Final

Minutes of the Center Directors Meeting held at ICRISAT from 3 to 6 July 1979

AVRDC	J. Moomaw
	J.J. Riley
CIAT	J.L. Nickel
	G.A. Nores
CIMMYT	R.D. Havener
	E.W. Sprague
CIP	R.L. Sawyer
	K.J. Brown
IBPGR	J.T. Williams
ICARDA	H.S. Darling
ICRISAT	L.D. Swindale
	J.S. Kanwar
	R.C. McGinnis
IFPRI	P.A. Oram
IITA	W.K. Gamble
	M. Akintomide
ILCA	D. Pratt
ILRAD	A.C. Allison
IRRI	N.C. Brady
	D. Greenland
WARDA	S. Coulibaly
	B.A.C. Enyi

A joint session of the Center Directors with TAC members was held on Tuesday, July 3 at 9.00 a.m.

Dr. Cummings requested the Center Directors to participate fully in the discussions to follow, He then reported on the two meetings held since the last meeting of the TAC. They were the CG meeting in Paris and the meeting of the Sub-committee on ISNAR. Ten members for the ISNAR Board were identified, to be asked to serve on the Board. Five alternative members were also selected. The first meeting of the Board will be held prior to the CG meeting in October. He further informed the participants that IFPRI was accepted in the CG system. However, the question of its location has to be further examined by TAC and the CG.

TAC Review of Priorities for International Support to Agricultural Research

. Mr. Mahler then introduced the TAC paper on Priorities. Mahler informed that in addition to the contribution made by TAC members and Center Directors, IFPRI, FAO and the CG had also given their input. He then related the various changes that had been incorporated since the last draft.

Swindale congratulated the TAC on the revised paper. He commented that. the objectives for the CGIAR as listed in para 23 was correct and applied to the system as a whole, but the emphasis on the several objectives given varied from center to center, The statement that first and foremost the CG System must support what it has created is correct but it implied also that reasonable priority should be given to research to make use of the Centers' results. For example there should be more input into production factor research, to try to develop better criteria for determining priorities. Intercropping research also deserved more consideration, because it was common practice in developing countries. Many of the center crops are grown togetherfor good reason and more Centers are doing work on intercropping,

Havener questioned the notion that too much money is being spent on Triticale. He believed that Triticale has an important place amongst the world's crops. Though at this stage it is mainly used as animal feed, he felt that it will soon be used for human consumption among the poorer people. To emphasise its importance, he suggested that it should be placed on the agenda of the CIMMYT Quinquennial Review in 1981.

Pratt commented that the analyses of the livestock situation were of less value than for crops and in any future return to this subject an opportunity could be taken for a more analytical approach to the livestock field. Often the paper deals only with very broad categories that are not very helpful.

Gamble stressed the importance of research on vegetables, and commented that IITA had dropped its research on vegetables, in the anticipation of additional work being done on it by a fullfledged center. On quarantine he appealed to the TAC members to make a concerted effort to improve the movement of seed material in Nigeria as they are losing valuable material due to the stringent controls exercised by the plant quarantine authorities.

Brady commented that the maturity of a Center could be defined in ways other than by age or largeness of a center. He felt that a concept of identifying a component program of each of several centers and even of international centers might be the logical approach to handle factor oriented research. He informed that the group that met at IRRI to talk about soil constraints came to that conclusion.

Oram commented that the question of energy has hardly been discussed in the paper. He stated that there is an impression that one can get more for less and maybe this can be done by husbanding of resources, but felt that the subject of energy accounting, energy efficiency of production systems has not so far been tackled adequately. He stated that it is a very controversial subject, but in his opinion the development of agricultural production is becoming more energy intensive rather than less intensive. He thought there was a lot of scope for research to be done in this area.

