a regular feature of monitoring the quality of research, divisions’ performance, priorities, and impact of policy research and outreach activities. To our knowledge, this EPR recommendation on periodic internal reviews has not been implemented. Very useful reviews with external consultants were conducted in 1989. Since 1990 divisions have reported on their activities in relation to preparation of the Strategic Plan and for the Board’s Program Committee. This is not a substitute for the continuing in-depth reviews of selected parts of the program which the EPR recommended.

Participation of the Division Directors in the Director’s Advisory Committee (DAC) and decentralization of management functions have significantly added to the Division Directors’ administrative burdens. This can have a high opportunity cost in terms of research performance. Since much of this burden has been a one time involvement in the redefinition of IFPRI’s administrative structure, it will be reduced. (Furthermore, the Institute recognized the need for administrative assistance
and provided and filled a new position in each division entitled Administrative Assistant.) To meet future needs while minimizing demands on the time of Division Directors, the EMR/EPR recommendation of establishing an on-line Senior Management Committee could be implemented. Here again there are many alternatives, one of which should be developed under the new leadership. This committee could, for instance, be composed of the DG, DDG, and Director of Administration and Finance, while likely confining participation of the Division Directors to the most important decisions.

Finally, in the context of administrative decentralization, we suggest that care be given that this is accompanied by proper administrative support to the Divisions and adequate training of Division Directors and their Administrative Assistants in the effective use of the centralized administrative services.

The EPR suggested that IFPRI should give more attention to gender issues in its research/outreach program. There is no question that many individuals are seriously committed to including a gender perspective in their research. There is, however, no institutional mechanism whereby this is coordinated and more widely recognized. Adequately, gender issues do not appear as a separate research area in the draft MTP; however, they need to be explicitly included in all 10 topics proposed. For this to occur in a more forceful and visible fashion than in past programs, a formal mechanism, such as a task force on gender issues, should be considered.

Concerned with the technical quality of research and the importance of empirical analysis at IFPRI, the EPR recommended that "professional support in statistics and econometrics needs to be secured, possibly on a contractual basis". Consistent with this recommendation, two short econometrics courses were offered at IFPRI in 1990-91 and two other courses are planned. Outside experts who teach these courses are in principle available for consultations, but this practice has not been followed.

2.9. Future Prospects and Opportunities

IFPRI's volume of research has continued to grow exponentially, research quality and relevance have been confirmed by additional contracts and awards, and visibility has been insured by participation in front line policy debates. Although performance in research and outreach remains uneven across programs, overall it is certainly as strong today as it was in 1990. For the future, we stress the following:

1. Out of the vast agenda laid out in the Strategy for the 1990s and the 10 broad research areas identified in the draft MTP, sharper priorities need to be defined. This includes the definition of strategic choices, critical sequences, and the quest for economies of scale in initiatives. As observed in the EPR, IFPRI's past major impacts have been in areas where priorities had been sharply defined, rigorous research methodologies had been defined, and a critical mass of information had been generated. For this to happen, divisional views have to be cooperatively subsumed to Institute priorities. It should be a first priority for the new Director General to work on the definition of these collective priorities, for research as well as outreach.

2. The central theme of the 1990 EPR was achieving excellence in research. We were preoccupied with the dynamism of the intellectual climate at IFPRI, with the need for access to relevant frontier developments in theory and methods, with the importance of constant retooling of research staff, and with active interface with the rest of the profession. Performance has continued to be strong. At the same time, our assessment is that there still exists a gap between achievements and potential as observed in 1990. Dynamizing and rejuvenating the research climate should also be an important priority on the new Director General's agenda. The 1990 EPR report provides a number of guidelines that may remain useful for this purpose.
3. The EMR/EPR recommendation of appointing a Deputy Director General for Research and Development has not been implemented. There is no question that the function is essential: research and outreach priorities need to be established and pursued, activities need to be coordinated above the inputs of the Division Directors, and an individual within IFPRI should be clearly accountable for these responsibilities on an ongoing basis. We suggest, however, that the recommendation should be interpreted with flexibility and an administrative answer provided in a timely fashion. The new Director General will have to determine which programmatic functions he wants to perform directly and which he wants to delegate. Several models are possible, each of which has opportunity costs and potential problems. In this Interim Review, we have identified the role of a DDG as a function, not necessarily as an individual. We consequently recommend that time be given to the new DG to experiment with his roles and responsibilities and, on that basis, decide where most essential complementary assistance may be needed and under what form, before making an appointment.
PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1990 EMR RECOMMENDATIONS

Prepared by IFPRI for the 1992 External Interim Review

This note lists the major recommendations of the External Management Review as found in the introductory chapter of the EMR report of October 1990 and describes the current state of implementation as of May 1992. Recommendations are numbered as in the EMR report and paraphrased in some cases in the interest of brevity.

