

# **Appendix 1**

## **SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS**

**For the Independent Review Panel**

**Consultative Group on  
International Agricultural Research  
(CGIAR)**

Dr. Anne Perkins

**August 2008**

Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not reflect the opinions of the Independent Review Panel or the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in any respect.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction to Survey</b>	<b>27</b>
1.1 Survey Sampling Frame	
1.2 Response Rates	
1.3 Survey Process and Methodology	
1.4 Overview of Questions	
<b>2.0 CGIAR and Centers' Research Priority Areas</b>	<b>29</b>
2.1 Centers' Effectiveness in Working in Research Priority Areas	
2.2 Issues and Respondent Comments	
<b>3.0 The CGIAR and Its Affiliated Centers</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1 The Executive Council	
3.2 Provision of CGIAR Executive, Secretariat and the Bank's Convening Power	
3.3 The Science Council	
3.4 Gender and Diversity	
<b>4.0 Partnerships</b>	<b>42</b>
4.1 The Importance of Partnerships	
4.2 The Alliance	
4.3 NARS, ARI, NGOs and Private Sector Partnerships	
4.4 Center-to-Center Partnerships	
<b>5.0 Managing for Results</b>	<b>49</b>
5.1 The Priority-setting Process	
5.2 Performance Measurement and Management	
5.3 The Importance of Vision	
<b>6.0 The State of Reform and Capacity for Future Reform</b>	<b>56</b>
6.1 Reform of CGIAR Governance	
6.2 Impact of the Reforms to the CGIAR System, 2002-2007	
6.3 Capacity for Change and Overcoming the Impediments and Barriers	

6.4	<b>The Future of Reform: Improving Benefits / Reducing Costs</b>	
7.0	<b>Members and Co-Sponsors</b>	<b>62</b>
7.1	<b>Role and Performance of the FAO, UNDP and IFAD Co-Sponsors</b>	
7.2	<b>The World Bank’s Financial Roles</b>	
8.0	<b>Program Innovations</b>	<b>68</b>
8.1	<b>Challenge Programs</b>	
9.0	<b>Financial Management</b>	<b>71</b>
9.1	<b>Unrestricted Funding</b>	
9.2	<b>Financial Management and Risk</b>	
9.3	<b>Financial Management of Challenge Programs</b>	

### List of Figures

<b>Figure 1A:</b>	<b>A Comparison of Importance &amp; Effectiveness Ratings of Various Aspects of the CGIAR &amp; its Affiliated Centers</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Figure 1B:</b>	<b>A Comparison of Importance and Effectiveness Ratings – Focus on Partnerships</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Figure 1C:</b>	<b>A Comparison of Importance or Appropriateness &amp; Effectiveness – Members &amp; Co-sponsors</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Figure 1D:</b>	<b>A comparison of Importance, Adequacy &amp; Effectiveness: Unrestricted Funding &amp; Financial Management</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Figure 1E:</b>	<b>A Comparison of Importance, Effectiveness &amp; Urgency Ratings: Governance Reform, 2002-2007</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Figure 1F:</b>	<b>Priorities and Priority-setting from the Perspective of All Respondents</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Figure 1G:</b>	<b>Summary of Importance Ratings of Various Dimensions Of The CGIAR by Section of Survey Overview</b>	<b>18</b>

---

<b>Figure 1H:</b>	<b>Summary of Effectiveness (&amp; Urgency) Ratings of Various Dimensions of the CGIAR by Section of Survey Overview</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Figure 2:</b>	<b>Response Rates – Overall &amp; by Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Figure 3:</b>	<b>Effectiveness of work of the CGIAR &amp; Centers in 5 research priority areas: a comparative perspective</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Figure 4:</b>	<b>Comparison of Importance &amp; Effectiveness Ratings of Executive Council by Population Sub-group</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Figure 5:</b>	<b>Comparison of Effectiveness Ratings of the Science Council by Population Sub-group</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Figure 6:</b>	<b>Gender &amp; Diversity Programs: Importance &amp; Effectiveness by Population Sub-group</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Figure 7:</b>	<b>Comparison of Alliance Importance and Effectiveness by Population Sub-group</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Figure 8:</b>	<b>Importance &amp; Effectiveness of Partnerships with NARS, ARIs, NGOs and the Private Sector</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Figure 9:</b>	<b>Importance and Effectiveness: Center-to-Centre Partnerships by Sub-group</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Figure 10:</b>	<b>Importance and Effectiveness: the Priority-setting Exercise and Effectiveness of Resulting Priorities by Sub-group</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Figure 11:</b>	<b>Changing Method of Allocating Contributions to make it more Performance-based? – Opinion by Sub-group</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Figure 12:</b>	<b>Importance, Effectiveness &amp; Urgency of Governance Reform: A Comparison by Population Sub-group</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Figure 13:</b>	<b>Importance of Reforms 2002-2007 in Comparison With Effectiveness of Implementing Changes – by Sub-group</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Figure 14:</b>	<b>Increasing the Capacity for Change and Overcoming Impediments: Response by Sub-groups to Suggested Options</b>	<b>60</b>

<b>Figure 15: Appropriateness and Effectiveness of the World Bank in Fulfilling its various Financial Roles – Comparison by Sub-group</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Figure 16: Importance and Effectiveness of Challenge Programs to the Success of the CGIAR – Comparison by Sub-group</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Figure 17: Importance versus Adequacy of Unrestricted Funds – Comparison by Sub-group</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Figure 18: Importance vs Effectiveness: Audit, Financial Oversight and Risk Management – Comparison by Sub-group</b>	<b>74</b>

## Executive Summary

This Executive Summary looks at the main findings of the survey of people actively involved in the CGIAR, 2001-2007, from three different perspectives:

- (a) Common or overarching themes;
- (b) Responses to survey by topic; and from
- (c) How the five respondent groups interpret the CGIAR System.

The survey was conducted in early 2008 as part of the work of the Independent Review Panel. The results are intended to complement visits to the Centers and extensive personal interviews that were undertaken by members of the Review Panel during the same period.

In preparation for the survey, a working version of the questionnaire was developed and pre-tested with 12 individuals from across the CGIAR System and among donors. The final version was sent to potential participants in five groups: Executive Council and other member representatives; Board Chairs and Center Executives; Challenge Program representatives; Science Council; and professional staff. Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality. [See Appendix 2 for the final version of the Survey Questions.]

Out of the sample of 227 people whose addresses could be verified, approximately 85% responded. Tables summarizing the results of the survey and coded by question number are found in Appendix 4.

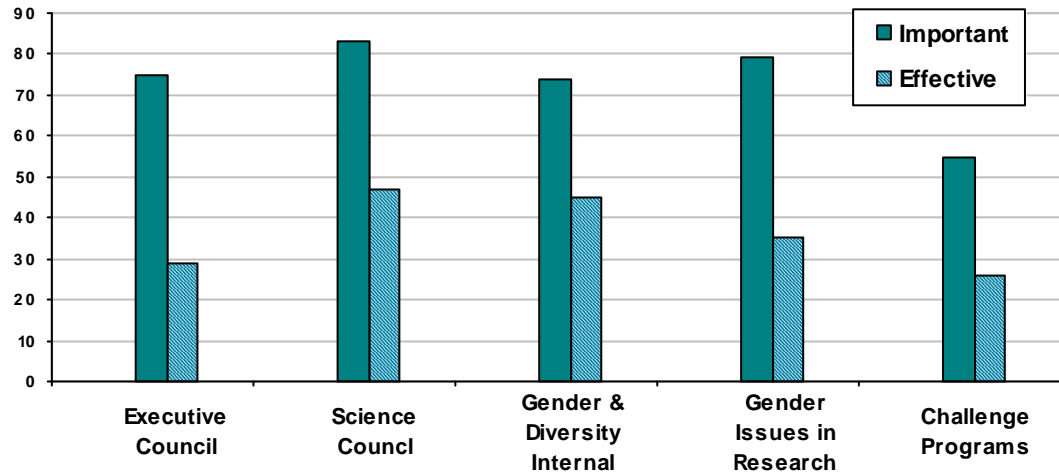
## Common Themes

### (1) The Effectiveness Deficit

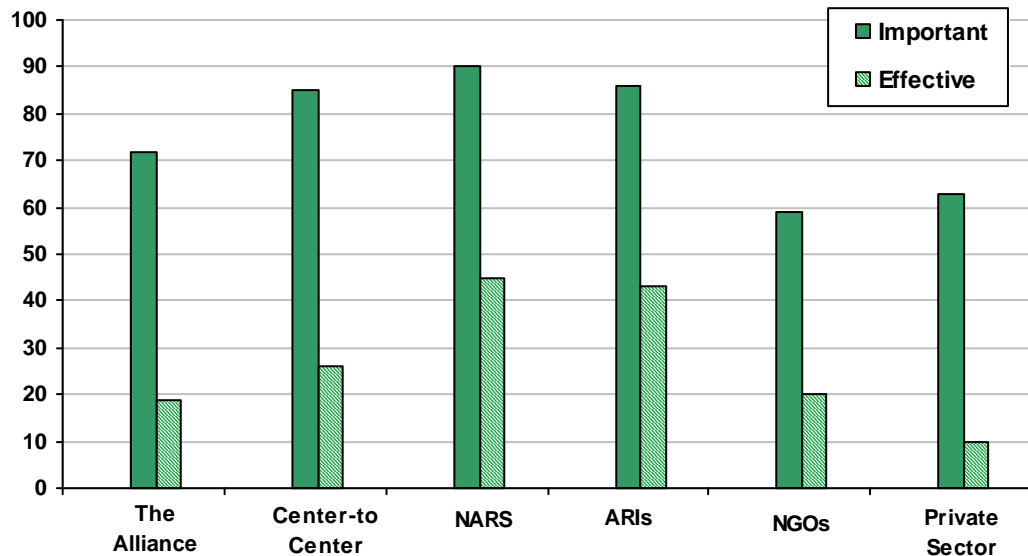
When respondents were asked to judge the importance and effectiveness of each CGIAR System actor, function or activity, the effectiveness rating was almost always significantly below the importance rating. Dealing with this “effectiveness deficit” is the System’s most pressing challenge.

Figures 1 A to E illustrate the disparity between the importance and the effectiveness ratings on some key aspects of the CGIAR Network from the perspective of all respondents. The bar charts are a simplification of the underlying data. For example, “important” is defined as the percentage of respondents who checked “important” or “very important” on a five point scale. “Effective” is defined similarly, based on a five point effectiveness scale.

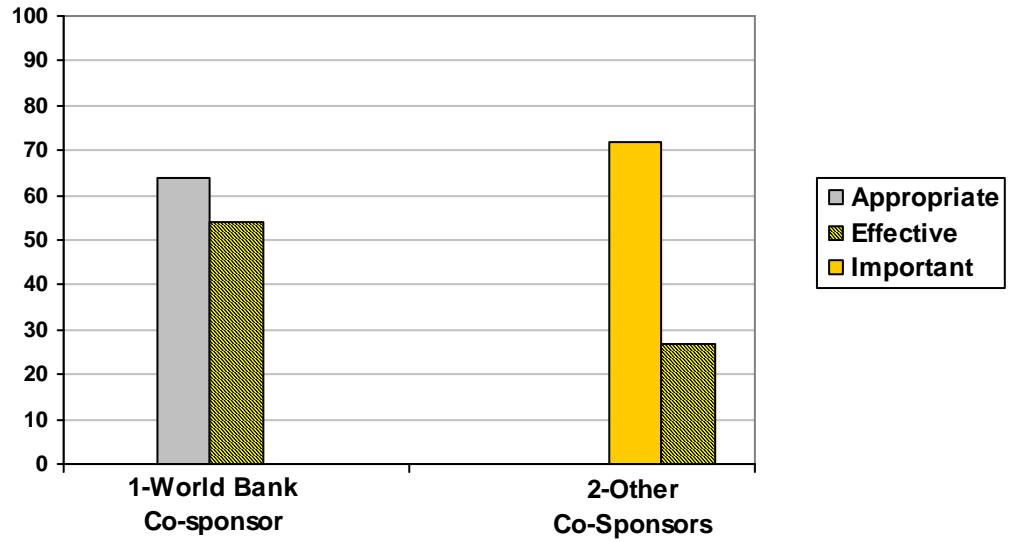
**Figure 1A**  
**A Comparison of Importance and Effectiveness Ratings**  
**of Various Aspects of the CGIAR and its Affiliated Centers**



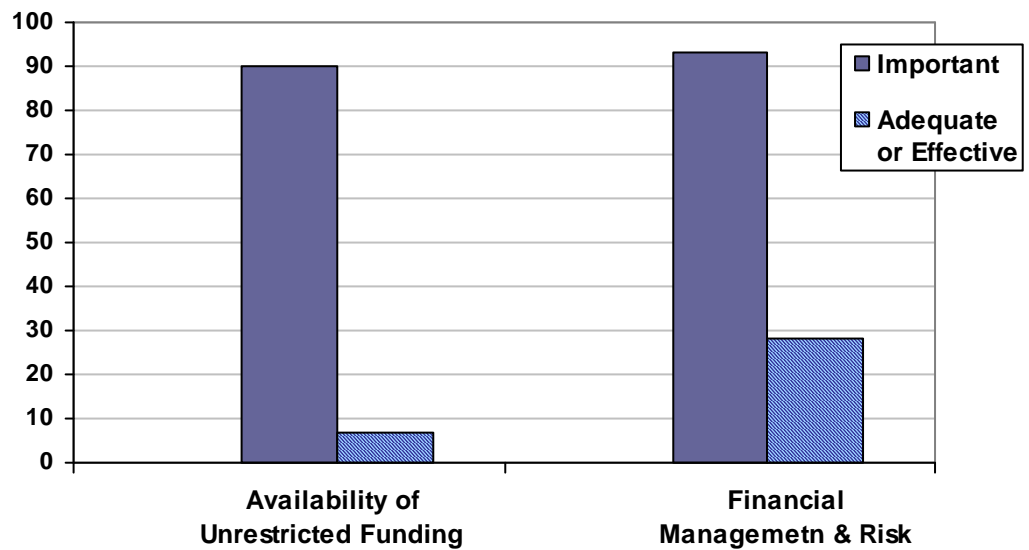
**Figure 1B**  
**A Comparison of Importance and Effectiveness Ratings**  
**A Focus on Partnerships**