Financial Outlook for 1980 and beyond

After the coffee break Mr. Lejeune gave the background for the CG's view of the financial outlook for 1980. Lejeune stated that there is continuing concern amongst the countries on the production of food, therefore the CGIAR enjoys support from the donors. However, many of the countries are facing difficult economic situations and severe foreign aid constraints. Therefore important donors are likely only to increase their contributions sufficient to retain the present level in constant terms. Moreover two large donors, Iran and Saudi Arabia, have not contributed this year. It was felt that the time had come for the Centers to constrain their programs, particularly the mature centers. It was discussed at the May meeting of the CG whether a subcommittee be appointed to allocate funds to the various centers. However a majority of the members felt that so far this extreme step was not necessary. The Chairman of the CG was authorised to bring into being a subcommittee to review the situation in mid-September, if necessary.

The CG had some suggestions for the curtailment of budgetary spending. The first area was cuts in technical items such as contingencies and allowances for inflation. Secondly no increase in midterm, and finally real program adjustments. Mr. Lejeune emphasized that there are practically no chances of donors pledging additional funds. He further stated that the term 'mature' is used in the sense that a Center should not cease to innovate or to make choices from the opportunities in front of it, but an institution with as much man power, physical resources and funds as the older Centers have should have no difficulty in carrying out their mandates.

The Center Directors meeting convened at 2.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 3rd July 1979.

Consideration and Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held in November 1978 were approved.

Mr. Pratt apologised for not being able to attend the meeting in Uashington.

Business Arising from the Minutes

a) Health and Retirement Benefits

Havener informed the Center Directors that the Van Breda Health and Life Insurance coverage seemed preferable to the existing AIL plan. The Van Breda'plan mentions that no medical examination was generally required. Havener was requested to inform IIE that the Center Directors wished to retain medical examinations for all staff and if inclusion of this facility would increase the premium. They also wished to be informed whether there was any location restriction in medical coverage.

Regarding post-retirement benefits, it would be up to the grocp to set the minimum time necessary for the qualification of the benefit because the Centers will be paying premium on the number of people insured. There is a very substantial difference in premium especially for post-retirement. IIE would administer the plan. It was decided to keep the retiring age at 60 and have 7 years of service in an institute to obtain eligibility for this benefit. The Center Directors agreed to put this recommendation before their Boards for consideration. Further they agreed that Inter-center service would also be counted in the length of service.

As the Center Directors had decided to keep the retiring age at 60 it was necessary to ascertain from Mr. Thannikary if the two options given in the Van Breda Life Insurance plan for decrease of principal sum could start at 60 instead of 65 as mentioned in the plan.

As regards the Off-shore pension plan it was decided to have an outside consultant review the AIRCO plan.

b) Meeting on International Testing

Some Center Directors felt that the emphasis on visiting CIMMYT's programs was too great, and the ten minutes allocated for each Center's speaker was not sufficient. Mr. Havener clarified that the program was made up taking into account the comments of various center scientists. However he stressed that the program would be changed if a number of scientists requested it. At this meeting basic questions of international testing should also be discussed. Suggestions were:whether Centers are overloading the system; whether they are serving the needs of national programs; the cost benefit ratio and amount of superfluous information asked for.

IIE Services

Drs. Nickel and Sawyer reported on the survey of IIE Services by the Controllers of CIP and CIAT. The Controllers recommended that 1) Centers continue to use IIE's service, 2) centers review services which they would prefer to handle themselves, 3) IIE be asked to quote different rates for those Centers who do not use all their services, and 4) payment to IIE be changed to monthly payments with penalties for those Centers who are delinquent. They further stated that IIE's charges were not exhorbitant. The Directors accepted these recommendations. It was suggested that IIE should be informed of the decision of the Center Directors as soon as possible.

Dr. Brady Suggested that the two recommendations regarding IIE quoting differing fees for those Centers not using all services, and payments on a monthly basis be sent to IIE and request their response to it. If IIE is agreeable, the Centers will then negotiate Individual agreements with them. Dr. Swindale, as Chairman was requested to inform IIE of these decisions.