SECTION A IMPLEMENTED

GOVERNANCE

1. Quickly decide on how to handle the succession in IFPRI's top management. (Completed)
   **ACTIONS:**
   
   (a) The Board appointed Dr. Just Faaland Director General for a two-year term ending August 31, 1992 and gave him full authority to move IFPRI vigorously forward with major administrative and management reforms, the continued development of research programs, the preparation of a strategic plan and personnel decisions as appropriate in the development of Board-approved programs and plans.

   (b) To identify a candidate to take over the responsibilities of Director General after Dr. Faaland, the Board appointed a Search Committee under the chairmanship of Professor Vernon Ruttan (University of Minnesota) and including five other members (including three Trustees). The vacancy was advertised in the Economist and widely publicized in other ways. A short list of five candidates was prepared, four of whom were interviewed in Washington in August 1991 and made presentations to the staff, one having withdrawn his name. Further withdrawals reduced the short list to two. At its meeting on October 3-4, 1991, the Board selected Dr. Per Pinstrup-Andersen who will assume the post of Director General on July 1, 1992.

2. Strengthen the role the Board of Trustees plays in formulating and overseeing Institute-wide strategic concerns. (Completed)
   **ACTION:** With assistance from a consultant who knows the CG system well and has considerable experience in Board governance and other administrative affairs, the Executive/Finance/Audit Committee undertook a comprehensive review of the Board's structure and operations. Recommendations resulting from that review were considered, revised and approved at the Trustees meeting in February 1991. The changes are expected to strengthen significantly and greatly facilitate Trustees' oversight of all aspects of the Institute's programs and operation without in any way interfering with the autonomy and authority of day-to-day management by full-time staff.
3. Move forward expeditiously with restructuring the Board's internal operational procedures. (Completed)

**ACTION:** See paragraph 2 above.

4. When appointing trustees, the CGIAR should give special attention to ensuring that the Board has sufficient management expertise in its membership. (Completed)

**ACTION:** This IFPRI progress report cannot speak for action taken by the CGIAR. However, the CG generally appoints Trustees in close consultation with IFPRI's Chairman, who makes clear to the Secretariat the criteria the Board is seeking for new appointees. Moreover, the Nominating Committee, as part of the operational changes noted in paragraph 2, has been instructed to define its criteria more explicitly and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that Board membership contains the appropriate mix of experience and points of view. Three persons appointed to the board in the period following the external reviews have considerable administrative experience in addition to being familiar with issues of food policy.

**STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT OF RESEARCH**

6. Prepare a clearly articulated IFPRI Strategy document. (Completed)

**ACTION:** A draft strategy statement was prepared with extensive involvement of the staff, and discussed by the Trustees at their February 20-22, 1991 meeting. A revised draft was circulated widely to stakeholders, and was discussed at the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Europe on May 16 and 17 and by a number of Board members at a meeting in Paris on May 20. It was also the subject of a two-day meeting with 25 representatives of developing countries on May 21 and 22. A further revision was considered and commented upon by TAC in June 1991. The Board approved the statement at its October 1991 meeting, and the document has been published and distributed.

8. Program Directors should be given greater authority to manage their programs. (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) In the months following the reviews, Program Directors played an active role in the annual performance review of staff assigned to their programs, in the redefinition of program content and priorities, in the formulation of their 1991 budgets, in the recruitment of senior research personnel, and in the formulation of Institute policies and operating procedures.

