

Future Harvest Alliance Office Annual Report 2004-05



**Prepared by the Future Harvest Alliance Office
A Unit of the CGIAR System Office**

December 2005

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Message from the Chair of the Alliance Executive and the Executive Officer of the Future Harvest Alliance Office

We are pleased to present the First Annual Report of the Future Harvest Alliance Office (herein referred to as the FHAO or the Alliance Office), covering the period from May 2004, when the Alliance Office began operations, until the end of 2005.

The Directors General of the Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR resolved to create the Future Harvest Alliance Office in 2003. In doing so, they sought to bring a greater level of organization, stability and continuity to the work of their executive body, the Center Directors Committee (CDC, now the Alliance Executive). At this same time, as the CGIAR reform processes gathered pace, they realized that important benefits could be gained by heightening collaboration among the Centers—the implementing agencies of the CGIAR's US\$450 million annual research program—and their partners.

The new Alliance Office incorporated the existing position of the CDC Executive Secretary under the direction of a new, part-time Executive Officer to provide high-level strategic and operational support to the CDC. It was conceived as an integral part of the CGIAR System Office to ensure the alignment of the Centers' work with the wider CGIAR activities and objectives, and to inform the collective work of the System Office with the Centers' views and expertise.

The Centers are committed to optimizing their contribution to the continuing development and effectiveness of the CGIAR by reinforcing the cohesiveness of their research, strengthening their influence on policy, expanding their partnerships to achieve human development, and making more efficient use of the contributions of the CGIAR's investors. The Alliance Office helps the Centers achieve these goals by providing continuity within the context of the rapid turnover that characterizes the office bearers and membership of the Alliance Executive and the Committee of Board Chairs.

The Alliance Office's achievements during 2004-05, outlined in this Annual Report, include:

- lending strategic policy support to the Alliance Executive and the Committee of Board Chairs in developing the foundations of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR (herein referred to as the Alliance)

- coordinating and drafting an assessment of the performance of 10 System Wide and Ecoregional Programs supported by World Bank special funding in 2002-03
- improving the communication tools and outputs of the Alliance Executive and Committee of Board Chairs, and disseminating their decisions and achievements through internal Web-based communication, and through articles in CGIAR news media
- establishing and maintaining secretariat and records-management systems for the work of the Alliance Executive and the joint work of the Alliance Executive and the Committee of Board Chairs
- making a substantial contribution to the CGIAR System Office, on behalf of the Centers.

These advances illustrate the importance of the FHAO's contribution, since its inception, to furthering the goals and mission of the CGIAR.



William D. Dar
Chair, Alliance Executive
2005



Meryl J. Williams
Executive Officer, FHAO
2004-2005

Creation of the Future Harvest Alliance Office and the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR

The Future Harvest Alliance Office was created by the CGIAR Centers to support cooperation among the Centers and their partners, building on the foundations of earlier support lent to the Centers through their Committee of Directors General.¹

Beginning in the 1990s, the CGIAR embarked on an active a process of consolidating collaboration among the Centers, as well as with their external partners. The model of free-standing Centers, each with its own independent support services, evolved to include a new, central support system encompassing the activities the Centers chose to undertake together.

A growing number of Center-to-Center program collaborations arose as complements to the highly visible and more extensive System Wide and Ecoregional Programs, and later the Challenge Programs. The Centers also began to create shared service units, many of these in collaboration with the CGIAR Secretariat and formally coordinated through the CGIAR System Office after its establishment in 2001. In 2002-03, the Centers' leaders began to revise their procedures to better meet their representational needs in the reformed CGIAR. In February 2003, they upgraded the operations of the Committee of Board Chairs (CBC) and Center Directors Committee (CDC), adopting new Codes of Conduct and Terms of Reference that reflected clear objectives and increased decision making authority. This process was aimed at strengthening and stabilizing their executive capacity.