Salary and Benefits Survey across IARCs

Hal Hanson introduced the subject. The CG Secretariat originally requested the Centers to initiate this study by employing an outside consultant. They felt that the donors would appreciate the fact that the Centers were setting salaries in reasonable relation to comparable agencies. CIMMYT therefore selected the consultant and worked out the logistics. Though the report was sent to only the nine sponsoring centers, Hanson'felt that a summary of the report together with the terms of reference and general reference to the study be made a public document. He also suggested that the questionnaire filled out by the center staff for Mr.Thorson be made public. However, the Directors decided not to publicise the questionnaire. It was agreed by the Center Directors to make copies available to WARDA, IFPRI and Genes Board free of cost, on the understanding that the information it contained should be kept confidential. It was further decided that Center Directors could present their Boards with as detailed information as they wished and that the summary report be made available to the CG Secretariat and donors. Drs. Hanson and Darling were requested to prepare an executive summary to be approved by the Directors. The summary was prepared and after minor corrections it was accepted. Thorson inquired if the people who cooperated with him could be sent Attachments 2 and 6 after deleting the column giving Center figures. He emphasized that this would help to get information in the future. It was agreed to. Havener enquired how long it would take Mr. Thorson to up-date such a study in the future. Thorson felt that most of a future survey could be done by correspondence. The Directors considered that one aspect not adequately covered was an analysis of salaries relating to age and experience. Mr. Thorson said it would be a difficult task for an outsider. It was therefore decided to request IIE to collect the information and pass it on to the Directors. A letter to this effect was sent to IIE.

U.S. Tax Issues

Dr. Nickel reported on U.S. Tax Issues. He informed the Directors that McPherson was not very hopeful of changing the 1978 Act in the near future. The Congress wishes to see the effect of its legislation before it enacts any changes. The Center Directors agreed to utilise McPherson's services for the rest of the year, particularly as they were assured his fees were reasonable. Dr. Nickel will take prior approval of the Center Directors before utilising his service in 1980.

Swindale distributed tax forms that ICRISAT was using to compute U.S. Tax payable by ICRISAT for individual staff. He stated that ICRISAT's Board did not want to reimburse U.S. taxes permanently on ad hoc basis and hoped the CG would do something about it. The Directors after considerable discussion felt that the only way to obtain relief from U.S. taxes was to get reimbursement from the U.S. Treasury or to be declared as a part of the U.N. family and ask for the same privileges. The Directors felt that if U.S. taxes were reimbursed local governments could also be persuaded to reimburse taxes of locally recruited staff.

Havener suggested that Thorson could recommend a package of guidelines for tax reimbursement to put before the Boards of Trustees. After considerable discussion, the Directors agreed to a consultant doing a comparative study and making sone recommendations about a uniform policy that Centers could recommend to their Boards, as suggestions of an independent consultant. The Directors felt that as a recent salary survey was done by Mr. Thorson, he could build upon the same material for this additional study.

ISNAR Report on behalf of the CGIAR Committee

Andrew Hayman who has been serving as secretary to the CG Steering Committee on ISNAR brought the Center Directors up to date on the establishment of ISNAR. GTZ was selected as executing agency on behalf of the CG to prepare a draft charter for the new Institute, and select the first Board of Directors. It will be located in the Netherlands in The Hague. A search was on for the first Director. The Charter indicated that ISNAR was expected to concentrate on strengthening research organization and management but it would be able to undertake field research activities. Swindale informed the Directors that his suggestion that a Center Director be on ISNAR's board was turned down, but the Chairman of the Center Director's group was invited to attend the first Board Meeting to be held just before Centers Week, as an observer. The Directors agreed that there should be close cooperation between ISNAR and the other Centers from the start. The Director of ISNAR would be a full member of the Center Directors group.

Enyi and Coulibaly hoped that candidates from developing countries would be considered for the Directorship of ISNAR or, for that matter, of any of the Centers, all of whom are working to help developing countries.