(b) After discussion within the Institute, explicit terms of reference were agreed for this important middle management position, which was renamed Division Director.
9. Re-establish the position of Director of Finance and Administration and recruit a new Director. (Completed)

**ACTION:** The Director of Development and Administration left IFPRI on March 31, 1991. A new Director of Administration and Finance was appointed, effective May 1, 1991, with responsibility for finance, development, the Board secretariat, external relations, information, personnel, travel, and other research support services.

10. Establish a Senior Management Committee and a Research Committee. (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) The Director General’s Advisory Committee (DAC), which consists of the DG, the Senior Policy Advisor, the five Division Directors, and the Director of Administration and Finance, with the Director of External Relations as Secretary, has been meeting two or three times each month and performing the function of a Senior Management Committee.

(b) A Research Committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Senior Policy Advisor to advise the Director General on the relevance and priority of particular research proposals.

11. Some portion of core funds should be reserved for seed money (pre-project) and for reflection and synthesis (post-project). (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) When preparing the 1991 and 1992 budgets, Management made a conscious effort to provide core-funding for pre- and post-project activities to the extent that such activities have been foreseen by individual researchers and their Division Directors in the discussion of annual work plans.

(b) Management has instructed Project Directors and budget officers to take care in negotiating project financing to allow adequately for pre- and post-project activities. It is hoped that donors will be willing to increase allocations for unrestricted and project funding in the light of EMR/EPR recommendations on this point. IFPRI will have to be more careful in accepting special project responsibilities where full funding, including pre- and post-project financing is not forthcoming.

(c) Research project budgets are being monitored to ensure that resources originally budgeted for pre- and post-project activities are not used instead for additional research activities or other purposes.
12. Institute an annual internal review process, which could include an in-depth examination of part or all of the Institute's research and outreach activities each year.  (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) Commitment to a regular annual internal review process is firm, and the 1991 review was held in August 1991.

(b) The Trustees have formed a Program Committee which met initially in October 1991. This committee will play an active role in formulating topics and procedures for internal reviews and will participate in them.

(c) Substantial adjustments were made by staff in program priorities on the basis of past accomplishments and projected future needs in the course of a thorough review of the EPR report and intensive staff participation in the process of formulating a strategy statement.

**MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

13. Recruit a competent, professional Personnel Manager.  (Completed)

**ACTION:** A new Personnel Manager joined the staff in late January 1991. She brings to the position many years of personnel experience administering the personnel function in international organizations and was chosen on the recommendation of a staff search committee, chaired by a Division Director, which received and reviewed more than 300 applications.

14. Institute an effective performance planning and review system.

**ACTIONS:**

(a) While there was no time to introduce an entirely new performance planning and review system before the end of 1990, the process carried out in November/December 1990 represented a significant advance over past practice: Division Directors participated in discussions between research fellows and the DG, written notes on those discussions were placed on file, and Division Directors participated in the final salary determination for all Research Analysts and Research Assistants and support staff on the basis of a written draft listing of proposed changes prepared by Administration.

(b) A staff Task Force reviewed the Institute's salary structure, and compiled initial job descriptions for most staff as a basis for evaluating the performance of all IFPRI staff.

* The implementation required by this recommendation has been approved and is well underway. The Panel sees no reason why it will not be marked completed once the staff has had the training and experience required.
(c) A good deal of planning went into the performance appraisal exercise conducted in the last two months of 1991. An appraisal of this process was prepared and for submission to the Executive and Finance Committee in June 1992 and to the Board in October 1992. The evaluation to date suggests that the Institute still has some way to go to implement this recommendation fully.

15. Complete the documentation of personnel policies, with appropriate staff inputs, and implement such policies equitably after review and approval by the Board.

**ACTIONS:**

(a) The Task Force that managed the search for a new Personnel Manager was instructed to assist in the preparation of an updated Personnel Manual, to recommend modifications (including additions) to personnel policies, to suggest mechanisms to ensure proper implementation of rules, and to recommend appropriate measures for improvement of office supply policies and procedures.

(b) Policy issues have been, and continue to be, brought to the Board individually as they are ready for consideration. Through a process of progressive revision, and consultation with staff and legal counsel, a version of the manual including all but three of the 22 sections was sent simultaneously to the Board, staff and legal counsel for comment, on January 13, 1992. It is expected that these sections will be published in finished form during June 1992.