The Center Directors designed the Future Harvest Alliance Office within this context to enhance the Centers' ability to influence and participate in the major reforms taking place throughout the CGIAR System. The FHAO would do this by building on the efforts of the CDC, and by helping the Centers to:

- strengthen existing collaborative efforts
- integrate existing efforts where relevant, and
- add additional capacity for essential collective action²

1. Originally called the Center Directors Committee, in 2004 the CDC agreed to change its name to the Alliance Executive to reflect its growing executive management role on behalf of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR.
2. See May 2003 CDC Business Meeting Minutes.

The FHAO Office began formal operations in May 2004 with the recruitment of the Executive Officer. As described in the 2004 CGIAR Charter, the Alliance Office is a unit of the CGIAR System Office.

Official discussions surrounding the creation of a formal alliance of Centers began in meetings held 2003. The first major step to develop this concept was taken, however, when the Directors General met in Ethiopia in July 2004 for a Collective Action Retreat, specifically designed to address mechanisms and models that could help the Centers to improve their collaboration. During this retreat, the Center Directors analyzed the constraints to and benefits of working together. Based on this analysis they developed a common set of guiding principles for collaboration, which would form the basis for the creation of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR. This has helped the Alliance to gradually build on existing, well-performing collaborations and sound CGIAR processes (e.g. the Medium-Term Plans as core planning documents; the active, collective participation of the Centers in the CGIAR Executive Council).

Today, the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR is informed by a new vision of successful collaboration, based on strong governance and management principles and procedures. Its governance is being made explicit in a formal document containing the Alliance Principles and Procedures, currently under development. This process has been—and continues to be—firmly backed by the support of the Alliance Office.

This Annual Report describes the work and achievements of the FHAO—from the initiation of the Alliance Office's operation in May 2004 until the end of 2005. During this period, the FHAO has operated efficiently, in a highly virtual mode, making the most of available resources and expertise to support the development and interests of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR. This is the first public report on the work of the Alliance Office; it complements the short report contained in the Annual Report of the CGIAR System Office³ and the ongoing work progress reports made at each meeting of the Alliance Executive.

3. www.cgiar.org/soar/2004/2004_fhao.html

Highlights 2004-05

This first Annual Report of the FHAO is structured around to the four functions of this office, as outlined the CGIAR System Office Integrated Operating Plan: strategic planning and development; monitoring and evaluation; communications and resource mobilization; and management services. As a unit of the CGIAR System Office, the Alliance Office includes its workplans each year in this Operating Plan.⁴

Strategic Planning and Development

Formation of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR

With oversight from the CDC Chair, the FHAO provided full support for the July 2004 Collective Action Retreat, including: drafting the substantive background paper; contracting the facilitators; and coordinating the development and clearance of the final Retreat Report for public circulation. As follow-up, the FHAO assisted the CDC and CBC with presentations—for example at the 7th meeting of the CGIAR Executive Council—and developed agenda papers leading to the unanimous decision by both Committees, in October 2004, to proceed with the formation of the Alliance of the Future Harvest Centers.⁵

In 2005, the FHAO provided support to the teams developing the Alliance Principles and Procedures document and, on behalf of the Centers, contracted consultants and assisted the Steering Committee in developing draft conflict-resolution guidelines for the Alliance.

CBC Retreat and Report

At the request of the CBC, the FHAO contracted a facilitator for the CBC Retreat held at the WorldFish Center in Penang, Malaysia in May 2005 and provided support in writing the Retreat Report. The recommendations contained in this report, cleared by the attendees, will be considered by the full CBC at their December 2005 meeting.

4. www.cgiar.org/who/structure/system/index.html

5. At their October meeting, the CDC resolved to rename itself the Alliance Executive (AE).

CBC Board Orientation Program

The FHAO provided a secretariat and some teaching support for four courses—two at the ILRI campus in Addis Ababa and two in Penang, at the WorldFish Center—under the CBC Board Orientation program.