IADS Training Proposal

Dr. Athwal of IADS was unable to join the meeting. Dr. Nickel recapitulated the discussion that took place at the Center Directors meeting in November at Washington. He informed that 3 Centers were represented at the Bellagio meeting, and they were informed of a European scheme for training personnel for working at agricultural centers. Dr. Nickel felt that Colin McClung saw the IADS proposal as a scheme for the younger professional whilst Athwal felt that at least a couple of years experience was necessary to undergo this training. The Directors decided that a 2 year training period was too short, especially as the scientist was required to work a year at a Center and the second year in a national program. They felt that no useful research work could be done in such a short time. Nickel also informed the Center Directors that IADS expected the Centers to provide the funding for the post doctorals assigned to their Centers. The Center Directors felt that costs of moving etc. would be too prohibitive for a year's assignment at an Institute. Swindale was requested to write to IADS informing them that the Center Directors are not at the present time prepared to start this project, and they feel there are better opportunities for cooperation with IADS in their regular training programs. Dr. Nickel suggested that IADS should also be informed that due to a shortage of funds in the CGIAR system and stringent budget cuts the Centers are not able to fund such a project.

Financial Matters

a) Financial Outlook for 1980

Dr. Gamble suggested that a positive discussion be held amngst the Center Directors about getting alternative additional resources. He believcd that there were no financial constraints in general, but only to the CG system. Brady suggested that if the group is able to get some bilateral funds it would be able to do some of the activities that have been cut out. Darling also felt that there is no shortage of money, but there was a weakness in that there is no obvious forum where the Center Directors meet as a group to make sure that the Centers are not competing with one another for funds. He felt that the donor representatives should be invited to a Center Directors 'meeting prior to Centers Week.

Mr. Lejeune and other members of the CG Secretariat were present for the discussion. Mr. Lejcune informed that with respect to fill rates the CG Secretariat had done some calculations for each Center and hoped that a drop in the number of new positionsfor 1980 would effect some savings. The numbers were available with Dan Ritchie. Ritchie added that the suggested fill rates for 1980 were higher than the estimates for 1979. Generally, it enables a reduction of one or two man years in the 1980 budget. The Secretariat further suggested that the Centers should add only 1% of their operational budget as contingency funds. On Swindale's enquiry of Contingency for salary increases, it was pointed out that this could be considered as price increases for which there is a specific item in the budget. This did not cover merit increases or equity adjustments.

Lejeune then stated that in the second year of a biennial budget there should be no increases, except for unforeseen circumstances. A 30 day working capital schedule was also suggested. Lejeune informed that with these changes the excess requirements would drop to half the original amount. $6m. which would be left would have to come from Program and Capital requirements. Mr. Lejeune suggested that all Centers should take a 25% cut in their equipment budgets. That would amount to approximately $800,000. In the capital program cuts were suggested in housing, farm buildings and warehouses, labs and green houses, hostels for trainees, and farm development. For the remaining 3 to 4 m. Mr. Lejeune suggested different ways to close the gap. One was a proportionate slice across the Board; secondly to have stiffer cuts for more mature centers and finally over budgeting against what the CG thinks would be likely contributions. Can Ritchie felt that over budgeting should be no more than $2m. He warned the Centers that any shortfall would have to be absorbed by the Centers. They accepted the last suggestion.

On Brady's question of what information to be given to potential donors, Lejeune stressed the need for the Center Directors to yet the work of the CG System as a whole known wherever they went. He suggested particularly Canada, Japan and OPEC. However he cautioned the Directors of extracting from donors undue share of funds as he argued if the donor contributed to the system all Centers would benefit. Mr. Lejeune also indicated that they may be approaching the LDCs for support to CG and he mentioned India and the Philippines. He also stressed the need for the Director-Generals to bring with them, when attending this meeting a board member, preferably from an LDC country, so that they can acquaint themselves with the work of the CG. Lejeune indicated that the CG Secretariat was very willing to work with the Centers in getting more funds and hoped that they would be informed of any sources which needed to be followed up or approached. He appealed to the Center Directors to let the Secretariat know when they were visiting a particular country and they would be informed of the right person to meet.

b) Cash Flow

This problem was discussed by the Center Directors prior to the joint meeting with the CG Secretariat. Dr. Garble described IITA's acute cash flow problems and since other Centers also faced cash problems, it was decided to first approach Mr. Lejeune to find out from the World Eank, particularly from Mr. McNamara about helping the Centers at short notice by setting up a revolving fund. In, this way the vast sum of money that is paid as interest would be saved, as well as considerable embarassment to the Centers.