(c) Work on most of the remaining sections should also be completed by the middle of 1992, and on projected revision of the section on Staff Relocation by the fall of the year. While the Board meeting in October 1992 should mark the completion of action on this recommendation, the manual is in one sense never finished, since changes will be made regularly to reflect improvements in processes, new issues and new laws and regulations affecting the Institute.

16. All senior staff positions should be well advertised and candidates should be reviewed by an effective internal committee drawn in large measure from staff with knowledge and experience in the subject on which new appointees will work. (Completed)

**ACTION:** New senior positions were advertised for economists to deal with trade and macro issues and with the sustainable management of natural resources and related environmental topics. In each case an internal committee was constituted to advise on the position description, recruitment process, evaluation criteria, and selection. Advice and assistance were solicited from knowledgeable outsiders. It is intended that these procedures will be the standard practice for all future recruitment of senior personnel; they will be monitored and assisted by the Personnel Manager and her staff.

* The implementation required by this recommendation has been approved and is well underway. The Panel sees no reason why it will not be marked completed in the near term.
17. Any unusual employment arrangements for senior research personnel should be reviewed and clarified. (Completed)

**ACTION:** There are four major cases of such arrangements which have been reviewed by the Director General and discussed with those involved. In one, the individual is no longer employed by IFPRI. In a second, arrangements are being completed for a transfer from employee status to daily consultancy. A third individual will complete his contract in 1992 on the existing terms, and a fourth case remains under discussion. Language in the personnel manual addresses the range of acceptable employment arrangements.

18. As a norm, the tenure of the Institute's Director General should be limited to ten years. (Completed)

**ACTION:** Section 4.2 of the revised Bylaws reads: "The Director General may not serve more than ten consecutive years, and a provision to this effect is included in the contract of the new Director General."

19. A comprehensive system of job titles, descriptions, and salary ranges should be developed by Institute staff, reviewed by the Board and then implemented. (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) A staff Task Force, chaired by a Division Director was appointed by the Director General to "look into issues of current and proposed structure of salaries within the Institute with emphasis also on the aspects of organizational structure, position description, performance criteria for appraisal, and distribution of core and special project staff within the Institute." In accordance with the Board decision in October 1991, a structure based on the Task Force recommendations was prepared for implementation as of January 1, 1992, subject to retroactive review by the Board in February 1992. All employees were given an opportunity to appeal their placement in the structure.

(b) A comprehensive salary structure was implemented with effect from the beginning of 1992. The Board reviewed this structure again in February 1992, and approved it.

20. A comprehensive conflict of interest policy should be formulated and implemented. (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) A conflict of interest policy statement for trustees was adopted by the Board in February 1991.

(b) A policy statement governing conflict of interest which might arise at the staff and management level is included in the revised Personnel Manual.
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

22. A program-budgeting system should be adopted. Also, the "Senior Management and Research Committees" should participate in decisions on the allocation of resources. (Completed)

ACTION: Describing this recommendation the EMR calls for a strategy-driven program with each program division having its own goals, budget, and leadership. Projects would remain important but as rightful parts of a larger program context. Proposals to redefine program content and to assign staff to the five reconstituted program divisions were developed in a highly participatory fashion before being presented to and approved by the Board in February 1991. This process was done in parallel with the articulation of a strategy statement for the 1990s and the development of 1991 budgets for each program division as well as for the Institute as a whole. New project commitments are being accepted only when they contribute to the achievement of approved program objectives and provide sufficient financial support so that scarce core funds will not be taxed unduly. The 1991 internal review focused on research accomplishments by division. Division directors, individually and as part of DAC, were heavily involved in the development of the 1992 budget. The 1992 budget process dealt with resource allocations on a division by division basis, as will the budget for 1993. The next stage will be preparation of a Medium-Term Program and Budget for 1994-1998, which will consider explicitly how budget decisions and program content can best be related. In short, a system is evolving which responds to EMR suggestions.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

24. The priorities for IFPRI's future external relationships should be an integral part of the institutional strategic planning process. (Completed)

ACTION: External relationships were given extensive attention in the process of preparing the strategy statement. Both the Board and Management are aware of the importance of these relationships for the effectiveness of the Institute, and the strategy contains a number of proposals in this regard.