CGIAR Private Sector Committee activities: SKEP, CG-PS Workshop

The FHAO has participated, on behalf of the Centers, as an active partner in two important activities led by the CGIAR Private Sector Committee (PSC). The first of these is the Scientific and Know-how Exchange Program (SKEP), developed by the CGIAR Centers and CGIAR Secretariat in collaboration with six international research-oriented agribusiness companies. The SKEP is designed «to promote technology and knowledge transfer in designing, managing and controlling R&D processes and projects through exchange of staff between private corporations active in research and the CGIAR Centers». In May 2005, the SKEP Concept Note and Guiding Principles were agreed on by the parties. The first staff exchange—a senior private sector research manager who was assigned to a CGIAR Center—was made in August 2005. The program is projected to run for 10 years.

The FHAO also worked with the CGIAR Secretariat and the PSC to design and support a high-level involving between the CEOs of agriculture-oriented corporations in the international private sector and CGIAR and Center management. The workshop, entitled *How To Meet The Needs Of Smallholder Producers Better In Developing Countries?*—attracted 20 senior, private-sector participants and 15 CGIAR representatives. The participants produced a joint agenda for action, giving special attention to ensuring the use of proven CGIAR processes, such as the SKEP and the Challenge Programs.

Institutional development of CBC and AE

FHAO has worked consistently with the Executive Committees of the CBC and the AE to improve the operations of both Committees. The improvements made to date include: proactive development of strategic and routine Committee agendas; creation of a rigorous and timely system for developing and collating agenda papers; and improved recording of meeting minutes and follow up on meeting decisions. Systems for AE and joint CBC/AE records management have also been instituted, and linkages have been made to ensure that relevant Center documents are registered and stored in the CGIAR Core Collection. Finally, the FHAO developed and maintains a manual of AE annual procedures.

Center contributions to the CGIAR Executive Council, Business Meeting, and out-of-session business

The FHAO provides policy advice and briefings—and collates briefings by others—for the Center representatives to the CGIAR Executive Council and Business Meetings. In 2004-05, this support was lent for four Executive Council meetings, two Business Meetings and several out-of-session business items.

Sub-Saharan Africa Medium Term Plans

On request, the FHAO has provided briefings on the progress of the MTP process to donors and the Science Council Secretariat.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Through the Alliance Executive, the FHAO assists in ensuring that rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place for the CGIAR.

Assessment of the performance of World Bank funded programs

The FHAO coordinated the production of detailed reports on 10 System Wide and Ecoregional programs that received World Bank special support in 2002-03, drafting a substantive review and assessment for the Directors General to discuss, amend and approve. The resulting report, the *Center Directors Committee Report To The World Bank On The Achievements And Impacts Of The System Wide And Ecoregional Programs Supported By World Bank Funds For 2002 And 2003*, was well received by the World Bank. The key recommendations were accepted and the report was used by the Science Council to initiate its review of all the System Wide and Ecoregional Programs.

Science Council Medium Term Plans commentary

In October 2005, at the request of the AE, the FHAO provided an overview assessment of the commentaries made by the Science Council on the Centers 2006-2008 Medium Term Plans. The FHAO prepared a set of good practice points and brought these to the attention of the Directors General for future reference. The overview assessment was shared with the Science Council Secretariat.

New CGIAR monitoring and evaluation procedures

The FHAO has been instrumental in raising awareness among the CBC and AE of the new CGIAR Monitoring and Evaluation guidelines, released in June 2005. The Office has also shared good practice notes among the Centers.

Communications and resource mobilization

The FHAO's role in communications and resource mobilization is to help raise awareness of the collective work of the Centers, with a special focus on the Alliance Executive. To this end, strong communication linkages have been established with the Centers, the CG Secretariat and other partners in the CGIAR System. Highlights include:

- A private Collaboration Web site was established in 2004. To date, over 150 people have access to this site, with permissions being granted by the DGs. The site houses important documents for the Alliance Executive, such as meeting papers and minutes, as well as the Consolidated Calendars for 2004 and 2005, the most comprehensive accounting of activities and important dates for the entire

System. Assistance in data collection and updates was provided by the Collaboration Team (consisting of one designated staff member from each Center) and CGNet.