Mr. Lejeune suggested that the Directors give the CG Secretariat an early warning of 30 to 40 days of the shortfall, and they would in turn write to the recalcitrant donors for their contributions. He also requested for an analyses of donor lateness for the last 3 years that the CG could persuade them to send their contributions in time. On the suggestion of contacting Mr. McNamara, Mr. Lejeune explained that the World Bank pays its contributions in tranches and it is only from these funds that Mr. McNamara can make a short term loan to the Centers. He informed that the CG has a $3m. reserve., and any Center that needed funds at short notice can always approach them. The Directors requested for more information regarding this facility. Mr. Lejeune agreed to try with the donors as well as the World Bank the idea of having a contingency fund. It could be suggested that the World Eank should increase its contribution one year and keep the increased amount as a fund-for the Centers to draw on in emergencies.

c) Banking Facilities in New York

Each Center still chose to approach its banking problems independently, but to share information on performance and procedures.

Long term planning - IRRI Experience

. Dr. Brady related IRRI's experience in drawing up a long term plan for their Institution. It was generally agreed that between 10 and 15 years was considered as long term. Dr. Brady commented that it could take approximately 6 months to draw up the plan, although IRRI took 2 years to do so, mainly in discussions within the program units.

Regional Coordination of IARCs including base-line farming systems studies

Dr. Darling cautioned'the Directors of the risk that donors could lose faith in the Centers and their work. He felt that there was no meeting ground for the Directors to meet for confidential or general discussions, or where donors could be invited to meet with the Center Directors or where Chairmen of the Boards could meet with the Directors and felt such a forum was badly needed. He thought that the Center Directors as a group do not show solidarity.

Though the Center Directors did not feel that such a forum would have the desired effect of gaining the confidence of the donors, it was agreed that some meeting place with donors was required. It was agreed that Center Directors will speak for the system wherever they go; that they adhered to the principle of positive cooperation among Centers, and they would use the biannual meeting to discuss programs and cooperation.

The Center Directors agreed to have a social function before Centers Week to which donors would be invited. Drs. Sawyer and Oram to look into this possibility and inform Swindale. This need was previously taken care of by Haldore iianson who hosted a farm party for the Center Directors and donors.

Report on IRRI Conference on Communication and Soil Constraints

Drs. Brady and Greenland reported on the success of IRRI's Conference on Soil Constraints. It was pointed out that in the final session of the Conference there was complete unanimity amongst the participants that they didn't want to see an International Soil Science Institute collie up, but wanted linkages between people involved in soil research and the Institutes and between them, national programs and crop production scientists. Members from the meeting were nominated to form a Steering Committee which would try end formalise a Coordinating Committee to bring together people in various programs working on soil science. Further, the general terms of reference of the Coordinating Committee were agreed upon. Gamble corroborated this view. The Communications Workshop was also a success with 5 centers being represented. At this meeting the issue of Annual Reports was discussed. Though it was described as a burden the scientists felt that it was worthwhile to publish them because it was greatly appreciated by collaborating scientists.

Report on ICRISAT Inauguration, IFARD Meetings in New Delhi and ICAR Golden Jubilee Celebrations, September 1979

Dr. Swindale briefly reported to the Center Directors that ICRISAT's Inauguration has been preponed to August 30. The Directors were invited to attend the Symposium and Inauguration ceremony. Swindale also inforined them of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of ICAR, to be held following the ICRISAT Inauguration, and the IFARD Symposium hosted by ICAR in conjunction with its celebrations. Swindale thought this meeting needed to be attended by the Directors if at all possible.

