

## **Update on Biofortification Challenge Program Activities, May, 2003**

### **First Project Advisory Committee Meeting and Selection of Program Director**

The first meeting of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was held on March 11-12 at IFPRI headquarters. The PAC members are:

- Peter McPherson (Chairperson), USA
- Bui Ba Bong, Vietnam
- Richard Flavell, United Kingdom
- Michael Lipton, United Kingdom
- Adiel Mbabu, Uganda
- Ruth Oniang'o, Kenya
- Maria Jose Amstalden Sampaio, Brazil
- Peter Sandoe, Denmark
- M.S. Swaminathan, India
- Barbara Underwood, USA
- Mark Wahlqvist, Australia
- Joachim von Braun (*ex officio*), Germany
- Joachim Voss (*ex officio*), Canada

The first order of business was to approve the nomination of the search committee of Howarth Bouis as Program Director. An international search was undertaken. The job vacancy was announced in October, 2002 and applications closed in December, 2002. Four persons were short-listed. On March 10, each short-listed person gave a seminar on their vision for the Biofortification Challenge Program (the seminar was open to IFPRI staff and attended by the search committee) and was interviewed by the search committee. The search committee was chaired by Peter McPherson.

Given the particular circumstances of his having been engaged in the effort to assemble the BCP team and move the proposal through the approval process, Howarth Bouis was in a position to participate directly in the first PAC meeting and immediately to assume the responsibilities of the Program Director.

During the course of the two-day meeting, the PAC made several administrative decisions, summarized in Appendix 1. A second PAC meeting is planned for November 11-12, also to be held at IFPRI headquarters.

### **Fund-Raising**

Appendix 2 outlines the general plan for fundraising. If all goes as planned, the primary donors will be the World Bank (\$3 million per year), USAID (\$2 million per year), and the Gates Foundation (\$6.25 million per year).

Discussions with the Gates Foundations to fund the biofortification program have been ongoing for several years, commencing before the Challenge programs process was established. Two Gates Foundation representatives attended the May, 2002 biofortification stakeholder meeting held at the World Bank headquarters. As stakeholders, they were kept apprised of developments with respect to the BCP approval process. At a meeting held at Gates Foundation headquarters in January, 2003 involving CIAT and IFPRI staff, the Gates Foundation signaled its interest in considering direct funding for the BCP. A formal request for \$24 million was submitted in writing in February, 2003 by the Directors-General of CIAT and IFPRI.

In reviewing the BCP proposal, Gates Foundation staff requested additional impact analysis (that incidentally dovetails with iSC and PAC recommendations on the proposal), which they recognized would increase the budget total and necessitate an increase in the amount requested from the Gates Foundation. A new section on impact analysis was incorporated into the proposal and formally submitted to the Gates Foundation in April, 2003. The new budget total is just under \$50 million for the first 4-year phase and a revised formal request has been made for \$25 million in funding from the Gates Foundation. We will be informed of their decision on July 22, 2003.

## **Workplan for 2003**

### ***Organizational Meetings***

1. Planning meeting of core collaborators and selected stakeholders, June 2-6, CIAT headquarters. About 70 people are expected to attend. Objectives of the meeting:
  1. To introduce and discuss the different broad components of the project to those who will be participating in the project and other stakeholders;
  2. To flesh out and revise the conceptual framework laid out in the proposal to ensure that the different components are designed to complement each other technically -- thus, it will be essential to encourage interdisciplinary learning and exchange at the meeting;
  3. To develop an operational plan to implement coordinated activities over the next 12 months;
  4. To open and set up lines of communication across the components -- collaborators getting to know each other;
  5. To hear, at a very broad, global level, what might be stakeholder or collaborator concerns on the concept of the project as a whole and to get their buy-in.
2. Six Phase 1 Crop Meetings (September-October). Objective: Assemble the crop teams and develop detailed workplans for full start-up of the project activities in January, 2004.

3. Regional Stakeholder Meetings. Objective: To establish contacts with farmer and consumer organizations (those whom biofortification will impact) and build support for the strategy; to better understand obstacles to seed distribution and incorporate plans to overcome these obstacles in the early project strategy discussions.
4. Breeding Objectives Workshop. Objective: Develop areas for research for competitive bidding process in consultation with an interdisciplinary group of leading experts.