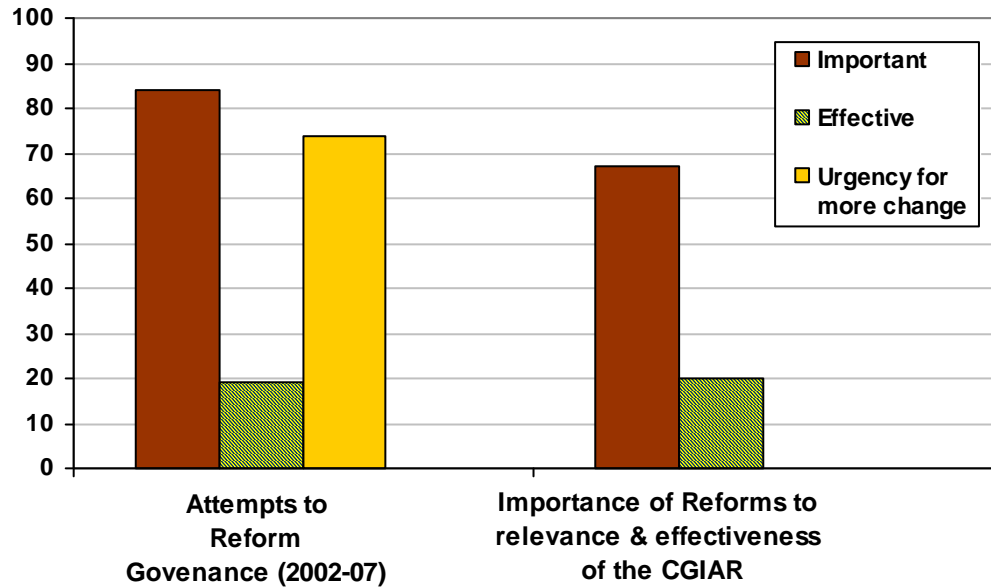
**Figure 1C**  
**A Comparison of**  
**(1) Appropriateness & Effectiveness of World Bank as Co-sponsor**  
**(2) Importance & Effectiveness of other Co-Sponsors**



**Figure 1D**  
**A Comparison of Importance, Adequacy and Effectiveness**  
**Unrestricted Funding & Financial Management**



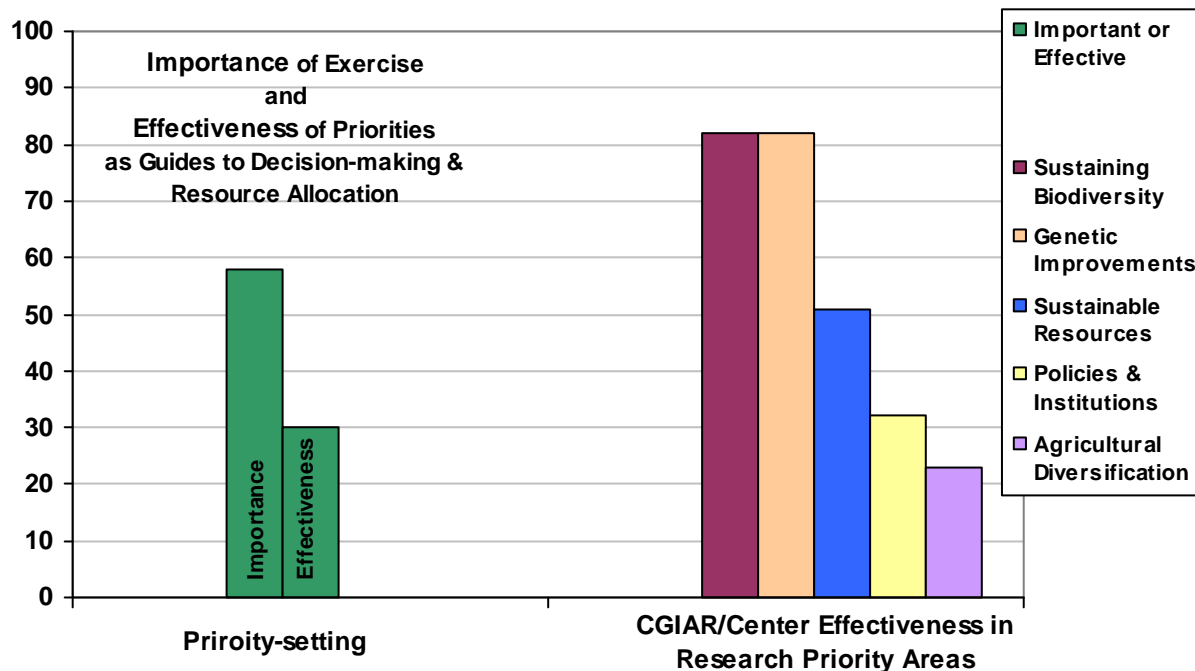
**Figure 1E**  
**A Comparison of Importance, Effectiveness & Urgency Ratings**  
**Governance Reform, 2002-2007**



Respondents were also asked to comment on the importance of the Science Council-led priority-setting exercise, the effectiveness of the resulting priorities as a guide to decision-making and resource allocation, and the effectiveness of the CGIAR and Centers in the five research priority areas (Questions 3A-E and 12 A-B). They clearly felt that the CGIAR/Centers are not working equally effectively in each of the five research priority areas.

The importance and effectiveness ratings for these questions are depicted in Figure 1 F, following:

**Figure 1 F**  
**Priorities and Priority-setting from the**  
**Perspective of All Respondents**



## (2) Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities

The survey revealed clearly that responsibilities and authorities are not well balanced. Throughout, respondents pointed to the need to clarify, strengthen, change, and/or re-distribute roles, responsibilities and authorities with respect to CGIAR System actors, defined broadly to include state and organizational donors, co-sponsors and partners. It was also apparent that many respondents did not know who has responsibility and authority to make decisions and/or to get things done.

In some areas of the survey – especially those addressing governance-related issues – this was one of the *most important* issues flagged by respondents for urgent resolution. The need to address roles, responsibilities and authority issues was also given serious consideration by respondents in the sections on partnerships, co-sponsors including the World Bank, and on the history and future of reform.

Ensuring that roles, responsibilities and authorities are clear, clearly assigned to the appropriate actors, and carried out effectively are essential in a well-run partnership. Without some common purpose and understanding of who/what actors are responsible for what and where the authority or authorities rest, the network cannot hope to function effectively – from either a management or a results perspective.

### (3) Opinions – Some Shared, Others Polarized

Looking at the survey results as a whole, it is surprising how much agreement there is about the importance or effectiveness of a particular CGIAR actor or activity. Differences of opinion tended to be much more polarized in the respondents' more open-ended comments, especially if they were focusing on areas where there was already some disagreement – like getting rid of Challenge Programs. [See “suggestions for improvement and respondent comments” in most sections of this summary for examples.].

There is also a great deal of consistency between groups on the relative priority of the options offered for discussion in the questions on how to improve a given situation. There is from 90 to 100% agreement on the relative priority of options for eight of the 18 “how to improve” questions, 80 to 89% agreement on seven of them, and agreement on the remaining three ranged between 67% and 73%. However, it should be noted that the percentage of respondents who actually selected an option at the same priority level might be dramatically different from group to group. For example, both professional staff (88%) and board chair/Center executive (53%) groups placed “strong oversight powers to the ExCo Ad Hoc Committee on Finance” as the first priority among four possibilities.

There are also some very significant disagreements, between both groups and individuals in a group.

Differences between individuals are particularly evident in the comments about the kind of partnership respondents want to see the CGIAR and Centers become. For example, some in each group think the System should become more centralized (e.g., with respect to financial decision-making), whereas a nearly-equal number think it should become more decentralized. There could also be a significant degree of polarization of opinion between members of the same group. For example, 50% of Science Council respondents think that having the World Bank provide the CGIAR Chair is important, whereas another 44% believe that it is of no or minor importance.

There are also sizable differences in viewpoint from group to group on some topics. For example, 60% of Science Council respondents thought that the Bank's method of allocating financial resources should be more performance-based, whereas only 29% of professional staff and 38% of all respondents agree. Similarly, there is considerable disagreement over whether the CGIAR and Centers have been effective in achieving gender and diversity objectives; or whether the Executive Council, the Science Council or Challenge Programs are performing well.

Finding such differences of opinion should perhaps be expected, given the history and nature of the network/partnership, and the issues it now faces. What is surprising is the level of agreement. Based on many of their comments, most respondents appear to recognize that building on agreement *and* finding workable solutions to which all parties can become committed are vital if the partnership/network is to achieve the desired results and outcomes in an effective way. However, it is also important that individual CGIAR actors, co-sponsors and partners take a closer look at their own strengths and weaknesses and how others see them, if they are to be truly effective participants in the Network. This is examined again toward the end of the Executive Summary.

#### **(4) The Need for Better Communications**

Many respondents clearly think that there are issues of communications and trust between the Centers, the CGIAR, the Science Council, and external stakeholders. For example, a number of respondents commented that the nature of the Executive Council's mandate and responsibilities has not been clearly communicated to others in the System and outside stakeholders. Respondents also thought that the Council's relationships with other CGIAR actors and stakeholders are not as effective as they might be. Similar comments were made about the World Bank's relationships with other co-sponsors and partners, the Science Council, the Alliance, the Secretariat, and other System actors.

The CGIAR System is a partnership and network. For this reason, good, clear and open communications and strong, trust-based inter-relationships are essential.

#### **(5) The Need to Manage Partners and the Partnering Process Well**

The CGIAR System overall, the Centers and the Challenge Programs depend directly on the nature and health of their partnerships, both within the System and with those outside such as NARS, NGOs, private foundations, and others. Observations about these partnerships and how to improve them were made throughout the survey. However, parts of several survey questions focused directly on this issue.<sup>1</sup> Among the more important insights into how these partnerships might be better managed were:

- Recognizing the need to understand the mandates, goals and aspirations of the partners as they relate to the CGIAR system, its programs and activities, and to manage the impact of these when they differ from those of the CGIAR System.
- The need to develop effective policies and strategic frameworks or plans for partnering with both research partners and with co-sponsors.
- The need to find a variety of approaches and tools to harness and support these partnerships and make them more effective (a number of suggestions are listed in Section 4.3).
- The need to consider whether partners should have a role (or a different or stronger role) in CGIAR and Center governance.
- Recognizing the need to change Center and Science Council corporate cultures to make them more partnership-friendly and capable by using various training and development strategies (hiring practices, building working capacity; knowledge/skills development, mentoring, etc.).
- With respect to funders and co-sponsors in particular, the need to recognize and deal directly with real or perceived conflicts between their funder role and more

---

<sup>1</sup> Some parts or all of Survey Questions 6-7, 10-13, 15-16, and 18-20 dealt with relations with "outside partners," as they have been defined here.

active roles in the CGIAR system (e.g., the World Bank's roles as major donor *and* in oversight and governance).

## Responses to the Survey by Topic

This section takes a different perspective on the survey responses, but covers the same ground as the previous section. Survey questions were organized according to seven themes: Science, Funding, Governance, Co-sponsors, Gender and Diversity, Partnerships, and Reform and the Capacity for Reform.

### 1. Science

The Science Council's roles and responsibilities, and relationships with other CGIAR System actors, were frequently questioned. Respondents focussed on (a) the nature, quality and quantity of Science Council personnel and other resources; (b) the degree of creativity, innovation and appropriate risk-taking needed to support ground-breaking research; and (c) ways to improve the Council's performance with respect to the evaluation of project or program outcomes and impacts. Most respondents thought that responsibility for the ethics review of research proposals should rest with the Science Council.

The priority-setting exercise led by the Science Council was not rated highly. Respondents commented on the need for three things (a) a new CGIAR/Centers vision; (b) a priority-setting process that is results focussed; and (c) realistic priorities against which achievements can be measured and future resources allocated.

Problems with the five research priorities included: (a) insufficient financial support; (b) weak System support for innovative research and approaches to research; and (c) the indirect relationship between "academic" scientific research and development impact "on the ground."

The Challenge Programs were not highly rated. There was general uncertainty whether they should stay or go. They are thought by many to be poorly managed, costly, and competing against the Centers for financial and other resources. Some wondered which CGIAR actors ought to take "ownership" of these programs or whether they should become much more independent from the System than now is the case. Difficulties with the selection of research topics and in the awarding of contracts were also noted.

### 2. Funding

The key issues with respect to unrestricted funding were the need to: (a) reverse declining levels of unrestricted funds; (b) improve management to build trust and thereby attract more unrestricted funds from donors; and (c) manage the relationship with donors better. Some key issues identified in relation to financial management were: (a) a concern that there is a general lack of appreciation of the importance of risk management; and (b) the need to have qualified people in place across the system, who understand finances, audit and risk management.

### 3. Governance

There was a consensus that the governance of the CGIAR/Centers partnership is under great stress, but no consensus about what exactly should be done. Comments about the current state of CGIAR governance and what still needs to be done included: (a) continuing difficulties associated with finding a workable and effective balance in the partnership between centralized functions and decentralized functions; (b) concerns about the involvement and commitment (or lack thereof) to better governance on the parts of some key actors and stakeholders; (c) the need to improve coordination and inter-relationships between Centers, donors, the Science Council and other stakeholders; and (d) the importance of improving management structures and practices.

In addition to comments about the mandate, roles and responsibilities of the Executive Council and its relationships with other Systems actors, respondents commented on (a) whether the Council should have more or less decision-making power; (b) whether it should be more representative of stakeholders; (c) the mechanics of Council operations (poor meeting practices, participants becoming unprepared, etc.); and (d) the general lack of vision and creativity.

### 4. Co-Sponsors – the World Bank and Others

The World Bank makes a substantial financial contribution to the CGIAR System. It also makes many non-financial contributions, including appointing and providing the Chair of the Executive Committee, Director of the Secretariat, provision of secretariat offices, and the use of its convening power. In addition to the issues already discussed, some respondents noted: (a) a perceived need for greater transparency and professionalism; and (b) the possibility that the management functions of CGIAR should be more independent from the World Bank.

With respect to the World Bank's financial roles respondents voiced some of the same concerns as they had expressed elsewhere – although they received extra emphasis in this context: (a) real or apparent conflicts of interest between the donor and manager roles; (b) the need to clarify and/or assign roles and responsibilities to other CGIAR actors; and (c) the need for more openness and transparency on how/why decisions are made, especially with respect to funding and staffing. Many respondents thought that the Bank (and the CG Secretariat) should develop a fully-analysed position on unrestricted funds and be more proactive in “selling” it to donors. Some respondents also thought that services to members, presently provided by the CGIAR Secretariat, could be improved, while others commented that it has too few financial and personnel resources to fulfill all its functions well.

