

## **The Future of Partnerships in the CGIAR**

### **Report of Working Group 2 (Partnerships) to the Change Steering Team of the CGIAR**

August 11, 2008

## **Executive summary**

Creating partnerships is crucial for the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) to reposition itself within the emerging global agricultural research and knowledge system. As part of the Change Management Process initiated by the CGIAR Members to examine the current role and situation of the CGIAR System, Working Group (WG) 2 has drawn on various studies, as well as the expertise of its members, to develop proposals for establishing successful partnerships.

Building on the new visioning elements proposed by WG1, this report reviews past and current partnerships with the CGIAR to identify gaps and problem areas, and proposes ways to address these issues in the immediate and long-term future. Viewing partnerships from three perspectives – namely repositioning CGIAR in this rapidly evolving context, the importance of stakeholder consultation, and the CGIAR a research for development and knowledge management organization – WG2 outlines the framework required for a partnership policy. This includes general principles and operational guidelines, identifying areas that need new or strengthened partnerships, the creation of a Partnership Facilitation Unit, and incentive policies.

Finally, WG2 puts forth seven recommendations based on the conclusions drawn from the above, and identifies the implications of these proposals for CGIAR governance and funding mechanisms. These are outlined in detail in Chapter 6 and are summarized as follows:

1. The CGIAR needs to strengthen its recognition as a major player in the global dialogue and in the construction of global perspectives and agreements on research for development. WG2 proposes that this responsibility be assigned to the Chair of the CGIAR Board in the Performance Contract model proposed by WG3.
2. Appropriate consultative processes with relevant non-member stakeholders need to be organized at the CGIAR System level to define strategic dimensions and main priorities. WG2 considers GFAR to be the most appropriate institutional mechanism to organize this process. However we also recognize that to fully incorporate and ensure the active participation of all relevant non-member stakeholders and the availability of sufficient resources, GFAR will need to be reorganized and strengthened.
3. As a research for development institution, the CGIAR should take an active role and responsibility in assuring that research results lead to impact and outcomes for most of its research activities. WG2 proposes four funding requirements, to be implemented by the new Fund, to meet this goal.

4. The CGIAR needs to diversify its relationship in order to include the ministries and secretaries of Science and Technology and other public sector institutions that have mandates in areas of interest to the CGIAR, such as natural resources or climate change.
5. In response to Strategic Objective 3 (promoting policy and institutional change to stimulate agricultural growth and equity to benefit the poor) the CGIAR needs to define a clear policy of engagement and strengthen its technical capacities in this domain and in system-wide coordination.
6. The CGIAR should redefine its capacity strengthening strategy to include a wider partnership with universities, foster processes that equip those in the uptake chain with the necessary skills to bring about development impacts, reward capacity-strengthening activities by its scientists, and incorporate capacity strengthening activities that are within approved programs and projects as Fundable items in the International Fund proposed by WG4.
7. A new 'Partnerships Facilitation Unit' comprised of independent persons with extensive experience in partnership-building who are knowledgeable about the different constituencies engaged with the CGIAR should be created to foster, monitor, and promote the use of partnerships within the CGIAR System itself and among its Centers, to draw lessons and experiences in partnerships, and to advise the CGIAR on these matters.