SECTION B. NOT IMPLEMENTED

5. A Deputy Director General for Research and Development (DDG) should be appointed.

ACTIONS:

(a) The Board endorsed this recommendation in its formal response to the EMR and considers the appointment of a DDG important in the long run.

(b) After thorough discussion during its meeting in October 1990, the Board concurred with the Director General's decision that during his tenure a Deputy would not be appointed. Accordingly, the functions which were intended to be performed by a DDG are being performed partly by the Director General himself and partly shared among other senior staff.
7. Create a position for a Director of Outreach which combines the present functions of Information Services and External Relations; and recruit as Director a respected scientist who understands policy issues and can participate in training as well as be able to organize conferences and seminars.

ACTION: Before creating this position and recruiting a specialist to manage the outreach functions, the Director General and staff see a need to explore more thoroughly and in detail what the Institute can and should do in the area of formal and informal training and other outreach activities in the 1990s. In the meantime, therefore, the EMR recommendation is on hold for a period of experimentation and discussion that will define more clearly IFPRI's outreach strategy for the 1990s.

21. The long-term employment prospects of Research Assistants/Analysts (RAs) should be clarified.

ACTION: Long-term employment prospects of RAs was taken up as part of the general review of personnel policies and among the concepts embodied in the Salary Administration Plan. Position descriptions and responsibilities were clarified in consultation with RAs' representatives. A number of issues related to the role of RAs in the Institute remain under discussion. Promotions from assistant to analyst, which were suspended, have resumed, and in some cases made retroactive.

SECTION C. OTHER

4. When appointing trustees, the CGIAR should give special attention to ensuring that the Board has sufficient management expertise in its membership. (Also appears under Section A.)

ACTION: This IFPRI progress report cannot speak for action taken by the CGIAR. However, the CG generally appoints Trustees in close consultation with IFPRI's Chairman, who makes clear to the Secretariat the criteria the Board is seeking for new appointees. Moreover, the Nominating Committee, as part of the operational changes noted in paragraph 2, has been instructed to define its criteria more explicitly and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that Board membership contains the appropriate mix of experience and points of view. Three persons appointed to the board in the period following the external reviews have considerable administrative experience in addition to being familiar with issues of food policy.

23. The CGIAR Secretariat should clarify the responsibility of the centers to inform the CGIAR before making material commitments which are not included in the currently approved budget or medium-term plan.

ACTIONS:

(a) This report cannot speak for the CGIAR Secretariat.

(b) For its part, IFPRI management has established and is actively using open channels of communications with the CG Secretariat.
This note lists the major recommendations of the External Program Review as found in Chapter 7 - Overall Assessment and Recommendations - of the EPR report of October 1990 and describes the current state of implementation as of May 1992. Although the recommendations were not numbered in the original document, they have been numbered for purposes of reporting here. Certain of the recommendations are common to the EPR and the EMR and have been covered by the companion report on implementation of EMR recommendations.

SECTION A. IMPLEMENTED

1. The Food Data Evaluation Program should be phased out and the research fellows of this program reallocated as appropriate to other programs. (Completed)

   ACTION: The issue of program restructuring was thoroughly discussed by the Director's Advisory Committee and given extensive consideration at the meeting of the senior research staff. Based on these discussions, the functions previously performed by the Food Data Evaluation program were more narrowly specified and transferred to the Special Development Studies Division along with the staff, except for one researcher who joined the Trade and Macroeconomic Division.

3. Professional support on statistics and econometrics needs to be secured, possibly on a contractual basis. (Completed)

   ACTION: In-house training courses have been organized and professional contacts with statisticians and econometricians at nearby institutions have been strengthened. A special committee was established to identify and resolve (usually through short-term consultancies) statistical problems in policy research. A new publication series (Microcomputers In Policy Research) has been initiated to convey both the problems and their solutions to IFPRI collaborators.