### ***Continuation of Ongoing Research***

The following ongoing projects will be funded with World Bank, USAID, and ADB funds during 2003. These activities will be scaled up considerably in 2004 as the anticipated funding becomes available. Some of these funds are available as a result of the BCP proposal approval and other funds are available as a result of the approval of individual projects before the AGM meeting in Manila. All projects involve multiple partners (including NARES) but only the Future Harvest center involved is listed here in most cases.

1. High-iron beans (CIAT)
2. High-betacarotene maize (CIMMYT and IITA)
3. High-iron rice (IRRI and IFPRI)
4. Golden Rice (IRRI)
5. Orange-Flesh Sweet Potato (CIP)
6. Continuation of breeding activities on wheat and cassava (CIMMYT, CIAT)
7. Initiation of Phase 2 crop activities (CIP, IITA, ICARDA, ICRISAT)
8. Regional NARES (EMBRAPA)
9. Nutritional genomics research (Michigan State, USDA-ARS (Baylor), University of Freiburg)
10. Breeding Objectives (University of Adelaide and USDA-ARS, Cornell)

### ***Staffing and Outreach***

The positions of Breeding and Biotech Coordinator, Nutrition Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, and Senior Administrative Coordinator (SAC) will be advertised and filled by the end 2003 – although this is somewhat dependent on donor funding decisions. The SAC position has been advertised, candidates interviewed, and the position is about to be filled.

The Communications Coordinator position is about to be advertised and is expected to be filled by July, 2003. Exploratory discussions have been undertaken on appropriate internal communications, internet-based software to be used to facilitate collaboration among partners spread out worldwide. One promising prototype will be presented at the

June planning meeting for experimentation and comments. A web site will be developed later in the year.

The Program Director has completed visits to CIAT, CIP, and CIMMYT to consult with management and staff on the BCP and to meet directly with collaborators. Visits to IRRI, ICARDA, ICRISAT, and IITA will be arranged after the June planning meeting. He has also made a trip to Europe for discussions with donors and collaborators. A consortium of European scientists has been formed for the purpose of approaching the EU and bi-lateral agencies for funding to support biofortification-related, complementary research at European universities and government research agencies. These efforts will be continued.

## Appendix 1

### **PAC Decisions** **March 11-12, 2003**

#### **Decisions about PAC**

- Barbara Underwood was chosen as vice-chair of PAC
- A committee (Peter Sandoe, Maria Jose Amstalden Sampaio and Ruth Oniang'o) was formed to nominate a person to fill the remaining PAC membership slot. A strong suggestion was made to nominate a high-level food technology expert. Another suggestion was to find someone with a health epidemiology background. By the end of April a nomination will be made to PAC and, once approved by the full PAC, approved by the boards of CIAT and IFPRI.
- Terms of PAC membership should be based on the CGIAR centers boards – 3 years with one renewal. The PAC's terms should be staggered after an initial 3-year commitment. The chair asked members to tell him if they want to stay longer than the 3-year term.
- Science committee was formed to oversee selection of competitive grants, they are Mark Walqvist (chair), Maria Jose Amstalden Sampaio, Adiel Mbabu, and Richard Flavell. See below for more information on process.
- Although they are not a legal entity, PAC wanted to be covered under CIAT/IFPRI insurance for liability. Need to consult with lawyers/insurance agent.
- Paper on PAC's code of conduct should be developed by the program director detailing specific roles (for example regarding advocacy), conflict of interest policy, decision-making protocols, etc.
- During the first year, the PAC will meet quarterly either by phone or in person. Fewer meetings will probably be needed in subsequent years. The second PAC meeting will be by conference call in early May. The program director will determine the date by conferring with members by email. The next in-person meeting may be in mid-November. PAC members were invited to attend the June planning meeting. The program director will submit materials for meetings by email at least one week before the meeting.
- The program director will develop a plan for communicating with PAC members.