- Drafts of six articles for the *CGIAR News* and for the Chairs section of the *CGIAR Annual Report 2004* were prepared on behalf of the CBC and AE Chairs. Regular contributions were made to the CGIAR Chair and Director's quarterly *Letter to Members*.
- Commencing in June 2005, a quarterly e-newsletter was produced, highlighting the collective activities of the Centers, their partners, and the System Office units, as well as the System Wide, Ecoregional and Challenge Programs. The e-newsletter is released with the CGIAR Chair and Director's quarterly *Letter to Members*.
- A listserv—centersalliance@cgiar.org—was created for joint use by the CBC and AE to support close collaboration on issues of shared importance, and is now used by both Committees.
- Progress was made in establishing the FHAO pages on the CGIAR Web site. These pages describe the formation of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR and the role of the FHAO.
- In late 2004, the FHAO worked with the Board of the Future Harvest Foundation and AIARC to support and facilitate the closedown of the Future Harvest Foundation (FHF) for legal and tax oversight purposes. In addition, a thorough study of the FHF Web site was undertaken by a consultant. Recommendations were made for an appropriate archiving strategy for the Web site—retaining public access to the high-quality material presented therein—and action commenced on the implementation of these recommendations. A document highlighting the legacy of the FHF was drafted for release in late 2005.
- Based on input from the Centers and programs, slide presentations were prepared for joint Center presentations at international meetings, including the World Bank ESSD Forum in Europe in June 2005, the JIRCAS meeting in Tokyo in July 2005, and the CGIAR Private Sector high-level workshop in September 2005. For AGM04 the FHAO helped coordinate the preparation of four joint Center presentations, including those of the outgoing and incoming AE Chairs. A set of FAQs on the Alliance were produced to provide CBC and AE members necessary background materials on the formation of the Alliance.
- The FHAO facilitated exchange of information within the CGIAR concerning efforts to reconstruct lives and livelihoods after the December 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. The Alliance Office also assisted the WorldAgroforestry South East Asia office, in Indonesia, in establishing a CGIAR tsunami Web site; seed funding for this initiative was provided by the AE and technical assistance was lent by the CGIAR Secretariat (see: <http://www.cgiar.org/tsunami/>).
- The FHAO worked closely with the CGIAR Secretariat and all Centers and programs to design and manage successful Centers and Members Days for AGM04 (Mexico City) and AGM05 (Marrakech, Morocco).

Management Services

The FHAO provides full secretariat services to the Alliance Executive and to the joint work of the AE and the CBC. The overarching objective of this support has been to create and institutionalize optimal procedures and practices, including maintenance of the continuity and corporate memory of the AE in the context of the rapid turnover of its leaders and office bearers.

These two Committees meet in full twice a year (before AGM and in the first half of the year, prior to the first meeting of the CGIAR Executive Council). The CGIAR Secretariat provides a part-time Secretary for the CBC, who works with the FHAO for joint meeting preparation and execution. In addition, the FHAO Executive Officer serves as the Secretary to the Executive Committees of the CBC and AE and provides implementation support and meeting follow up. In 2005, these Executive Committees met twice. An additional AE meeting was also held at IFPRI, in conjunction with the CGIAR Private Sector workshop. Three AE teleconferences were arranged during this year to facilitate the interaction required to handle their business agenda. The FHAO outsourced cost-effective teleconferencing services from commercial providers in developing countries.