4. The Food Production Policy Program should be divided into two programs with maximum internal disciplinary homogeneity, possibly along the lines of farm management and public goods. (Completed)

   ACTION: This recommendation has been reviewed by the Director's Advisory Committee and was given extensive consideration at meetings of the senior research staff as part of the discussion of the overall redefinition of IFPRI's research. The decision was taken to divide the Production Program into two divisions: a Market and Structural Studies Division and an Environment and Production Technology Division, with staff reallocated according to their areas of interest and expertise.
5. The Agricultural Growth Linkages Program should be redefined and named "Development Strategies" and focus its research on the main themes that pertain to the role of agriculture in economic development. (Completed)

**ACTION:** This recommendation was discussed by the Director's Advisory Committee and given extensive consideration at meetings of the senior research staff. The decision was taken to rename this program Special Development Studies Division and to redefine the program's content in line with the recommendation.

6. The Food Consumption and Nutrition Policy Programme should develop collaborative arrangements with centres of excellence in nutrition and health rather than trying to build up this expertise at IFPRI by hiring isolated specialists. (Completed)

**ACTION:** Collaborative arrangements with leading scientists and institutions have been and are being developed in a number of cases. One of the earliest such links is with the Istituto Nazionale della Nutrizione of Italy on investigating the effects of seasonal food insecurity on changes in energy metabolism and work capacity.

The division has developed ties with the Department of Nutrition at the UCLA, Berkeley, on the micronutrient deficiency area, and with nutrition and health professionals at the School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University in the design of a micronutrient protocol.

Other collaborative arrangements exist with the UN Subcommittee on Nutrition (ACC/SCN) which is a major world forum for discussions on nutrition research, policy and programs, with INCAP which is the foremost nutrition research center for Central and South America, and with the Nutrition Department of Wageningen Agricultural University.

8. The current organizational approach to Research Areas coordination should be abandoned, but the effort of synthesis in the form of edited books should be thoroughly redesigned and pursued. (Completed)

**ACTION:** The recommendation to abandon the earlier approach to research area coordination was accepted. The new approach is based on task forces for integration of micro- and macro-based research as between two or more divisions.

9. Country policy reviews and white papers on instances of "hot" policy reforms should be prepared in support of conferences that bring IFPRI to the front line of current policy debates. (Completed)

**ACTION:** IFPRI recognizes the importance of materials of the sort described, which have strong empirical and analytical content. Since the External Review, IFPRI has published a number of papers that approach this type of publication. Two examples are "Labor Intensive Public Works for Food Security: Experience in Africa" and "Improving Food Security of the Poor: Concept, Policy and Programs". In addition, IFPRI has embarked on a new series called Food Policy Report, which includes papers on subjects of regional and global policy importance. The first such paper, A Policy Agenda for Famine Prevention in Africa, reviews the experience of
Sudan and Ethiopia and provides policy prescripts for future consideration. Current plans include producing, in conjunction with the United Nations Sub-Committee on Nutrition, the second report in a series on global malnutrition in children.

12. In-service training through collaborative research should be continued. Training should be broadened to include more formal teaching in policy-research, particularly through short courses based on IFPRI's materials. (Completed)

**ACTION:** The research strategy addresses training in its various aspects, and there has been a strong focus on this issue in planning for the MTP. The approach is consistent with the recommendation. Short courses under IFPRI are being contemplated and one has already been held. Particular emphasis is being placed on efforts to encourage the utilization of IFPRI research materials in courses organized by others.

13. Conferences and seminars should be held as much as possible in association with developing country institutions. These should increasingly focus on front line food and poverty policy issues and on current debates of concern to developing countries. (Completed)

**ACTION:** Since the 1990 External Program Review, IFPRI has sponsored nine seminars, conferences, or workshops on policy and/or research issues of concern to the developing countries. Topics included drought and famine prevention, irrigation performance, forestry and agroforestry policy, agricultural sustainability, regional trade liberalization, intra-household resources allocation, food insecurity and malnutrition, and women in development. Three of the meetings were co-sponsored with host country institutions in developing countries; four were held at IFPRI headquarters; and one was held in a donor country to promote policy dialogue. In the near term (1992-93), seven meetings are planned focusing on such topics as development cooperation in the next decade, agricultural diversification, and intra-regional trade liberalization. Follow-up regional workshops in the areas of forestry/agroforestry policy and agricultural sustainability are included in the plan. Six of the meetings will be held in developing countries in cooperation with local research organizations. The seventh will be held in a donor country to assist it in identifying future priorities for technical assistance to developing countries. This data suggest that IFPRI does seek developing country collaborators for policies and seminars, and is arranging such collaboration with increasing frequency.