#### **Project Management and Governance**

- Howarth Bouis was chosen as the Biofortification Challenge Program Director (rather than Leader), and will have chief executive officer functions for the program.
- The fiscal agent, reporting to the program director, will inform CIAT or IFPRI how to disburse the funds.

- Program director would be the chief enforcer of contracts for the program between CIAT/IFPRI and third parties. Need to check legality of this.
- In the event of irreconcilable difference, CIAT, IFPRI, and the PAC must agree on an arbitrator. Any party can ask that a mediator be brought in.
- Program Director needs some discretionary room in budget adjustments without needing PAC approval.

### **Competitive Bidding Process and non-program funding**

- Science Committee will be composed of three PAC members and perhaps 2-3 outsiders to flush out multi-disciplinary nature of different grants. PAC chose Mark Walqvist (chair), Richard Flavell, Maria Jose Amstalden Sampaio, and Adiel Mbabu. PAC would ensure that the expenditures on the grants match the program's long-term objectives. The Science Committee would oversee the competitive process using anonymous external reviewers with expertise in the relevant topics. The Science Committee and the program director make funding recommendations pending approval by PAC.
- PAC will consider forming another subcommittee or using the Science Committee to assist the program director in the evaluation or development of non-competitive grant proposals that fit into the goals of the project.
- Competitive bidding process will be delayed until next year when we can ensure sufficient funding is available to maintain credibility.

### **Intellectual Property**

- Program director needs to develop a policy statement that would direct the program's IP issues and would form part of all contracts under the program. The statement would follow the CGIAR system's policy and would stress that what is developed under this program is a public good and that freedom to operate is a key principal.

### **Fundraising**

- The PAC should be ready to help if requested by the program director.
- We should approach donors as a coalition of partners to raise funds for the whole program.

### **Transgenics**

- Proposal is not transparent regarding the use of transgenics. Potential problems and benefits should be detailed in an ethical statement. The program director will draft something with the input of Peter Sandoe.

### **Partnerships**

- We should develop a concept paper detailing our liaison policy with all potential partners including NGOs and private sectors groups.

### **Scenario Analysis and Impact Assessment**

- The group asked the program leader to develop a set of scenarios that would lay out how effectively and efficiently we might reach the program's goals by different techniques and use of crops.

### **Workplan and Budget**

- PAC approved the budget and workplan on a preliminary basis – and will review and approve the updated version developed for the June planning meeting. PAC recommends that the program director speed up the hiring of key personnel and that impact assessment activities (scenario development) be included in the first year.
- PAC suggested that the workplan and budget need parallel structure – each workplan component should have a budgetary component.
- PAC wants to see a draft of a model contract prior to implementing them with subcontractors.

**Appendix 2: Biofortification Challenge Program Funding Plan**

(Thousands of US\$)

| <b>Donor</b>     | <b>2002</b> | <b>2003</b> | <b>2004</b>  | <b>2005</b>  | <b>2006</b>  | <b>2007</b>  | <b>Total 2004-2007</b> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|
| WB               | 200         | 3000        | 3000         | 3000         | 3000         | 3000         | 12000                  |
| Gates Foundation |             |             | 6250         | 6250         | 6250         | 6250         | 25000                  |
| USAID            | 750         | 1500        | 2000         | 2000         | 2000         | 2000         | 8000                   |
| DANIDA           | 125         |             | 375          | 375          | 375          | 375          | 1500                   |
| ADB              | 433         | 433         |              |              |              |              |                        |
| <b>TOTALS</b>    | <b>1075</b> | <b>4500</b> | <b>11625</b> | <b>11625</b> | <b>11625</b> | <b>11625</b> | <b>46500</b>           |
| <b>Proposed</b>  |             |             | <b>12500</b> | <b>12500</b> | <b>12500</b> | <b>12500</b> | <b>50000</b>           |

Within dotted line box = specific amounts under discussion with donors

Within solid line box = funding for biofortification-related projects, but approved prior to BCP approval

**Discussions Held With:**

Switzerland  
 Rockefeller Foundation  
 Canada  
 Sweden  
 European Union

**Previous Donors to Biofortification Who Will Be Approached**

ACIAR  
 Micronutrient Initiative

**Other Possibilities:**

United Kingdom  
 Netherlands