In general, issues about the other co-sponsors included: (a) whether the concept of “co-sponsors” should be continued or not; (b) what additional powers and responsibilities they should have; and (c) whether the co-sponsors should become more involved in the CGIAR/Centers/Challenge Programs and, if so, how.

## 5. Gender and Diversity Programs

Respondents noted the need for more work to make the gender and diversity perspective an integral part of Network and Center culture. However many respondents noted that there is a potential conflict between, on the one hand, making sure gender and diversity perspectives are respected and, on the other, the need to maintain a strong commitment both to hiring the best managers, scientists and other specialists, and to doing the best science possible. A couple of other difficulties were also noted: (a) the pool of female researchers, especially those who might be willing to work in difficult environments, is limited; (b) there has been a lack of financial and other resources to advance the gender and diversity agenda, although this appears to be changing; and (c) there is a lack of expertise in using a gender perspective to do sound research. Several respondents noted that implementing successful gender and diversity programs this is an on-going challenge, one that needs the continuing visible support of co-sponsors and other partners.

## 6. Partnerships

Most of the key points about partnering and partnerships have already been summarized in the context of common or overarching themes. Additional issues that arose include the following: (a) Centers should be rewarded through the performance management system for how well they form and manage their partnerships; (b) there is a concern about duplication of work and/or administrative activities among partners (especially with respect to ARIs and NGOs); and (c) there is also a concern that potential that partners might compete with Centers for money and personnel (and that centers are competing with one another in this respect). Some respondents thought that a general partnering strategy would not be useful because different types of partners present different challenges.

## 7. Reform and the Capacity for Reform

The overall consensus was that reform efforts since 2002 have, at best, been moderately effective, although they have been costly, both in terms of money and administrative burden. Many respondents suggested changes that would improve governance in the future – some of which have already been discussed in other contexts, including (a) developing and coming to agreement on a shared vision of the partnership and network; (b) finding a more effective balance between centralization (standardization) and decentralization (flexibility); (c) improving coordination and inter-relationships internally and externally; and (d) improving management structures and practices. Respondents identified some key barriers to reform and provided ideas on how they might be overcome. The barriers identified were: (a) the narrow self-interest of some donors and some Centers; (b) reform burnout; (c) a limited ability to move from agreement on conceptual reforms to implementation; and (d) a lack of common vision to go beyond existing mandates and structures.

## Respondent World Views – How the Groups interpret the CGIAR

The five groups of respondents are not fully distinct. Individuals have often played several roles in the CGIAR, the Centers and/or the Science Council over a period of time. Nevertheless the groups do tend to display different perspectives in their responses. The overall impression one gets from reading the full responses is that each group is focused on its own particular needs and interests. A second impression is that the level of understanding of each other's points of view is not very high. Not being aware of and/or being able to manage the differences may eventually undermine the CGIAR partnership and network.

For this reason, it is important that CGIAR actors and stakeholders be as fully-aware as possible of the differences *and* similarities in the perspectives between the population sub-groups. Herein lies opportunity. Where there is sufficient agreement over, say, the importance of a particular CGIAR actor, the conditions exist for cooperative action to increase effectiveness. And, where key differences are recognized, there is space to begin to explore new ideas and/or ways to address critical challenges.

The intent of this section of the Executive Summary is to highlight the similarities and differences in perspective among the five population groups. Figures 1G-H in sub-sections 2 and 3, following, compare their different viewpoints on the importance and effectiveness in table form. These different perspectives are also depicted in scattergrams (Appendix 3), which provide another view, by mean score, of the way each sub-group interprets the CGIAR universe. These will be examined toward the end of the section.

### 1. The effectiveness of the five priority research areas

There was general agreement that the CGIAR and Centers are highly effective in the *Sustaining Biodiversity* and *Genetic Improvements* research areas, with ratings in the 70- and 80-percent range. Only the respondents liked to the Challenge Program disagreed (67% rated the Centers' work in Sustaining Biodiversity and genetic improvements as ineffective). *Agricultural Diversification* received ratings in the low-mid range (18-28%), although Challenge Program respondents were again out of step (50% effectiveness). Opinions about CGIAR and Center effectiveness in *Sustainable Resources* hovered around 55%; only professional staff disagreed (79% ineffective). Finally, *Policies and Institutions* were given ratings in the 35% range, with the exception of Challenge Program respondents (20% effective) and professional staff (13% effective).

Where effectiveness ratings were low (*Agricultural Diversification* and *Policies and Institutions*), the percentage of respondents in a group who selected "not clearly effective or ineffective" was relatively high – and, sometimes higher than the "ineffective" rating. There were three exceptions: Science Council respondents and professional staff were quite clear that the CGIAR and Centers are ineffective in the pursuit of the *Agricultural Diversification* priority area (50% and 47% ineffective). And, 44% of professional staff rated the CGIAR and Centers as ineffective in the Policies and Institutions research area.

## 2. Importance Ratings

There are a number of areas where the groups generally agreed with each other about their assessments of importance and/or effectiveness within a narrow range (i.e., within less than ten percentage points of the mid-point), with perhaps one or two exceptions. These exceptions (outliers) are noted clearly in the last column of Figure 1G in this sub-section and, with respect to effectiveness, in the last column of Figure 1H in the next sub-section.

As Figure 1G indicates, for 75% of the survey questions that asked about importance, three or more groups agreed within 15 percentage points or less (18 questions). Where there are two groups outside of the norm (the “outliers”), all but one pair were relatively consistent with each other in rating importance (5 or fewer percentage points). By contrast, the range of difference for the remaining six questions was very great – from 37 percentage points for private sector partnerships, to 69 percentage points for Challenge Programs.

**Figure 1G**  
**Summary of Importance Ratings by Percentages of**  
**Various Dimensions of the CGIAR**  
**According to the Section of the Survey Overview**

Importance ....	Range		High	Low	Outlier(s)
<b>CGIAR &amp; Affiliated Centers</b>					
Executive Council	90%-80%	10 points	CP	SC	59% - BC/CEx
Provision of Chair	69%-58%	11 points	BC/CEx	PS	35% - CP 50% - SC
Provision of Director CGIAR Secretariat	54%-44%	10 points	ExCo/mem	SC & PS	27% - CP
Housing Secretariat	64%-56%	8 points	CP	SC	42% - BC 47% - SC
World Bank’s convening power	87%-72%	15 points	ExCo/mem	SC	67% - SC
Science Council	100%-50%	50 points	SC	CP	diverse
Gender & Diversity – internal	77%-65%	12 points	SC	BC/CEx	None
Gender & Diversity – research	84%-74%	10 points	ExCo/mem	PS	65% - SC 67% - CP
<b>Partnerships</b>					
The Alliance	81%-76%	5 points	SC	ExCo/mem	65% - BC/CEx 67% - PS
Center-to-Center Partnerships	94%-83%	11 points	PS	SC	77% - BC/CEx

**Independent Review of the CGIAR System**

NARS Partnerships	95%-88%	7 points	SC	ExCo/mem	None
ARI Partnerships	81%-72%	9 points	ExCo/mem PS	CP	100% - BC/CEx
Partnerships with NGOs	58%-53%	5 points	ExCo/mem	BC/CEx	91% - CP
Partnerships with the Private Sector	78%-41%	37 points	CP	SC	diverse
<b>Priority-setting</b>					
SC-led Priority-setting exercise	84%-42%	42 points	SC	BC/CEx	diverse
<b>Allocation of contributions against performance</b>					
Make more performance-based	39%-29%	10 points	BC/CEx	PS	60% - SC
Make less performance-based	13%-0%	13 points	ExCo/mem	PS & CP	20% - SC 24% - BC/CEx
<b>Governance</b>		1 point	BC/CEx	CP & SC	90% - ExCo/mem 94% - PS
Reforms to CGIAR governance	76%-75%	1 point	BC/CEx	CP & SC	90% - ExCo/mem 94% - PS
Reforms (2002-07) to relevance & effectiveness of the CGIAR	100%-53%	47 points	CP	BC/CEx	diverse
<b>Members &amp; Co-Sponsors</b>					
Having co-sponsors	100%-53%	47 points	SC	BC/CEx	diverse
World Bank in financial roles (appropriateness)	66%-55	11 points	ExCo/mem	CP	72% - SC
<b>Challenge Programs</b>	100%-31%	69 points	CP	BC/CEx	Diverse
<b>Funding &amp; Financial Management</b>					
Unrestricted funding	94%-81%	13 points	PS	SC	50% - CP
Audit, financial oversight & financial risk management	100%-85%	15 points	CP	BC/CEx	None

### 3. Effectiveness Ratings

There is also agreement about the degree of effectiveness in a number of areas. For more than 78% of the survey questions on effectiveness, there was agreement within 16 percentage points or less for three or more of the groups (14 questions). This drops to 74%, if the effectiveness ratings for the CGIAR and Centers in the five research priority areas are included. The range of difference for the remaining four questions was very great – from 26 percentage points for the priority-setting exercise, to 65 percentage points for the impact of the Science Council on Center research.

**Figure 1H**  
**Summary of Effectiveness (& Urgency) Ratings by Percentage of**  
**Various Dimensions of the CGIAR**  
**According to the Section of Survey Overview**

Effectiveness ....	Range		High	Low	Outlier(s)
<b>CGIAR &amp; Affiliated Centers</b>					
Science Council	74%-19%	65 points	SC	BC/CEx	diverse
Gender & Diversity – internal	59%-43%	16 points	BC/CEx	ExCo/mem	17% - PS 27% - CP
Gender & Diversity - research	53%-41%	12 points	SC	ExCo/mem	0% - CP 7% - PS
<b>Partnerships</b>					
The Alliance	30%-20%	10 points	SC	BC/CEx	0% - CP 6% - PS
Center-to-Center Partnerships	33%-22%	11 points	BC/CEx	PS	10% - CP
NARS Partnerships	60%-50%	10 points	BC/CEx	PS	25% - CP 34% - ExCo/mem
ARI Partnerships	37%-27%	10 points	CP	PS	54% - BC/CEx 56%-SC
Partnerships with NGOs	33%- 20%	13 points	BC/CEx	CP	10%-ExCo/mem 13%-PS
Partnerships with the Private Sector	12%-3%	9 points	BC/CEx	ExCo/mem	36%-SC
<b>Priority-setting</b>					
SC-led Priority-setting exercise	40%-14%	26 points	SC	BC/CEx	diverse
<b>Governance</b>					

Reforms to CGIAR governance	47%-0%	47 points	SC	CP	diverse
<u>Urgency</u> of need for change	94%-83%	11 points	PS	ExCo/mem	52%-SC 57%-BC/CEx
Reforms (2002-07) to relevance & effectiveness of the CGIAR	22%-8%	14 points	ExCo/mem	BC/CEx	None
<b>Members &amp; Co-Sponsors</b>					
Co-sponsor performance	56%-13%	43 points	SC	CP	Diverse
World Bank performance of financial roles	61%-48%	13 points	ExCo/mem	BC/CEx	33%-CP
<b>Challenge Programs</b>	28%-13%	15 points	SC	BC/CEx	82%-CP
<b>Funding and Financial Management</b>					
Unrestricted funding	9%-0%	9 points	ExCo/mem	SC	None
Audit, financial oversight & financial risk management	38%-23%	15 points	CP	ExCo/mem	None

#### 4. The View from the Scattergrams – Some Observations

The scattergrams give still another view of the differences between the various groups and the larger survey population (Appendix 3, Figures A - G). Many of these have already been noted in Figures 1 G-H, above. It is not the intention here to do an exhaustive analysis, but to point out only some of the things they appear to tell us about the perspectives of each respondent group.

##### Executive Council and other Members

Because Executive Council and other member respondents were the most numerous (91 individuals or 45% of respondents), it is important to recognize that their opinions will have dominated response results (Appendix 3, Figure B). For this reason, it is important to examine the different groups separately as well as all responses together. In addition, the opinions of Executive Council and other members from the developing countries were sometimes different from those of developed country representatives (Appendix 3, Figure C)

The following observations are made with the above comments in mind:

First, there is a clear consensus that all aspects addressed in the survey are important to the success of the CGIAR network (mean scores from 3.66 to 4.75). Secondly, there is a very wide range between the lowest and highest effectiveness ratings (from 2.44 for private sector partnerships to 3.48 for the impact of Science Council on Center research). Thirdly, only Science Council respondents rated the importance and effectiveness of their impact on Center research higher, and most other groups gave it much lower ratings. Finally, it is worth noting that the group's opinion about the importance and inadequacy of unrestricted funds is shared across the board.

With respect to partnerships, the Executive Council/members group sees NARS, center-to-center and ARIs partnerships as very important but, with the exception of the ARIs partnerships, not very effective. Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector received relatively poor ratings for both importance and effectiveness. Note that the general neglect of private sector partnerships seems to be a pattern across the network, with only the DG/Center executives group giving them a positive importance and effectiveness assessment ( $m = 3.8$  and  $2.44$ , respectively). Respondents from developing countries agreed fairly closely with Executive Council and other members from the developed countries with respect to the importance and effectiveness of the several partnership relationships.

It is interesting that Executive Council/member respondents thought that the World Bank as a co-sponsor is less important but more effective than the other co-sponsors. It is not surprising, however, that the Executive Council should have high expectations with respect to governance performance, which is their primary role in the Network. Nor is it surprising that they are concerned about CGIAR financial management, as their interest likely reflects the focus of their own jobs as public servants, managers, or business people (importance –  $m = 4.48$  and  $4.75$ , respectively). Unfortunately, they have not found either governance performance or financial management to be especially effective ( $m = 2.74$  and  $2.83$ ).

In general, representatives from the developing countries in this survey population gave somewhat higher effectiveness ratings except with respect to partnerships, which they gave ratings similar to the larger Executive Council/member group. For example, the developing country sub-group judged the Science Council to be somewhat more effective than the larger group at helping Centers to enhance the quality, relevance and impact of their science. They also gave overall financial management, the Executive Council, the World Bank and other co-sponsors higher effectiveness ratings than did the group as a whole (questions 7B, 10 B, 11B and 13B). It is not clear why this is the case, based on the survey responses alone.