15. IFPRI should create a new program entitled "Natural Resources and the Environment" and immediately establish two staff positions including a Natural Resources Economist as program director. (Completed)

**ACTIONS:** This recommendation was discussed by the Director's Advisory Committee and was given extensive consideration at meetings of the senior research staff in the context of Institute-wide program restructuring. As indicated above (under point 4), responsibility has been placed in the new Environment and Production Technology Division. IFPRI has employed a Natural Resources Economist as of August 1, 1992. Recruitment for the position of division director was initiated in the Spring of 1992.
16. **IFPRI should reformulate its environmental policy research agenda in close collaboration with other agencies.** (Completed)

**ACTIONS:**

(a) The program content in this area has been actively debated within IFPRI's own research staff. A study on the issue was widely circulated outside of IFPRI for comment in September 1989. These were the first steps in an ongoing process of consultation which includes the Board, TAC, our national research partners, and other environmental specialists and agencies.

(b) In July 1991, IFPRI conducted with USAID and IUFRO and in collaboration with FAO, a special workshop on Forestry Policy Research with participation of experts from around the world. In September 1991, IFPRI convened jointly with the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) a policy seminar on "Agricultural Sustainability, Growth, and Poverty Alleviation: Issues and Policies," held in Feldafing, Germany. Participants in both seminars included natural and social scientists and senior administrators and policy advisors from both developed and developing countries.

17. **IFPRI should reallocate resources by phasing out some programmes and expanding others, adding dimensions to the training program, and greater involvement in policy outreach.** (Completed)

**ACTION:** The program identified for reduction in the EPR has been phased out and one program has been expanded. Additional dimensions of training are being considered in connection with the MTP. These issues have been addressed in our strategy and planning exercises, and in our day to day work. The proposals of the EPR have been seriously considered at each stage. Whether the result at the end, under the constraints of CGIAR priority guidance and available resources, will match the balance recommended by the EPR panel is unclear at this point. We note that the recommendation contains one type of savings, and three proposals for increased use of resources.

**SECTION B. NOT IMPLEMENTED**

2. A primary data bank that archives IFPRI's household surveys needs to be organized with assistance from a data management expert and core funding support. (This recommendation would assign the data bank function to Computer Services and require additional staff financed by the core budget.)

**ACTION:** As a result of scrutiny by the Director's Advisory Committee and discussions in meetings of the senior research staff in the context of program restructuring, the responsibility for the organization of the data bank was placed alongside the remaining food data evaluation function and located in Special Development Studies Division. In the budget review for 1992, the director of this division was asked to make a specific proposal for consideration by the RAC and the Director General of steps to be taken under this recommendation.
7. The International Trade and Food Security Programme needs to be expanded to take on new research and outreach responsibilities.

**ACTION:** Resource constraints have limited progress in this direction. One Senior Trade Economist has been recruited, and another is under recruitment to allow expansion of the activities of the division following priorities of IFPRI Research Strategy and Medium Term Plan.

10. Staff performance should be thoroughly reviewed when contracts come up for renewal.

**ACTION:** Procedures have been put in place for tracking termination dates of employment agreements and making a considered decision on extension taking account of performance factors *inter alia*.

11. The Institute should reinforce its outreach and developing country capacity-building in policy research according to a well-defined strategy.

**ACTION:** This relates to the issue of a Director for Outreach which is addressed in connection with the EMR. IFPRI decided to focus on these issues in developing its research strategy document, which is complete, and its medium-term program which remains to be done. The Institute notes that CGIAR priority for capacity-building has weakened as reflected in a lower core allocation for this purpose to IFPRI in the resources envelop suggested for the MTP.

14. IFPRI should design and implement a strategy for post-research follow-up activities to secure sustained collaboration with the developing country policy research communities.

**ACTION:** This is part and parcel of the issue of outreach strategy which is being addressed, as mentioned in item 11 above. A great deal of follow-up is undertaken at the divisional level usually in the form of second and third phase research collaboration. We also need to consider the competition for resources between follow-up in areas where research is no longer being conducted and new research.