

CSO-CGIAR Forum

Summary Report to the CGIAR Business Meeting

1. Introduction

During the CGIAR Annual General Meeting the first CSO-CGIAR Forum was held. The focus of the Forum was on finding common grounds, sharing lessons from experience, and creating avenues for working together.

Fernando Lopez (Farmer from Uruguay and President of the Regional Committee of Latin America and the Caribbean at IFAP), Glyvyns Chinkuntha (Farmer from Malawi and occupying the civil society seat on the CGIAR Executive Council) and Rajul Pandya-Lorch (IFPRI/CGIAR) reported the key results from the first CSO-CGIAR Forum to the CGIAR Business Meeting immediately following the Forum. The following is a summary of their report.

Participation and Participant Evaluation results of CSO-CGIAR Forum

300-400 CGIAR staff and stakeholders participated in the Forum. Results from the participants evaluation show that out of the 124 respondents 118 found the CSO-CGIAR Forum useful or very useful. Participants liked most the interaction and exchange of information between different participants, the diversity and the networking opportunity. A number of suggestions were made, out of which one was that possible future CSO-CGIAR Fora should involve more research staff from CGIAR Centers that have ongoing partnership project with CSOs.

2. Lessons Learnt from working together

- Generating appropriate incentives for inter-institutional collaboration and coordination
- Participation of CSOs in identifying new topics for future research
- Success: Synergy between farmers, CSOs, national and international research organizations and policy makers
- Engagement of Farmers through participatory research

3. Creating Avenues for working together

CSO-CGIAR partnership should build on a set of general principles:

- Mutual Respect, Trust and Commitment
- Working together on common priorities
- Responding to demands of civil society and hence generate impact, particularly on local level for poor and food insecure.

1. Focus on areas of common interest

- common priority areas in research and development: food security, linking small-scale farmers to markets, sustainable agriculture, sound management of natural resources, adapting to climate change,

- working together in ensuring relevance of technology development for civil society

2. Investment in better communication between CSOs and CGIAR

- working together in communicating (i) CGIAR work to CSOs - (ii) CSO work to the CGIAR and (iii) CSO/CGIAR partnership work to other audiences finding appropriate avenues for communicating scientific information to different audiences, including translation
- explore new means of exchanging information more widely and more cost-effectively
- develop platform for gathering information and clearing house for exchange of information about Center and CSO collaborative activities and services

3. Mutual capacity building and learning

4. Raise funds together for developing and implementing collaborative work - Equitable partnership

5. Collaborative Mechanisms for expanding engagement and relationships

- make use of available regional Fora as a venue for expanding engagement
- Continue the CSO-CGIAR interaction (such as through the CGIAR –CSO Forum, Virtual dialogues)
- broaden collaboration to include CSOs in the area of education, health, social development, ICT