### **Board Chairs and Center Executives**

Board chairs and Center executives contributed about a quarter of total respondents. They have an optimistic view of Center partnerships (see Appendix 3, Figure D). Given that partners are absolutely critical to Center performance, this is not surprising. Board chairs and Center executives clearly think that their partnerships with NARS and the ARIs are effective ( $m = 3.57$  and  $3.5$ , respectively). They also believe that Center-to-center partnerships and those with NGOs are effective, but somewhat less so ( $m = 3.1$  each). Although partnerships with the private sector are given a relatively high

importance rating ( $m = 3.96$ ), the group considers them to be marginally ineffective ( $m = 2.6$ ). As for the Alliance – there is a general consensus across groups that it has been relatively ineffective (although different people disagree about this in its details).

The board chairs and Center executives are clearly *not* impressed with the importance and effectiveness of the Challenge Programs – to which they have given a significantly lower rating than given by any of the other groups ( $m = 3.0$  and  $2.5$ ). Similarly, they do not think very highly of the Science Council's efforts at priority setting ( $m = 3.2$  and  $2.6$ ), or they believe it has had little impact on the effectiveness of Center research ( $m = 2.7$ ).

Co-sponsors other than the World Bank (Question 13), Governance reforms (Questions 9 and 21), and the Executive Council (Question 10) also received poor effectiveness ratings ( $m = 2.47$ ,  $2.46$ ,  $2.27$  and  $2.57$ , respectively).

## Challenge Programs

The Challenge Programs are the “new kids in the neighborhood” (Appendix 3, Figure E). The fact that they appear to think a lot of themselves may simply be a sign of their own feeling of insecurity within the Network. There may be good reason for this however, as there is a strongly-stated belief on the parts of some of the other groups – although certainly not all – that they are not fulfilling their original promise.

Partnerships are also very important to the Challenge Programs. With respect to importance, Challenge Program respondents gave mean scores from a high of 4.75 (NARS) to a low of 4.11 (private sector partnerships). However, the only partnerships this group believes are effective are those with ARIs ( $m = 3.27$ ). They also thought the Alliance deserved a low effectiveness ratings ( $m = 2.63$ ).

Challenge Program respondents gave the Executive Council (Question 10), World Bank (Question 11), financial management (Question 7), and the impact of the Science Council on Center research (Question 1) positive effectiveness ratings ( $m = 3.5$ ,  $3.22$ ,  $3.13$  and  $3.09$ , respectively).

One final point: as Figures 1 G-H indicated, Challenge Program opinions were often out of line with those of other groups, and comparing the figure for the Challenge Programs with those of the other groups confirms the observation.

## Science Council

The very first impression is that the Science Council – in stark contrast to the other groups – has a much more optimistic outlook about the current state of the CGIAR System and Centers (Appendix 3, Figure F). The sole exceptions are unrestricted funds (Question 6) and governance reform, 2002-07 (Question 17), which is in line with the opinions of the other groups.

With respect to partnerships, the Science Council judges them all to be important (from  $M 3.29$  – private sector, to  $4.11$  – NARS), and from marginally effective to effective (from  $m = 2.94$  – NGOs, to  $m = 3.56$  – ARIs). It is striking that private sector partnerships are slighted, given the predominance today of private sector activity in agricultural research.

The Science Council gave the co-sponsors other than the World Bank (FAO, FAD and UNDP) the highest combined importance and effectiveness ratings of those given by any of the groups (importance,  $m = 4.72$  and effectiveness,  $m = 3.5$ ). This is in stark contrast to the importance and effectiveness ratings given to these co-sponsors by board chairs and Center executives. This may be, in part, because the Science Council is housed in the FAO offices in Rome.

Finally, the Science Council thought that the Challenge Programs deserves relatively high ratings in comparison with the other groups – in importance,  $m = 3.75$ ; and effectiveness,  $m = 3.28$ .

### **Professional Staff**

In contrast with the Science Council, the professional staff appears to be disenchanted with the CGIAR partnership and network (see Appendix 3, Figure G). Only three dimensions were judged to be effective: NARS partnerships; the World Bank as a co-sponsor, and the Challenge Programs ( $m = 3.38$ ,  $3.33$  and  $3.13$ , respectively). While all dimensions were considered to be important, there was a considerable range, from  $m = 3.29$  for private sector partnerships to  $m = 4.71$  for financial oversight and risk management. It would appear that, again, partnerships with private sector companies are undervalued.

Professional staff also appear to have an especially low opinion of the effectiveness of the Alliance, NGO and private sector partnerships, the impact of the Science Council on Center research, co-sponsors other than the World Bank, governance reforms (2002-2007), and the gender and diversity programs (mean score range from 2.33 to 2.56). As with the other groups, the lack of growth in restricted funding is a concern.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The Survey has generated a great deal of data, and large numbers of perceptive comments and good ideas from respondents. This overview of Survey results has only touched the surface. Nevertheless, the time has come to conclude.

These observations point to what the author believes are the five most significant areas on which the CGIAR, its actors and stakeholders should focus their efforts, in the best interests of the Network overall and of those who are related to it or depend on it. These views are supported only by information taken from survey responses, and not on in-depth knowledge of the CGIAR System itself.

1. It is Imperative that the CGIAR attack the effectiveness deficits, giving priority to some key dimensions, such as Executive Council decision-making, partners and co-sponsors, the role of the Science Council and its relationship with the Centers, and funding and financial/risk management. A good place to start is where most or all of the groups agree that the dimension is important or very important, but judge effectiveness to be low. Dealing with the effectiveness

deficit will be a great deal more difficult where opinions are highly polarized – for example, with respect to the Science Council’s impact on Center research, the priority-setting exercise or the future of Challenge Programs.

2. *WHY* the CGIAR and Centers are effective in delivering against some of the research priorities but not others is unclear from survey responses alone. Getting a clear “fix” on this is the first step toward increasing effectiveness with respect to agricultural diversification, policies and institutions, and sustainable resources.
3. Mandates, roles and responsibilities, and authorities must be clarified and clearly communicated to CGIAR actors and key stakeholders, including co-sponsors and outside partners. Based on many of the comments, this may mean strengthening, changing or re-distributing current responsibilities, or taking on new ones. It is also important that those who have responsibilities and the corresponding authorities are strongly committed to fulfilling them to the best of their abilities. Otherwise, things are going to start (or continue?) to “fall through the cracks,” to the great detriment of the Network’s effectiveness from both management and program perspectives, and with respect to its ability to achieve desired results and outcomes.
4. Because the CGIAR, Centers and Challenge Programs are so dependent on donors and research partnerships, it is very important that these relationships be well-managed. Survey respondents gave a number of suggestions on how this should be done (see Sections 4.0 on partnerships; Section 7.1 on the FAO, UNDP and IFAD, and Section 9.1 on unrestricted funding). Special attention needs to be paid to partnerships with NGOs and the private sector, and to convincing funders and co-sponsors that they ought to contribute unrestricted funds in addition to what they already give to projects and targeted programs.
5. There should be a strong, sustained commitment to the development, implementation and maintenance of sound management structures and practices on the parts of all those involved in the CGIAR (managers, scientists, support specialist, partners, co-sponsors and funders). These include:
  - Having a shared vision appropriate to Partnership/Network values and that takes into account the environment in which the Network must function;
  - Putting in place a governance structure that is effective *and* compatible with the needed balance between centralization and stability, on the one hand, and decentralization and flexibility, on the other;
  - Doing strategic planning; developing and implementing flexible strategic plans and approaches (e.g., for the Network overall, for partnering, for pursuing co-sponsors, donors, etc.);
  - Making sure the right people are in place (centrally and in the Centers) with the knowledge, capacity and commitment to manage well (or, who arrange to have access to such individuals);

- Making effective decisions (rational, defensible, based on knowledge, experience and sound risk assessment, as well as on good instincts and common sense). Associated with this, making sure that decision-making responsibilities and the corresponding authorities are assigned to the most appropriate CGIAR actor(s);
- Supporting clear and open communications between and among CGIAR actors and stakeholders’;
- Having a workable and informative performance assessment system;
- Making sure the basic elements of management control and effective resource management (of financial, personnel, other resources) are in place, and that they are compatible with the values, needs and character of the CGIAR and the Centers; and, finally
- Remembering, always, that good management is never an end in itself, but is done in support of the Network’s pursuit of desired results and outcomes.

## 1.0 Introduction to Survey

In February 2008 the Independent Review Panel commissioned a survey of key CGIAR actors and stakeholders. The survey was only one instrument of data collection. It complemented extensive interviews and visits to Centers by Panel Members.

The questions covered in the survey were derived from the Terms of Reference of the Independent Review Panel. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a small sample drawn from the target groups. This document summarizes the survey results.

### 1.1 Survey Sampling Frame

The survey population was approximately 225 persons drawn from five groups of people who were active with the CGIAR from 2001 to 2007. The groups were:

- The Executive Council and Members;
- Board chairs and Center executives;
- Challenge Program leaders;
- The Science Council; and
- The CGIAR Professional Staff.

### 1.2 Response Rates

The overall rate of response for the survey was just under 85%. Response rates by stakeholder group are summarized in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
**Response Rates – Overall & by Stakeholder Group**

Group	Population	# Respondents	% Responding in Category	% Total Respondent Population
<b>All respondents</b>	237	201	84.81%	100%
<b>Executive Council / Members</b>	109	91	83.49%	45.27%
<b>Board chairs &amp; Center executives</b>	60	54	90.0%	26.87%
<b>Challenge Program</b>	16	15	93.75%	7.46%
<b>Science Council</b>	27	21	77.78%	10.45%
<b>Professional Staff</b>	25	20	80.0%	9.95%

### 1.3 Survey Process and Methodology

Several iterations of the survey questionnaire were developed by the Independent Review Panel in consultation with Change Management team members and others. A working version was pre-tested with 12 individuals from across the CGIAR System. The final version was then developed and sent by email to the initial contact list.

Participants were guaranteed confidentiality, even from the Review Panel, to ensure that they could respond to the questions as freely as they wished. To achieve this, a separate consulting firm with no connection to the CGIAR or to the Review Panel was engaged to make all contacts with respondents, and to ensure that any individual identifiers were eliminated.

To help ensure a high response rate, potential participants were contacted a number of times by email and/or telephone.

- An initial list of 330 people was checked for current addresses. 237 could be contacted by email or telephone and these became the sample for the survey..
- A second email was sent as a reminder to those who had not yet responded at the beginning of March, which was followed-up by a second prompt call, if needed.
- Finally, those who had promised that they would respond, but who had not already done so, were pursued by email and telephone a third time during March and April.

Survey results were recorded and collated when received, and statistical profiles developed for each survey question by total population and by individual respondent group. These profiles have provided data for a large number of graphs and figures which depict survey results.

### 1.4 Overview of Questions

There are 24 questions in total, most with a number of sub-questions, resulting in a total of 71 distinct questions in six categories: Science, Funding, Governance, Co-sponsors, Partnerships, and Reform and the capacity to reform.

The questions are of three types:

- Scaled Questions, which compare the importance of an issue with the effectiveness or adequacy with which it is being addressed;
- Open-ended multiple choice questions, which provided respondents with a choice of possible actions which might help in dealing with the issue(s) identified and the opportunity to provide additional comments; and

- Essay-style questions that provide no guidance so as to allow respondents the fullest possible freedom to respond (questions 9 c, and 22-24).

More than 300 pages of comments, across all topics and types of questions, were received.

## 2.0 CGIAR and Centers' Research Priority Areas

The CGIAR, Centers and Science Council have identified five priority areas (and twenty sub-priority areas) to guide research. The five main priorities are:

- Sustaining biodiversity for current and future generations;
- Genetic improvements to produce more and better food at lower cost;
- Agricultural diversification and help for farmers so that they can take advantage of emerging opportunities for high-value commodities and products;
- Sustainable management of resources (water, land, forests); and
- Improving policies and facilitating institutional innovation

Questions 3 A-E asked survey respondents to judge how effective the CGIAR and Centers have been in each of these five priority areas.

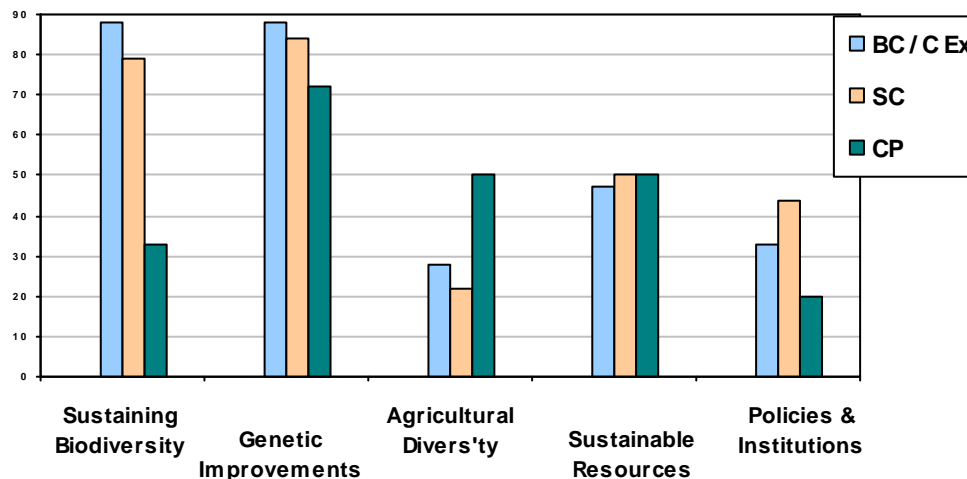
### 2.1 Centers' Effectiveness in Working in Research Priority Areas

Over 80% of all respondents rated the CGIAR and Centers as working effectively/very effectively in the areas of "sustaining biodiversity" and "genetic improvements" (81.61% and 81.92%). "Sustainable management of resources" was lower at 51% effective/very effective, followed by "improving policies / facilitating institutional innovation" at 32% and "agricultural diversification" at 23%.

The respondents most likely to be directly concerned with meeting these research priorities are those responsible for managing the Centers (Board Chairs, Directors and Deputy Directors General), Science Council members and those involved in the Challenge Programs. Figure 3 illustrates how effectively these sub-groups believe the CGIAR and the Centers are working in the five priority areas.

