

CGIAR AGM07

# Agricultural Research Management

## New challenges, new strategies

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# Unprecedented challenges

- Agriculture faces unprecedented challenges:
  - Population increase, urbanisation, migrations
  - Diet change
  - Climate change
  - Land degradation
  - Water scarcity
  - Emerging and disseminating diseases
  - Energy and natural resources management
  - etc



# Unprecedented challenges

- Demographic growth as well as development of non food production imply a development of agricultural production
- Lessons drawn from the past
- The imperative and expectations of sustainable development

# Unprecedented challenges

- Agricultural research is the basis on which responses can be provided through
  - Generation of new knowledge (development of new concepts and methods) and innovations
  - An improved access to and dissemination of knowledge and innovations
  - The support to adapted public and private policies



# Research Management Strategies

- The question of “Quality” of research
  - The case of Agricultural Research
- Excellence and relevance
  - Research which issues come into being outside the laboratories in a societal context
  - The “Knowledge Society”
  - The “Global sustainability” and the MDG



# Research Management Strategies

- The main drivers in thinking about research management strategy are
  - The role that research plays in society (What is expected from it? How is it expected?)
  - The evolution of research itself (scale and scope, tools and methods)
  - The new actors (in research and outside)
  - The evaluation

# The new role of Agricultural Research

- Agricultural research is mission oriented research that requires both excellence and relevance
- Agricultural research has changed in scale (including globalisation of science) and scope (more integrative, more systemic, more multi/interdisciplinary)
- As such, agricultural research has a key role to play to respond to new challenges and has to adapt its governance



# The conditions for relevance

- New challenges imply new research areas (environment, nutrition, food safety, social sciences)
- New research areas imply new partners and new stakeholders, e.g.:
  - Consumers, environmentalists, NGOs
  - Regulatory agencies
  - Health system

# The conditions for relevance

- To be relevant agricultural research has to set up procedures to involve the stakeholders
  - in the designing of the programmes
  - in the setting of priorities
  - in the evaluation of research
- realisations in Denmark, the Netherlands, UK, CSO for the CGIAR, GFAR and INRA in France



# Excellence and relevance

- Excellence and relevance together imply a change in scale and scope of agricultural research, i.e.:
  - the building of more integrative and more systemic research programmes
  - more multi/inter/transdisciplinary programmes
  - a larger geographic scale with many partners
- In that sense research institutions in that field are becoming more and more “brokers” and less in-house performers

# Research Management Strategies (bis)

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# The role of CGIAR Centres

- CGIAR Centres are fully a part of the global Agricultural Science and Technology System
- CGIAR Centres are at the interface of development needs and research promises
- In that position, CGIAR has to address the issue of mobilising (inside and outside) the best science available to respond the challenges its Centres have contributed to identify

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# Research Management Strategies

- As a part of the global system, CGIAR Centres have to face and to cope with the same issues as other Agricultural Research Organisations concerning
  - The globalisation of science
  - The broadening of scope
  - The involvement of stakeholders



# Research Management Strategies

- Globalisation means that relevant science regarding the main focus of CGIAR Centres is more widely distributed than before
- All the scientific resources needed to address the broadening of the scope of Agricultural Research can no longer be made available at the scale of one Centre alone
- Priority setting must be opened and more widely shared



# Research Management Strategies

- In response to this context and to achieve their objectives, CGIAR Centres have to develop jointly two complementary strategies to mobilise the best science available and to participate in science development:
  - Internal capacity enhancement
  - External openness and partnership



# Internal capacity enhancement

- Human resources
  - Welcoming and training of young researchers
  - Balancing long term and temporary contracts
- Organisation and management
  - Research staff/technical staff
  - Partnership
- Technology platforms



# External openness and partnership

- The partnership with Civil Society
  - From information to priority setting and evaluation
- Participation in the international debate on the future of Agricultural Science and Technology for development
  - IAASTD
  - Other fora



# External openness and partnership

- Partnership within CGIAR
  - Challenge Programmes and others
- Partnership with ARIs
  - Strategic - medium and long term - cooperation
- Partnership with NARS

# Evaluation

- Evaluation is part of the process (the coach model vs. the jury model)
- Evaluation of Research in Context (NL)
  - Self evaluation
  - Research embedment and performance profile
  - Stakeholder analysis
  - Feed back/discussion about future strategy



# Research Management Strategies

- A research management strategy has to combine new questions with new scientific opportunities and new actors
- It has to draw a roadmap that will light the different possible ways
- In doing so it will help the institution to gain in flexibility, to be pro-active and to choose the best way at every moment