Other Business

a) Sabbatic Leave for regular and contract staff

The Center Directors felt that there were three categories of staff. 1) Regular and core staff, 2) staff on special projects but guaranteed a longer term 3) and short term contract staff. It was felt that if a staff member was required to stay on for a longer period even though he was on contract, sabbatic leave could be sanctioned. However, it was not possible to offer sabbatic leave benefit to short term contract staff. Service at one Center would not earn sabbatic leave credit at another.

b) Releasing breeding material to commercial companies

It was generally felt that unless a host government particularly requested the Institute not to distribute seeds to commercial companies the Institute would do so. It was suggested that seeds be distributed freely but no patenting rights be given.

c) Dr. Sawyer expressed the view that there was a shortage of scientists who have managerial capabilities and can stand in for the Directors. He therefore considered that Centers should provide management training for such individuals. Bob Havener stated that shortly CIMMYT would follow the process that CIP had'initiated and provide management training for selected individuals within CIMMYT.

d) The roles and responsibilities of Boards

Concern was expressed about a lengthy paper put out by Mr. Solandt on the rules and responsibilities of Boards of Trustees. This would be discussed at the meeting of the Chairmen of the Board of Trustees. An issue of concern was the idea that Chairmen or Board members wanted to set up direct channels of communication with staff members and bypass Directors.

Place and Dates for the next meeting

The 1980 meeting will be held at CIP in Lamolina, Peru, during the week July 1 to 8. Dr. Gamble was nominated as the Vice-chairman. The meeting in 1981 would be at **IITA.**

Preliminary Discussion of Items for Joint Session

a) Contracting Research to NARP's in LDC Institutions

Drs. Gamble and Allison were requested to draft a statement on behalf of the Center Directors. This was done and used as a starter in the joint discussion with TAC.

b) Progress Report on Stripe Analysis of Off-Campus Activities of the IARCs

Dr. Havener pointed out some inaccuracies in the TAC Secretariat's paper and stressed that the Centers do nut feel it is a burden to cooperate with national programs. The Directors felt that the definition of outreach should identify types of activities rather than using terms that have a budgetary connotation. This issue was later discussed in joint session with TAC.

Final Joint Session with TAC

a) Contracting Research to NARP's in LDC Institutions

Mahler introduced the subject by referring to the note prepared by the TAC Secretariat. Then followed an extensive discussion in which Center Directors, TAC members and Observers participated. Most centers are already subcontracting work to NARP's in both developed and developing countries. There probably was room for more subcontracting particularly to developing country institutions. Points made in the discussion referred to the needs to ensure adequate standards of quality, the long term benefits of strengthening national institutions, the problems of deflecting national scientists away from national priorities, the likelihood that more initiatives might need to be taken along these lines to deal with future CG priority areas, and the value of joint cooperative project to technology transfer. There was general agreement that the discussion had been useful and constructive.

b) Stripe Analysis of Off-Campus Activities of the IARCs

The TAC Secretariat informed the meeting of TAC's decision' to extend the deadline for the stripe review, the report of which would be discussed at ICW in October/November 1980. It was agreed that there would be discussion of the draft report at a Special meeting in May and the regular Center Directors/TAC meetings in June/July 1980. The review was intended to be mainly a desk study and questionnaire followed by visits to some centers and out-station activities both core and non-core. In the discussion it was made clear that the kinds of off-campus activities eg. research in additional environments, multilocational testing and nurseries, assisting national programs, provided a better form of classification to use in the review than titles carrying budgetary connotations. Terms of reference and the timetable were generally agreed upon, but there was some concern that the number of countries and off-campus activities to be visited would best be determined after the kinds of activities had been more or less defined.

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September 17, 1979

Mr. Cyriac Thannikary
Manager
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U.S.A.

Dear Cy.,

When the Center Directors considered your memo of June 19 on changes of the Off Shore Pension Plan, they agreed with you that it would be valuable to have an outside consultant to review the present plan and make recommendations on possible alternatives. The Directors felt that the consultant should be from a company that could not in any way be involved in the administration of any future plan if a change from AIRCO was approved. However you will note from Marcus Vegas' Letter of August 30, that IRRI would prefer that no consultant be employed at this time until the desires of the Center Directors had been more carefully determined. We hope that you will think about the types of questions we need to provide to you to get this information which we would be happy to discuss further at our October meeting.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie D. Swindale
Director

LDS:fv

cc: Center Directors