Figure 3

**Effectiveness of work of the CGIAR & Centers in 5 research priority areas  
A comparative perspective – BCs / SC / CP**



## 2.2 Issues and Respondent Comments

The most commonly-noted issues with respect to the five research priority areas, in order of frequency were:

- Lack of sufficient financial support for work on these priorities;
- Lack of CGIAR System support for innovative research and approaches (e.g., research different from traditionally-supported types of projects or areas of research);
- Whether some of the priorities are appropriate for the CGIAR system because they are already funded by business, think tanks and others (e.g., policy & innovation); or the System itself lacks experience with some of the areas (e.g., with high value crops); and
- The relationship (or conflict) between scientific research in academic perspective and its actual impact on the ground in recipient regions, countries and communities.

Some respondents also noted that judging effectiveness may be difficult – in the “improving policies and facilitating institutional innovation” research area, for example.

## 3.0 The CGIAR and its Affiliated Centers

The CGIAR is a consultative group of 64 members from governments, international organizations and some foundations, and 15 Agricultural Research Centers across the world. It meets once a year at an Annual General Meeting, and is supported by an Executive Council, to which it has delegated limited decision-making responsibilities.

Several questions addressed the importance and effectiveness of the CGIAR and its affiliated Centers, and how they might be changed or improved individually and/or as an inter-related System.

### 3.1 The Executive Council

The 22-member Executive Council meets twice a year, and has several working committees (e.g., the recently-revived Ad Hoc Finance Committee). Members are selected from the group of CGIAR members and serve for two years. The Survey questions about the Executive Council centered primarily on its functioning, composition and mandate – and especially on its importance to System governance and decision-making.

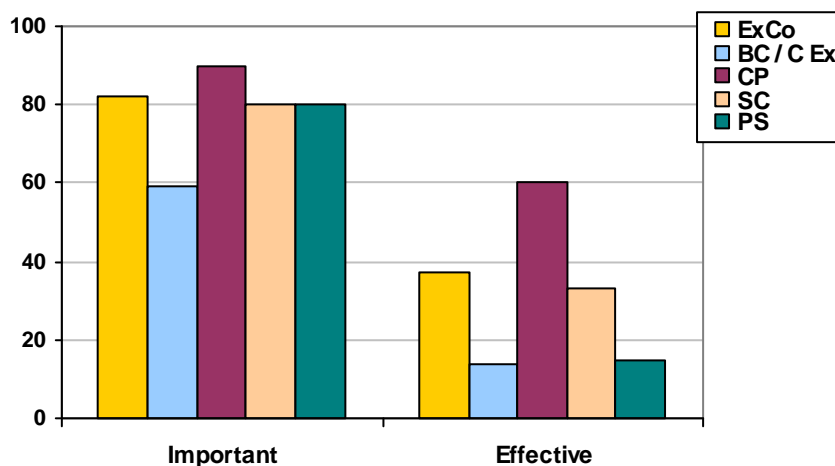
#### Importance and Effectiveness

Nearly 75% of all respondents rated the Executive Council as important (43%) or very important (32%) to System governance. This assessment was relatively consistent across the groups with one exception. The Board Chair/ Center DGs sub-group rated the Executive Council (ExCo) importance nearly 16 percentage points lower than all respondents taken together (59%) and 23 percentage points lower than the level at which ExCo/Members sub-group rated themselves (82%). This reflects a major disconnect between the way the donors and the doers see themselves.

This difference is also reflected in the fact that approximately 29% of all respondents think the Council is effective or very effective, whereas about the same number (32%) believe it is completely or marginally ineffective. Figure 3 compares Executive Council importance and effectiveness by sub-group.

The professional staff in the CGIAR System also tend to have a low opinion of the effectiveness of the ExCo. (See Figure 4)

**Figure 4**  
**Comparison of Importance & Effectiveness Ratings of Executive Council – by Population Sub-group**



### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Question 10 C offered five possibilities regarding how the mandate, composition or functioning of the Executive Council might be improved. Many respondents commented on these possibilities and many added others.

The most important issues raised were:

- Council mandate and responsibilities A number of respondents questioned whether the Council's mandate and responsibilities are clear and/or well-communicated to and understood by others in the system and by outside stakeholders.
- Council decision-making More than 40% of respondents commented on the role (or lack thereof) the Executive Council plays in decision-making or on how such decision-making should be done (e. g., broadly or narrowly collaborative, by sub-committees, etc.). Two options given in the question also focused on Council decision-making:
  - (1) The Council should use formal votes and make binding decisions (nearly 50% of ExCo/member, BC/center executive and professional staff respondents agreed. Fewer Science Council and Challenge Program respondents agreed; and
  - (2) More power should be given to major shareholders in Council decision-making. More than 40% of BC/center executives and professional staff respondents agreed, and significantly fewer ExCo/member, Challenge Programs, and Science Council respondents (26%, 11% & 29%).

- Representation. Three options given in the question related to increasing the representation on Council: agreed by developing countries' representatives (44% all respondents), constituency representatives (40.84% all respondents), and scientists (34% all respondents). In addition, about 20% of those offering additional comments added civil society, "beneficiaries," development specialists, and managers to the list of those who should be included in the Executive Council.

The lack of representation of some significant group was considered to be an important issue for almost two-thirds of respondents (50-68% of respondents). However, there were differing opinions about which group should have more representation. For example, the Science Council and Board chairs/center executive sub-groups think that increasing the representation of scientists is of primary importance (rated first at 53% and 49%, respectively), while 79% of the Executive Committee & Members considered it the *least* important of the choices. Again the difference of opinion between the donors and the doers is striking.

- Other significant issues. Three additional issues were raised by respondents with some frequency:
  - (1) The nature and overall effectiveness of the Council's relationship with other CGIAR actors and stakeholders (about 10% of comments).
  - (2) The mechanics of Council "operations" – for example, poor meeting practices; participants coming unprepared; the best people are NOT rotated onto Council; etc. Vague and non-transparent decision making practices.
  - (3) Lack of vision and creativity in the CGIAR and Executive Committee (noted explicitly by two respondents, but incorporated into or assumed by several other comments).

### **3.2 Provision of the CGIAR Executive and Secretariat, and the World Bank's convening power**

The World Bank provides the CGIAR with a chairperson (also the Chair of the Executive Council), and a Bank staff member is the Director of the CGIAR Secretariat. The CG Secretariat is housed in Bank offices in Washington DC. The Bank also uses its power to convene meetings, consultations and so on, to promote the interests of the CGIAR.

Respondents were asked to comment on the importance of these roles to the CGIAR, and suggest ways in which performance might be improved.

## Importance that the World Bank fulfil these roles

There was significant difference of opinion about the importance of the World Bank providing the Chair, the Director and housing for the Secretariat.

### (a) Provision of the Chair, Director of the Secretariat and Secretariat office space

- Between 50% and 69% of respondents in four groups think it is important or very important that the Bank provide the CGIAR chairperson. Only 36% of Challenge Program representatives agreed, however.
- Many respondents commented that: (1) the chair needs to be a *working* chair, with enough time to do the job well; (2) the Chair need not be supplied by the World Bank, but should be someone who can command respect; and (3) having the Bank supply the chair may not always be in the best interests of the CGIAR.
- About half the respondents (between 44% and 54%) in four groups think it is important or very important that the Bank provide the director of the Secretariat. However, only 28% of Challenge Program respondents think this is important.
- About the same proportions (somewhat more than half) of all respondents feel it is important or very important that the Secretariat is housed in the World Bank. However only 42% of Board chairs/center DGs agreed.

### (b) Use of the Convening Power

Eighty-two percent (82%) of all respondents believe that it is important or very important that the Bank use its convening power to the benefit of the CGIAR. From 68% (Science Council) to 87% (ExCo/members respondents) agreed with this assessment.

One respondent commented that success in this area should not depend solely on the abilities and personality of the individual(s) fulfilling the role, but also on how it is structured and supported. Another respondent suggested that the cost of this service should be paid by all donors.

## Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Respondents were given four possible ways in which the World Bank performance might be improved with respect to these roles:

- About half of respondents agreed that a CGIAR legal entity should be established that would be somewhat more autonomously from the World

Bank (57% all respondents). (51% to 67% of respondents in the five sub-groups agreed).

- About half of most sub –groups of respondents agreed that there is an inherent conflict between the Bank’s roles as major donor and manager of the CGIAR Secretariat, Directorship and Chair (48% all respondents). Four of the sub-groups rated this item in the 40-55% range. Science Council respondents were the one exception, with only 18% agreeing that there is a problem.
- Fewer than half of respondents thought it a high priority to maintain two-way exchanges between World Bank regional, country and sector strategists in agriculture and rural development (41% all respondents). Fifty-three percent (53%) of Board chair/center executive respondents selected this item, as did 47% of Science Council respondents.
- A similar picture emerges in regard to mutual gains in knowledge management (39% all respondents). From 28% (ExCo/Mem) to 50% (Challenge Program) of respondents selected this item.
- Sixteen percent (16%) of Board chairs/center executives think that no change is needed in the established roles.

In the comments attached to the question, respondents focused primarily on the Bank’s roles and responsibilities. The most important and/or frequently-stated of these were:

- A lack of clarity about the Bank’s current roles and responsibilities.
- The need for change in these roles, how they are delivered, and how the Bank relates to other parts of the CGIAR System. Comments included: give Bank more oversight responsibilities; CGIAR director should not act like a CEO but be consultative and coordinating; the Bank should play NO role in CGIAR’s domain of work and research; the CGIAR should be more independent of Bank influence; the Secretariat and the Alliance play parallel or competing roles in the system; etc.
- A need for greater transparency and professionalism – especially the need to avoid conflicts-of-interest (in both appearance and reality). The most common example noted is perceived conflicts between the Bank’s donor role, oversight, and governance responsibilities (this is also addressed in Section 7.2).

### **3.3 The Science Council**

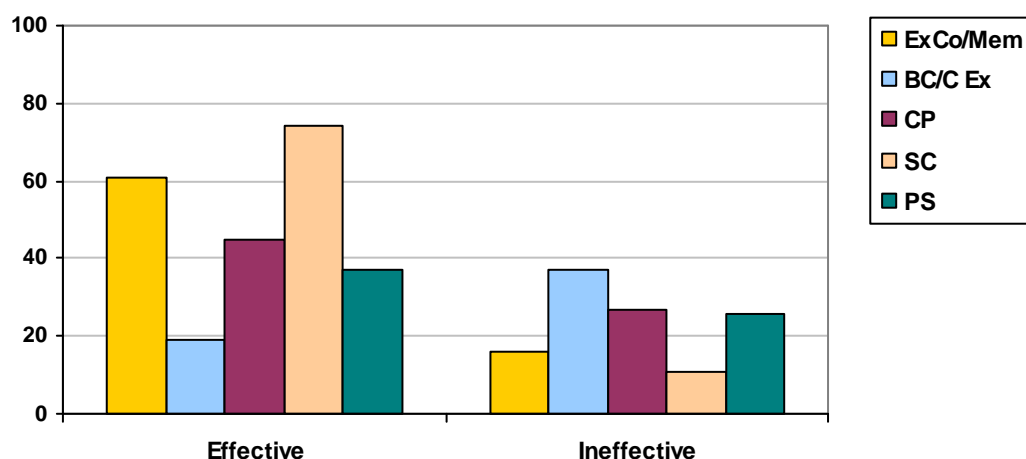
The Science Council acts as an independent scientific advisory body to the CGIAR. Its role is to help centers enhance the quality, relevance and impact of their research objectives. The importance of this role and whether the Science Council is fulfilling it effectively were the subjects of Questions 1 A-C.

## Importance and Effectiveness

Eighty-three (83%) of all respondents think the Science Council is important with respect to its impact on Center research (33%) or very important (50%). Science Council respondents agreed with this assessment (21% important; 79% very important). Respondents in the other groups gave the role of the Science Council an importance rating of from 92% (ExCo/Members) to 50% (scientists involved with the Challenge Programs).

Whether the Science Council is effective in this role is less clear. Seventy-four percent (74%) of Science Council respondents think it is effective in helping the Centers enhance the quality, relevance and impact of their research. However fewer than 50% of all respondents agreed with this assessment, as indicated in Figure 5, below. And a large minority believe that the Science Council is ineffective. As one can see from Figure 5 there is a significant difference of opinion about the Science Council.

**Figure 5**  
**Comparison of Effectiveness Ratings of the Science Council by Group of Respondent**



## Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

The major areas of concern over the importance and effectiveness of the Science Council fell into five inter-related categories:

- Mandate, roles and responsibilities This is not surprising, given the nature of the questions asked about the Science Council. Respondents offered over 130 comments on how the Council's mandate and/or performance might be improved. The vast majority of comments had to do with how the respondent interprets the Council's mandate and roles/responsibilities, whether these should be changed or strengthened, and how they should be implemented.

Because the suggestions were so wide-ranging, diverse and sometimes contradictory, only a few are noted here. The interested reader should read them in total. Respondents thought that the Science Council should (a) be more normative and strategic and less operational in its focus; (b) have “power” to make Centers focus on core needs; (c) should be advisory, only; (d) should be a proactive body for change; (e) should design, implement and oversee the system-wide and challenge programs; (f) be responsible for promoting joint research projects; (g) make sure that the Centers are doing *good science* that is also *relevant* to the ultimate beneficiaries in the developing world; and (h) have responsibility for strengthening the ethics review of research proposals (as per Question 5 of the survey).

Some of these concerns were also reflected in four of the suggestions given in Question 1C about how to improve the Science Council's performance:

- The Science Council should offer guidance and advice to Centers (53% all respondents). Fifty-five percent (55%) of Science Council respondents selected this option, as did between 56% (ExCo/Mem) and 38% (professional staff) of respondents in other groups.
- Science Council's role in facilitating research partnerships should be strengthened (52% all respondents). Forty-five percent (45%) of Science Council respondents agreed with this option, as did 77% of Challenge Program respondents.
- Science Council is conflicted between its support and evaluation roles (30% all respondents). About 1/3 of respondents in four of the groups agreed with this statement. Twenty percent (20%) of Science Council and 46% of Challenge Program respondents selected it.
- Science Council should have a greater role in resource allocation (25% all respondents). A relatively small number of respondents in each sub-group selected this option, ranging from 30% (Science Council and ExCo/Mem) to 8% (Challenge Program scientists).
- Relationships and coordination with other actors in the System, outside partners and stakeholders The most common concern, here, was whether the relationship with the Centers is as constructive as it could be. Some commented that it is too bureaucratic. Others thought that some of the work of the Science Council is duplicated by either or both of the Alliance and the CGIAR Secretariat.
- Insufficient or inappropriate resources Several respondents commented on the nature, quality and quantity of Science Council personnel (scientists and support staff). Some questioned whether those currently in the Science Council possess the knowledge and skills it needs to fulfil its mandate, role and responsibilities -- however these may be defined. Others praised member and staff quality and commitment. Some wondered whether Council membership is sufficiently aware of “CG research realities” to do an effective job. The lack of first hand knowledge of the Centers was noted by some.