In addition to logistical backstopping and institutional oversight, the FHAO also provided numerous management services:

- The FHAO lent backstopping and support for System Office Unit reviews (Gender and Diversity, 2004-05).
- In 2004, the FHAO assisted the AE in developing recommendations for World Bank funding of selected System Wide and Ecoregional programs. In 2005 it helped to collate program proposals for World Bank consideration.
- In 2004 the FHAO initiated a CDC/AE Archive Project; the first phase was completed in 2005. Most materials were obtained from the ISNAR Director Generals' private collections, upon the closing of ISNAR. The Alliance Office contracted a consultant to work with the CGIAR Secretariat on documentation and scanning formats and protocols, in conformance with the standards of the CGIAR Core Collection. The CDC/AE collection will eventually be added to the CGIAR Core Collection on the CGIAR Web site. The first phase of the Archive Project focused on meeting minutes, going back to the start of CDC meetings in 1973. In 2004, the FHAO collated and archived, on the Collaboration Web site, a recent collection of papers relating to research priority setting in Africa.
- Through collaborative work with AIARC, the FHAO provides oversight for the management of the AE collective budget of approximately \$1.2 million. In 2004 new financial reporting formats and procedures were put in place, in collaboration with the CG Secretariat, to help streamline the reporting mechanisms for the System Office Units and avoid duplication of reporting efforts.
- The FHAO Executive Officer provided oversight and management of consultants hired by the AE to perform work on areas of collective interest (as approved during the budget process at AGM).

- The FHAO provided support and background documentation for the SP-IPM dispute and drafted a dispute process for use by the Review Panel.
- Critical links were firmly put in place for solid communication and joint meeting planning among the CBC Executive Secretary and the Chair of the Center Deputy Directors Committee (CDDC). This includes keeping abreast of important items for follow-up in between meetings, as well as meeting planning.
- The FHAO continued to assist staff members from the Directors Generals' offices, as needed, with information, meeting and travel planning, and logistical support.

About the FHAO

Definition (from the CGIAR Charter)

Future Harvest Alliance Office: *An office created by the Centers to support collaboration among the Centers.*

The Office administers common activities assigned by the CDC, in keeping with the objectives of the Future Harvest Alliance to give policy and administrative support to collaboration among Centers, and streamline and strengthen the Centers' contribution to the CGIAR System. The Office is headed by its Executive Officer.

History, Staffing and Operations

The FHAO was created by the Center Directors Committee (now the Alliance Executive) in 2003 and staffed from May 2004. Until the end of 2005, the Alliance Office has been managed by two part-time staff: an Executive Officer (Dr. Meryl Williams, May 1, 2004–November 4, 2005; Dr. Geoff Hawtin, from 4 November 2005), and an Executive Secretary⁶ (Ms. Kerri Wright Platais). The FHAO has operated virtually (from Penang, Malaysia; Washington D.C.; and San José, Costa Rica), working closely with Center staff on projects and contracting consultants for specialist tasks, such as administrative services, financial services (AIARC), graphic and communication services, meeting facilitation, etc.

The Alliance Office works in an integrated fashion with the other units of the CGIAR and its System Office, in particular the CGIAR Secretariat, the Science Council Secretariat, the Chief Information Officer, the Central Advisory Service on Intellectual Property, the Gender and Diversity Program, and the Marketing Group.

6. This position began informally in 1999 and became a part-time consultant in 2002.

Annex: Future Harvest Alliance Office Expenditures 2005

	Total Expenditures Jan 1 - Dec 31
Personnel	188,000
Consultants	
External consultants	25,000
Contractual and conflict resolution mechanism	34,000
Follow-up to SSA TF Report: ESA MTP	98,000
Follow-up to SSA TF Report: WCA MTP	72,000
Publications	
AE Archives project	15,000
Communications and website assistance	15,000
Travel	38,000
Other	
AIARC financial fees	4,000
AE meetings	13,000
Subtotal	502,000
General operating costs (e.g. rent, utilities, supplies, communications)	15,000
Grand Total	517,000

The Future Harvest Alliance Office (FHAO) is an integral part of the CGIAR System Office. It works to streamline and strengthen the Centers' collective contribution to the mission of the CGIAR through the Alliance of Future Harvest Centers of the CGIAR. The FHAO provides policy and administrative support to the Alliance Board, the Alliance Executive and the Centers for more effective coordination, cooperation and outreach.

Future Harvest Alliance Office

FHAO. 2005. *Future Harvest Alliance Office Annual Report 2004-05*.

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