Still others noted that the Council's organizational structure and financial resource levels do not allow it to fulfill even its current mandate let alone take on greater responsibilities such as visiting Centers regularly.

- Creativity, innovation and appropriate risk-taking. Several respondents commented that the Council is not sufficiently creative or innovative, lacks imagination, and/or is too conservative when it should be proactive in encouraging and supporting innovative approaches to research. This is not necessarily the consensus. In fact there is no clear consensus.
- The evaluation of research. One of the options given to respondents about how Science Council performance might be improved focused on its responsibility for evaluating research. Forty percent (40%) of all respondents agreed that some research is under-valued by the Council (although respondent comments did explain this further). This was the most frequently-selected option by board chairs and center DGs (46% of respondents), Challenge Program scientists (77%), and professional staff (50%). Only 20% of Science Council respondents agreed with the statement that there might be a problem with the approach of the Council to evaluation.

### 3.4 Gender and Diversity

The survey asked about gender and diversity in two contexts: (1) internal to the CGIAR system in the form of the *Gender and Diversity Program*; and (2) as these issues – especially gender – are incorporated into the work of the CGIAR and the Centers. In each case, respondents were asked to assess importance and effectiveness, and comment on how the current situation might be improved.

*The Gender and Diversity Program* focuses on how gender and diversity are handled within the CGIAR and the Centers, including staffing and professional development activities. It was administered as a unit of the System Office but after receiving a major grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation has become an autonomous program.

The *Participatory Research and Gender Analysis Program* is concerned with gender issues as they affect or are incorporated into agriculture research programs.

In addition, individual Centers may have their own gender and diversity activities and programs.

#### Importance and Effectiveness

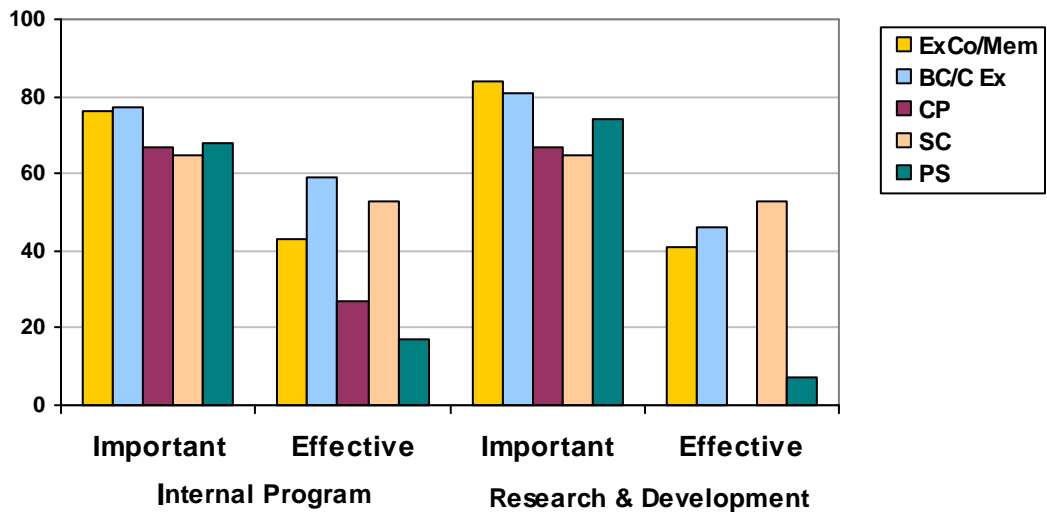
Seventy-four percent (74%) of all respondents judged gender and diversity issues as important or very important to the effectiveness of the CGIAR and Centers. Positive opinion about the importance of the integration of gender issues into research programs was slightly higher at 79%. The sub-groups were generally in line with this assessment.

Responses were mixed about whether the CGIAR and Centers have been effective in achieving gender and diversity objectives. Only forty-five (45%) of all respondents believe that the objectives have been achieved in an effective way. A significant difference of opinion was again evident. There was a 32- point gap between the low and high values (27% of Challenge Program respondents, to 59% of board chair/center executive respondents). Forty-three percent (43%) of the ExCo/Members and 17% of the professional staff of the System thought that the CGIAR and Centers have been effective in achieving gender and diversity objectives.

Only 35% of all respondents thought that the Centers have been effective in incorporating a gender perspective into research and development activities, and another 43% of all respondents chose “not clearly effective or ineffective”. There was also a significant difference of opinion among the sub-groups. Around 50% of Science Council and board chair/centre executive respondents thought the Centers have been effective in incorporating a gender perspective (46% and 53%), whereas only 7% of professional staff and 0% of Challenge Program leaders agreed. It is interesting that 80% of Challenge Program leaders opted for “not clearly effective or ineffective,” and half of the professional staff thought the Centers have been ineffective at incorporating a gender perspective into research and development activities.

The relationship between importance and effectiveness for these two perspectives on gender and diversity are depicted in Figure 6, below.

**Figure 6**  
**Gender and Diversity Programs**  
**Importance & Effectiveness by Group of Respondents**



## Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

(a) CGIAR /Center approaches to achieving internal program objectives. Two options were listed in Question 14 C:

- Implement gender and diversity principles more strongly (56% of all respondents agreed). The percentage of respondents who selected this option ranged from 34% (Board chairs/center executives) to 78% (professional staff). Sixty-three percent (63%) of the ExCo/Mem population sub-group agreed.
- Collect system-wide gender and diversity human resources information in disaggregated form (53% all respondents agreed). Seventy percent (70%) of Challenge Program respondents and 76% of Science Council respondents agreed, while only 44% to 54% of those in the other groups agreed.

Forty-six percent (46%) of board chairs/center executives thought that no change in the current situation is needed; 27% of Science Council respondents agreed.

The majority of comments made in relation to Question 14 C fell into the following categories:

- Roles and responsibilities (the perennial issue). About 15% of those commenting said that it is unclear who in the CGIAR system is truly accountable for developing, implementing and evaluating compliance and performance of the gender and diversity policies.
- Need for real cultural change. Some observed that for gender and diversity objectives to be adopted and effective, must be incorporated into the organizational culture – i.e., accepted as a normal part of CGIAR / Center life. The need for cultural change was stated or implied in about 25% of comments.
- Gender and diversity versus commitment to the “best”. Over 30% of comments referred to a potential conflict between a commitment to fairness and representativeness, on the one hand, and to making sure that the most highly qualified and capable individuals are available to do the best work (science) possible, on the other.
- Lack of resources. A few respondents commented on the lack of financial and other resources to advance the gender and diversity agenda – both inside the CGIAR and with respect to research and development activities.

(b) Incorporating a gender perspective into research and development. Question 14 E offered respondents five options to begin the “discussion”:

- Provision of training and guidance materials / best practices on gender and diversity in agriculture (59% all respondents agreed that this is a priority). Between 50% (board chairs/center executives) and 69% (ExCo/Mem) of sub-group respondents supported this option, with one exception (Science Council – 39%).
- The program should deal with other diversity and equity issues in addition to gender (46% all respondents agreed). Forty-two percent (42%) to 54% of respondents from four sub-groups selected this option. It was selected by 35% of professional staff.
- There should be a written gender policy and strategy to cover CGIAR and the Centers (43% of all respondents agreed). Only thirty percent (30%) of board chairs and centre executives selected this item, compared with 65% of professional staff, and 50% of respondents in the other groups.
- More gender disaggregated data and performance indicators should be collected in the CGIAR and Center performance measurement system (43% all respondents agreed). Twenty percent (20%) of board chairs/center executives think this is a good idea (lowest), in contrast with Challenge Program leaders and the professional staff at 68% and 59%, respectively. Forty-four percent (44%) of Science Council respondents indicated they are in favour of this option.
- Establish specific accountabilities system-wide to address the needs of rural women and girls (41% all respondents agreed). The board chair/center executive (34%), and the Science Council (39%) sub-groups selected this option least frequently. It was most popular with Challenge Program and professional staff respondents (50% and 59%).

Issues about the *Participatory Research and Gender Analysis Program* generally paralleled those discussed with respect to the internal CGIAR program, especially in two areas. (1) Which System actor should be responsible for designing, developing, implementing and assessing any gender (diversity) policies and programs in agricultural research and development? (2) A gender (and diversity) perspective must become part of corporate culture – in this context, this means that the perspective should be fully integrated into research priority-setting and planning, and performance evaluation as well as into individual projects.

Some other interesting comments were:

- The visible support of co-sponsors and partners for the incorporation of gender (and possibly diversity) approaches and perspectives would be very helpful;
- All projects and programs should be evaluated from the perspective of the impacts they have on women *and* children, in recognition of the fact

that women are the primary actors in agriculture in many countries and cultures;

- “We have talked enough – now is time for action!” “Move on from planning and principles to implementation”;
- A special fund should be set up for research projects with strong gender-based elements; and
- There is a real lack of expertise in using a gender perspective to do sound research.

## 4.0 Partnerships

Questions 15 through 20 asked respondents to assess the importance and effectiveness of the several partnerships in which the CGIAR and/of the Centers are involved, and what might be done to improve these relationships. Possible CGIAR and Center partners include *inter alia*: National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), Agricultural Research Institutes (ARIs), non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), and the private sector.

Respondents were also asked to assess the importance and effectiveness of Center-to-Center partnerships; and the Alliance which helps to facilitate collaboration among the Centers, and with partners.

### 4.1 The importance of partnerships

Partnering is the essence of the CGIAR System. The CGIAR was founded in 1971 as a “strategic partnership of countries, international and regional organizations and private foundations” to support the work of fifteen international agriculture research centers (2006 *Annual Report*). Over the intervening 37 years, the number, variety and complexity of these partnerships have grown significantly.

### 4.2 The Alliance

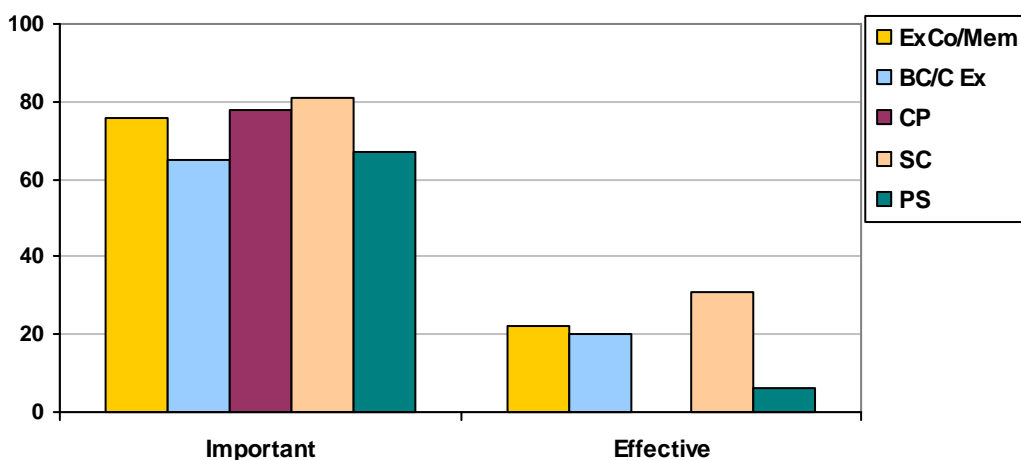
The Alliance was put in place by the Centers in 2005 to facilitate joint initiatives that should, in turn, increase the impact of the Centers’ ability to alleviate poverty in a more effective and efficient manner. The Alliance also provides the Centers with some joint services. Survey participants were asked to assess the importance of the Alliance to the CGIAR and the affiliated Centers and whether it has been effective in achieving its objectives. A third question asked participants to comment on the future of the Alliance.

#### Importance and Effectiveness

Seventy-two percent (72%) of all respondents think the Alliance is important to CGIAR System. But only 19% believe it has been effective in achieving its objectives and another 44% reported that they are unsure about whether the

Alliance is effective or not – leaving 37% who believe that it has been ineffective. Figure 7 depicts the importance and effectiveness ratings for the Alliance by population sub-group. The consistent gap between importance and effectiveness ratings is striking.

**Figure 7**  
**Comparison of Alliance Importance and Effectiveness**  
**by Population Sub-group**



### The Future of the Alliance

The options given in Question 15 C dealt, in one way or another, with the Alliance’s roles and responsibilities now and in the future.

- The continuing need for a coordinated approach by the Centers. The Alliance was created to fill this role. Whether the Alliance remains in its current form, is altered, disbanded or merged with another CGIAR-related “corporate entity,” the need for joint action will continue to be critical for the success of the CGIAR and the Centers
  - Two options dealt with the survival of the Alliance as an entity. (a) Forty-one percent (41%) of all respondents thought that having the Alliance join the Executive Council to form a new joint CGIAR Board might be a good idea. Forty-eight percent (48%) of Centers’ board chairs and center executives and 25% of the professional staff agreed. (b) About a quarter of all respondents believe that the Alliance is temporary (range = from 11% / Science Council to 30% / board chairs and center executives). There is no clear consensus.
  - It was also suggested by some that: (a) the Alliance’s administrative functions should be merged with those of the Systems Office (55% of all respondents agreed); or (b) it should be strengthened and given more (unspecified) responsibilities (46% all respondents); or (c) its mediation and other roles should be strengthened (56% all respondents). Again opinion is polarized.

- **'Form follows Function'**. Assuming the Alliance remains in place, what organizational form it might take and how it should be organized was also discussed. Should it continue to be a creature of the Centers, "at their service"? Or should it become a legal entity with a broader membership? Does it need an executive director and board independent of the Centers to be effective? And, so on.

### **4.3 NARS, ARIs, NGOs and private sector partnerships**

#### **Importance and Effectiveness**

##### **(a) Partnerships with National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS)**

A National Agricultural Research System is the collection of public and private institutions in a given country that are devoted, full or part-time, to agricultural research and promoting the country's national research agenda. Question 16 A – C of the survey dealt with CGIAR / Center partnerships with these organizations.

All respondent groups indicated that they believe these partnerships to be important or very important (88% for ExCo/Mem respondents to 95% for Science Council respondents and the professional staff). In contrast, only 45% of all respondents think they are effective. Those most closely involved – board chairs and center executives, and the Science Council – rated partnerships with NARS as 60% and 52% effective or very effective.

##### **(b) Partnerships with Agricultural Research Institutes (ARIs)**

The percentage of respondents who believe CGIAR and Center partnerships with ARIs are important or very important is high at 86% for all respondents. The board chair/center executive sub-group gave a 100% importance rating, and the Science Council 79%. In contrast, only 43% of all respondents think these partnerships are effective or very effective (54% of board chairs/center executives and 56% of Science Council respondents).

##### **(c) Partnerships with NGOs**

Fifty-nine percent (58%) of all respondents believe that partnerships with NGOs are important. With the exception of the Challenge Program (91%), respondents in the sub-groups agreed within 5 percentage points. On the other hand, only 20% of all respondents think CGIAR/Center – NGO partnerships are effective.

##### **(d) Partnerships with the private sector**

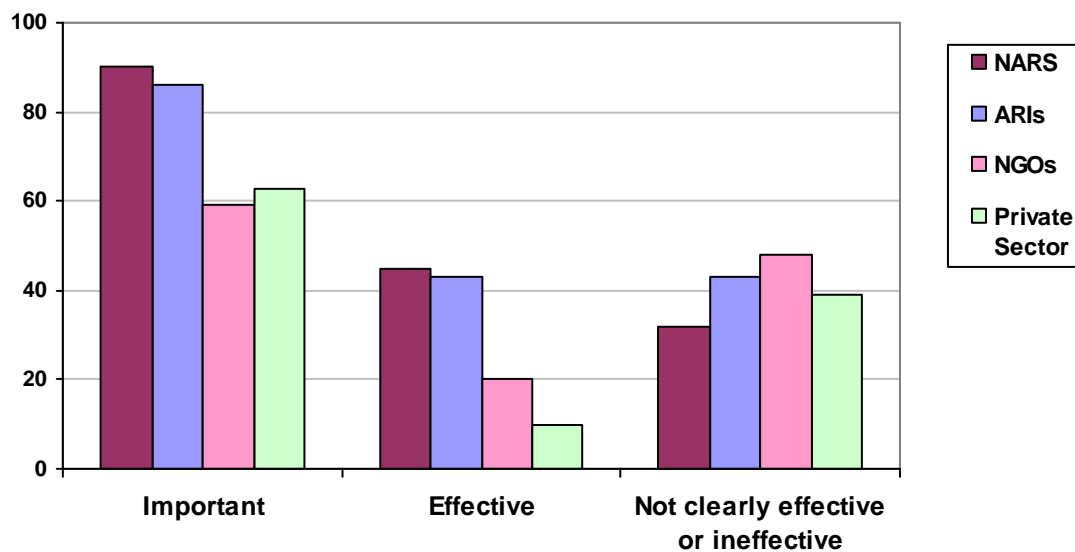
Sixty-three percent (63%) of all respondents think partnerships with the private sector are important. Both Science Council respondents and the professional staff gave a somewhat-lower importance rating at 41% and

45%, respectively. Effectiveness? Only 10% of respondents think partnerships with the private sector are effective (12% of board chairs and center executives and 36% of Science Council respondents think they are effective).

Figure 8 depicts the importance / effectiveness perspective on the NARS, ARI, NGO and private sector partnerships. The “not clearly effective or ineffective” rating has been included because it was selected so frequently by individuals in all of the groups.

It is unclear why this should be the case. Perhaps there is confusion about the nature, value and workings of these partnerships. Or, there may be a pressing need to assess the partnership strategy and its performance. Both of these possibilities are supported by respondent comments. Whatever the reason, the implication is that respondents were not quite willing to describe these relationships as *ineffective*.

**Figure 8**  
**Importance & Effectiveness of Partnerships with NARS, ARIs, NGOs and Private Sector**



**Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments**

Respondents were again asked to select one or more options and to comment on how the current situation might be improved. The options and most of the comments dealt with one or more of the following:

- The need to provide policy and/or strategic framework(s) for partnering. Between 54% and 62% of respondents thought that developing effective policies and strategic plans for partnering should receive the highest consideration (for NARS and private sector partnerships, respectively). The

majority of comments indicated that this should be a priority if partnerships are to be effective vehicles for the CGIAR and Centers.

There were differing opinions on whether there should be one framework or several – after all, the nature of these partnerships and the capacities of various partners *are different*. Respondents also disagreed about which entity should take responsibility for developing and implementing these approaches – the CGIAR/Executive Council, the Centers, the Science Council or Challenge Programs. Some stressed that partnerships must be encouraged but not forced if they are to be effective.

- What else can be done to harness and support these relationships, and make them more effective? Various options were given in the questions and respondents offered more. Some were: (a) strengthen Center services to NARS (47% all respondents); (b) encourage donors to fund NARS to purchase CGIAR services (37% all respondents); (c) fund more joint CGIAR-ARI projects and programs (75% all respondents); and (d) invest more resources in communication with NGOs (57% all respondents).

Respondents offered several additional suggestions, including:

- (a) Make a concerted effort to understand and take into account the differences in the nature and capacities of various partners, and the possible impact on effectiveness;
  - (b) Help existing and potential partners build needed capacity;
  - (c) Be “up-front” about partners’ expectations and who will be responsible for what;
  - (d) Keep in mind that cooperation depends on mutual interests;
  - (e) Support exchanges and sabbatical leave for scientists in Centers and ARIs; and
  - (f) Change the corporate cultures of the Centers and Science Council to make them more partnership-friendly and capable, perhaps by providing incentives.
  - (g) Training and development strategies to increase knowledge about and skills in partnering... etc.
- Partners should have a role (or stronger role) in CGIAR and/or Center governance. Between 38% and 53% of respondents thought that partner groups should be involved in CGIAR and/or Center governance (note, this option was offered to respondents in the “C” sections of the questions about NARS, NGOs and private sector partnerships, but not for ARI partnerships).
  - Assessing and rewarding performance. Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents to Question 18 C (ARI partnerships) thought

networking/partnering should be incorporated into the performance measure system. The importance and effectiveness of performance assessment as a motivator and management tool were the focus of a significant number of comments, but were especially prevalent in the discussions of ARI and NGO partnerships. Some respondents seem to be referring to *the* performance measurement system as in the option presented in Question 18 C, whereas others were referring to performance assessment, more generally. A few respondents, in contrast, thought that performance measurement should not be applied to partnering.

Performance measurement with reference to the survey as a whole is discussed in Section 5.2.

- Some other issues. A few respondents were concerned about possible duplication of work and/or administrative activities among partners (especially with respect to ARIs and NGOs). Others noted that potential partners are competing with the Centers for money and personnel.

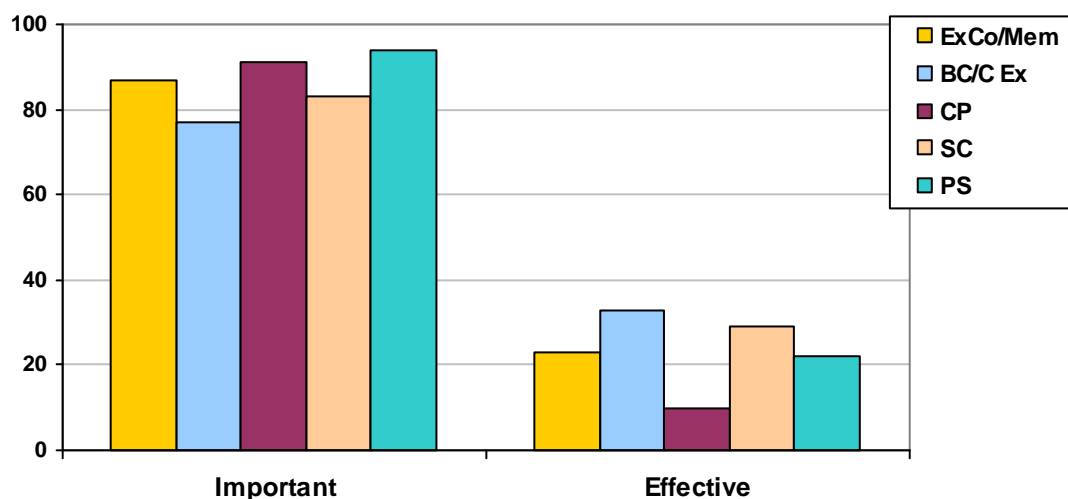
Those commenting on partnerships with the private sector noted that dealing with small and medium businesses (SMEs) is quite different from dealing with large business. Forty-eight percent (48%) of those responding to the question on private sector partnerships supported the suggestion that the CGIAR should be “more flexible in forming partnerships that are aimed at shared private goods if they are judged to be in the long-run interests of the poor.”

#### **4.4 Center-to-Center Partnerships**

##### **Importance and Effectiveness**

Eighty-five percent (85%) of all respondents think Center-to-Center partnerships are important or very important. On the other hand, only 26% believe they are effective. As with the other partnerships, a high number of respondents indicated that they are unclear about the effectiveness of these partnerships (42% of ExCo/Member respondents to 70% of Challenge Program respondents).

**Figure 9**  
**Importance and Effectiveness**  
**Center-to-Center Partnerships by Sub-Group**



### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Five options for improving Center-to-Center partnerships were listed, two of which would affect Center personnel directly:

- Increase mobility of scientists across Centers (53% all respondents agree).
- Increase joint appointments (49% all respondents agree). Respondents in all sub-groups rated this and the previous option in the mid-range (40-60%).
- Fund more inter-Center workshops or publications (48% all respondents). Seventy percent (70%) of Challenge Program scientists selected this option, while the remainder selected it between 40-60% of the time.
- The Alliance should continue to have an active role in promoting partnering (65% of all respondents agree). Seventy-two percent (72%) of professional staff and 85% of Challenge Program respondents agree. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents in the board chair/center executive and Science Council sub-groups also agree (see Section 4.2 on the Alliance).
- Recognize that partnerships are appropriate only between some Centers and in relatively few ways (26% all respondents). There is considerable disagreement on this. Forty-one percent (41%) of board chairs and center executives selected this option. Respondents in the other groups selected it between 10-30% of the time. (Respondents made a similar point in their comments with respect to the other partnerships assessed in the survey.)

Based on the respondents' comments, the issues identified with respect to Center-to-Center partnerships are essentially the same as those identified in relation to the other partnerships. The most important were:

- The continuing need for strategic thinking – i.e., to approach partnering more strategically (policy, strategic frameworks, priority-setting, etc.), and to identify effective vehicles to support collective action.
- The importance of having a results-based and performance-based focus with respect to partnering (i.e., have performance-based incentives; do performance measurement and assessment; and reward performance and the achievement of results/ outcomes).
- Concerns about the overlapping or duplication of services (Alliance, CGIAR Secretariat) and, possibly, duplication of research efforts on the part of the Centers.
- Concerns about competition between/among Centers for financial and other resources. This and the concern about duplication or overlap were seen as pressing with respect to Center-to-Center partnerships.

## 5.0 Managing for Results

Very little was said directly about performance management or managing for results – except for the general need to be more results-focused (see suggestions for improvement under the next sub-section).

### 5.1 The Priority-setting Process

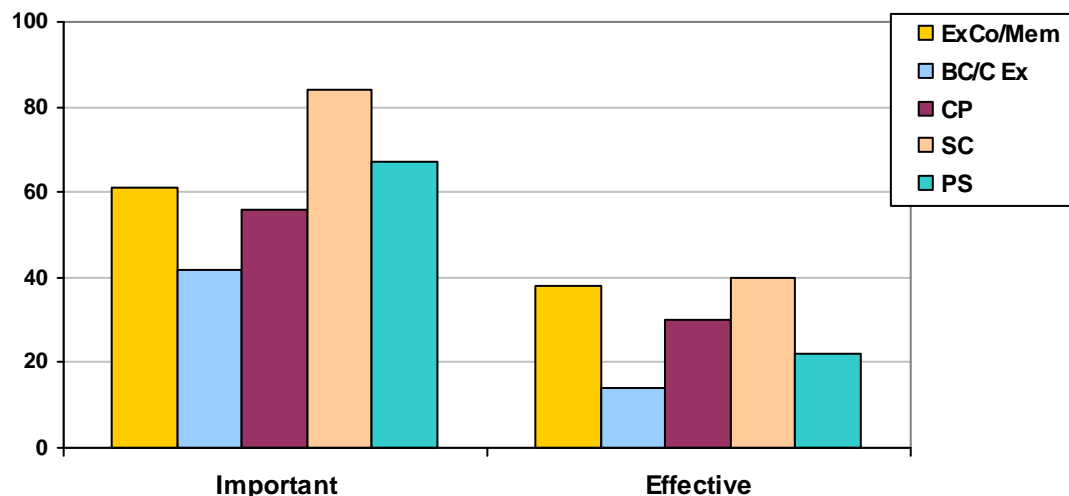
The Science Council has led an exercise to define research priorities for the CGIAR and Centers. The exercise identified some 20 CGIAR priorities and five priority research areas (see section 2.0). Question 2 A-B asked respondents what they thought of the priority-setting exercise, and whether the resulting priorities are likely to provide an effective guide for resource allocation and other decision-making.

#### Importance and Effectiveness

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of all respondents thought that the Science Council-led priority-setting exercise has been important for the CGIAR and Centers. In contrast the board chairs and center executives gave the exercise a relatively low importance rating at 42%. Science Council, ExCo/Member and professional staff respondents rated it higher (84%, 61% and 67%, respectively). *However, only 20% of all respondents thought that the resulting priorities will be effective as guides to resource allocation and other decision-making.* [Whether respondents thought that decisions about resource allocation should be more or less performance-based is addressed at the end of Section 5.2 on performance measurement.]

Figure 10 illustrates the relationships between the importance of the priority-setting exercise and the effectiveness of the resulting priorities by population sub-group.

**Figure 10**  
**Importance and Effectiveness**  
**Priority-setting Exercise and Effectiveness of Resulting Priorities**  
**By Sub-Group**



The vast majority of respondents in all sub-groups believe that they are generally or very familiar with CGIAR/Center priorities (96% all respondents or 47% detailed knowledge and 49% generally familiar).

### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Most respondents appear to be convinced of the need to set priorities. However, the usefulness of the Council-led exercise and the resulting priorities was questioned.

With respect to the priority-setting process, some of the most important or commonly-noted issues were:

- The importance of vision – i.e., that a new vision for the CGIAR and Centers should have been developed *before* the priority-setting exercise was undertaken. [See Section 5.3 on vision.]
- Who should have orchestrated and participated in the process, and whose priorities should take precedence? Some respondents pointed out that deciding on priorities and which should receive funding are the prerogatives of donors (“priorities follow the money”), not of the Science Council, scientists or the development community. Others felt that the priorities will simply be

used to justify resource allocations based on complex center and partner-specific priorities, or donor and international politics. These views call into question whether these particular priorities will be as useful as some had hoped for guiding resource allocation.

- The need to make the process and resulting priorities more results/outcome focused.
- Complete the process! Suggestions on what still needs to be done were wide-ranging, and included: complete framework plans; deal with how to fund the priority-setting process; and manage the related administrative burden and complications associated with applying priorities to 15 independent centres.

Most comments dealt with the priorities and not the process, however.

- Some respondents stated or implied that one or more of what they believe to be the proper characteristics of priorities were not being respected (not strategic enough, not broad enough, must be weighted or ranked, etc.)
- A small number suggested that the priorities ought to be dropped in favour of one of the following: a set of core competencies the System wishes to maintain; outcome-oriented development challenges against which resources could be mobilized; and positions of intent.
- A number of respondents commented that the current priorities are unrealistic and/or inadequate. For example:
  - They should be linked clearly to the big development challenges;
  - There should be both regional and global priorities;
  - They do not adequately reflect the key challenges facing the Centers
  - They are too narrowly focused on science and not enough on development (or, they should support a balance between science-driven research and directly-oriented development research);
  - They are too complex to be communicated easily to those involved directly and other stakeholders; and
  - There are too many to be meaningful.

Do the priorities need to be revised? The three suggestions made in Question 2D addressed this issue.

- The system needs to revise its priorities in the near future (55% all respondents). Between 44-67% of respondents in each group selected this option.
- Even if changes are needed, re-opening System priorities in the near future is too expensive and disruptive (29% all respondents agreed). From 12% (professional staff) to 38% (board chairs/center executives) of respondents selected this option. It is interesting that nearly 40% of Science Council respondents also agreed with this option.

- No change is needed (22% all respondents). Between 20 and 30% of respondents in the groups selected this option, with one exception (Challenge Program respondents at 8%).

A few respondents also commented on how frequently priorities ought to be changed (every five years, every ten years; as needed). A couple thought that the current set of priorities is broad enough to accommodate some modification.

## 5.2 Performance Measurement and Management

An effective performance measurement system has several elements. It:

- (1) establishes a balanced set of performance measures and indicators that cover both the quantitative and non-quantitative aspects of performance;
- (2) gathers and analyzes accurate performance information;
- (3) evaluates the information and identifies possible concrete steps to correct or improve performance;
- (4) ensures that effective steps are taken to improve performance; and
- (5) reports on progress against expectations.

Respondents were not asked explicitly to assess the CGIAR/Centers' performance measurement system. As a consequence, the contents of this section have been drawn from several different parts of the survey.

### Commitment to Performance Measurement

Most respondents agreed that a performance measurement system is a useful, even essential, tool in support of good management. However, they did not all agree that the performance measurement system now in place is effective.

Respondent comments addressed the following questions: (a) whether the existing performance measurement system is sufficiently comprehensive; (b) whether the existing indicators are/are seen to be adequate; and (c) what remains to be done to have a workable performance measurement system. A fourth question about the application of performance measurement is also addressed in this section – whether the allocation of Bank resources should be performance-based (Survey Question 11C).

### Issues and Respondent Comments

- Is the System comprehensive enough? Respondents suggested that a number of areas be incorporated into the performance measurement system. Some thought certain management processes and activities had been neglected, whereas others thought that the achievement of results and/or outcomes had not received due consideration.

Areas respondents thought should be incorporated into the existing System included:

- The effectiveness of gender and diversity programs, and the impact of projects and programs on women and children (Question 14f);
- CGIAR and Center networking and partnering activities (Questions 16-18); and
- Co-sponsors – their involvement and level of commitment (Question 13).

A few suggested that Challenge Program performance should be assessed on a different basis from that of the Centers because of the broad and complex nature of the issues they are addressing. Some wanted to see the system's capacity to assess scientific performance strengthened. Finally, being able to assess whether the CGIAR and Centers' programs and projects are delivering results that have the desired impact (i.e., are they supporting or doing good agricultural science research that benefits the poor) was considered most important by many (Question 6).

- Are existing indicators adequate? A number of respondents focused on the adequacy of existing indicators. Respondents commented that existing indicators are too arbitrary; too time consuming to apply; have yet to be proven; and may not reflect performance accurately. Others stressed that they should be applicable System-wide and to both programs and projects to be useful.

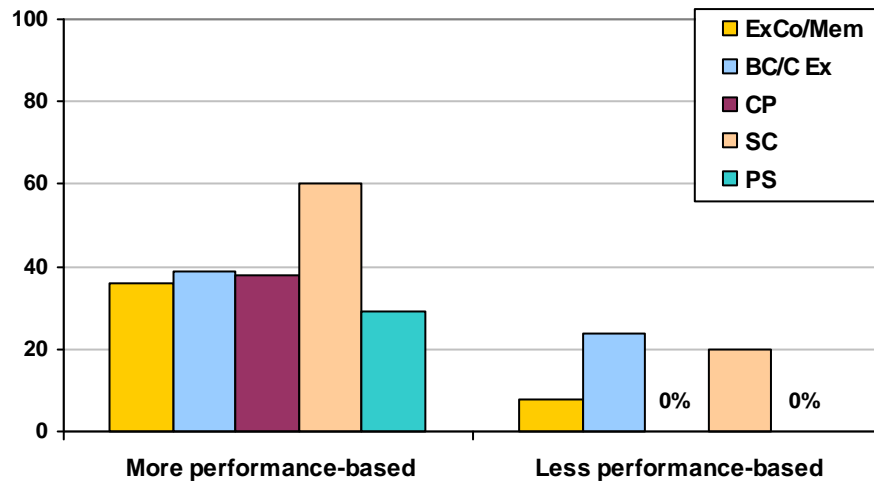
Again, the need for indicators to be relevant to both science and development was stressed, as was the need that they relate to real impacts and outcomes (e.g., they should “be linked to the impact on poverty and not to academic outputs such as papers published or scientists' reputations”; or, they should “be focused more broadly on development rather than on the more narrow Science Council priorities”).

- What remains to be done? Respondents did not have a lot to say about this – but included:
  - The need to continue to improve performance indicators, and to align them with goals for the systems as desired by all the members, not just those of the World Bank
  - Increase incentives and rewards (funding, recognition, etc.) for good performance (e.g. 68% of respondents agreed with respect to Center partnering); and
  - Complete and refine financial performance indicators at the Center level and communicate these to donors and co-sponsors.
- Should the allocation of Bank contributions be performance-based? As part of Question 11C, respondents were asked whether the World Bank should change its method of allocating financial resources to be more or less

performance-based. The response was not overwhelmingly in favour of either option.

- Just over one-third of all respondents agreed that the Bank's method of allocating financial resources should be more performance-based, as did three of the five groups within two percentage points. Sixty percent (60%) of Science Council respondents agreed, while only 29% of professional staff did.
- Even fewer thought that the allocation of funds should be less performance-based (13% all respondents), although the range was greater between the groups (no Challenge Program leader or professional staff member selected this option, whereas 24% of board chairs and center executives did).

**Figure 11**  
**Changing the Method of Allocating Contributions**  
**to make it more Performance Based?**  
**Opinion by Sub-group**



Some comments were attached to these two options.

- Some thought that all funds should be allocated against performance, whereas others thought only directed funds should be (i.e., funds used for targeted programs and projects, but not for unrestricted funds). One commented allocating funds against performance has to be seen as a fair process based on reliable information by all those involved in or affected by it. Another thought that resource allocation should be *informed* by performance assessments as well as other factors.
- *One respondent commented that it does not make sense to go through an annual performance measurement exercise unless the results are used to allocate resources (he/she pointed out that funding still seems*

*to be driven by historical, institutional political biases).* Another asked that performance criteria should be communicated before the previous year end.

### **Moving beyond Measurement to Result-based Management**

Possibly the most important comment made in response to these two options had to do with the ultimate purpose of having a performance measurement system and the need to move beyond it to a fully-integrated performance management system. One important aspect of this move from assessment to management is the realization that performance information should not be used primarily to *punish*, but to motivate organizations (networks and centers) to identify problems so that they can be overcome or managed in the interests of achieving desired results and outcomes.

### **5.3 The Importance of Vision**

Throughout the Survey, many respondents called for the CGIAR to be more “visionary” and/or to reconsider its current vision in light of the agriculture and development realities of the Twenty-first Century. Many recognized that effective priority-setting, and performance management and assessment have to be rooted in a shared vision of how the CGIAR and its constituent actors and stakeholders see themselves, now and into the future.

Question 24 asked respondents to write about the kind of organization they would like to see the CGIAR and Centers become. *One hundred and sixty-five (165) individuals or more than 80% of the survey population answered this question. They offered nearly 150 different visions of the future of the System – some of which could be compatible and others that, clearly, are not.*

With few exceptions, they did not really offer “vision statements”, per se. When done well, developing these characteristics will involve serious collaborative-but-disciplined effort on the parts of those who must share the vision.

All the usual suspects appear, but take on special meaning with reference to the CGIAR System, its context, character and focus. For example:

The CGIAR should:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ❖ Become more centralized              | ❖ Become more decentralized         |
| ❖ Be more corporate                    | ❖ Be more networked                 |
| ❖ Have stronger governance structures  | ❖ Have weaker governance structures |
| ❖ Be more aware of its successful past | ❖ Be significantly new              |
| ❖ Stay unchanged                       | ❖ Be changed (a little/greatly)     |
| ❖ Be changed                           | ❖ Be replaced                       |
| ❖ Focus on excellence in science       | ❖ Focus on the needs of the poor    |
| ❖ Be science- & technology-driven      | ❖ Be development-driven             |

## **6.0 The State of Reform and Capacity for Future Reform**

Several survey questions examined the current state and future of reform in the CGIAR System. Questions 8 and 9 A-D focused on reforms to governance, and on what changes might still be needed and how urgently. Questions 21 A and B asked whether the collection of reforms that have been implemented from 2002 to 2007 have been important to the relevance and effectiveness of the CGIAR System, and if they have been implemented effectively. Impediments to change and how they might be dealt with were the subjects of Questions 21 C and 23). Question 22 focused on what reforms could most improve the benefits or reduce costs of CGIAR system. Each of these questions is addressed in turn.

### **6.1 Reform of CGIAR Governance**

#### **(a) Effectiveness of CGIAR Governance since 2002**

The general consensus is that the overall governance of the CGIAR has been moderately effective since 2002 (74% all respondents). Respondents in the ExCo/member sub-group gave an effectiveness rating of 86%, followed by the Science Council and professional staff at 76% and 74%, respectively. Sixty-three percent (63%) of board chair/center executive respondents and between 53 and 44% of Science Council and Challenge Program respondents agreed.

The most important issues raised in response to this question were also raised in relation to other survey questions; they include:

- The lack of clear mandates, roles and responsibilities;
- Reforms have been costly and have added to administrative burden;
- Finding a workable, effective balance between centralization and decentralization continues to be difficult and contentious;
- The lack of an effective balance has given rise to assorted difficulties with priority-setting, resource allocation and decision-making, more generally; financial oversight; a too-high level of complexity; increased costs associated with the current governance system/structure, duplication, and so on);
- The involvement and commitment (or lack thereof) on the part of some key actors and stakeholders is worrisome.

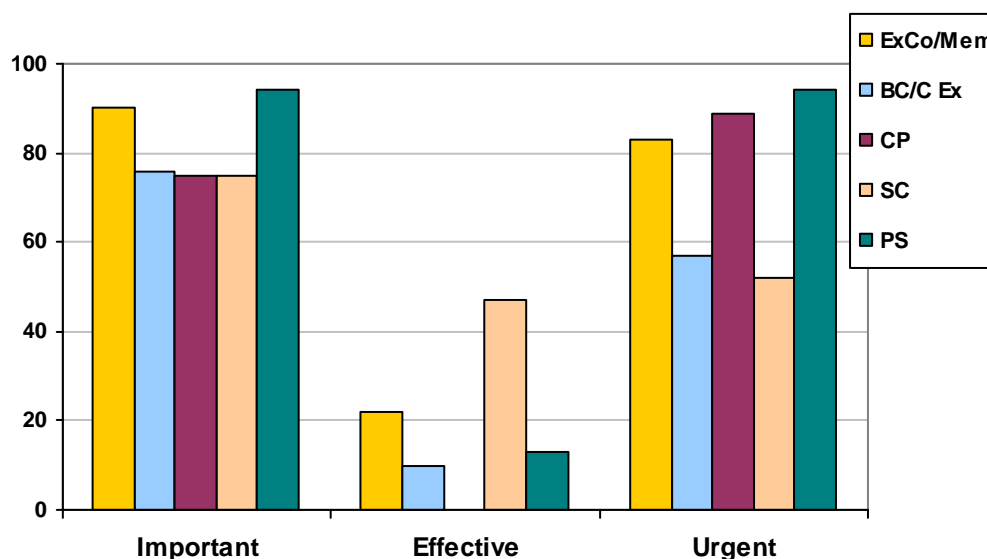
#### **(b) Assessment of Governance Reform Attempts to 2007**

A significant majority of respondents think the reforms have been important or very important (84% all respondents). About 75% of Science Council, Challenge Program, and board chair/council executive

respondents agreed. ExCo/Member respondents rated importance at 90%. *The reforms to governance were rated significantly lower in terms of effectiveness (19% all respondents). Seventy-four percent (74%) of all respondents think further changes to the CGIAR governance are urgent or very urgent.*

The three parameters of importance, effectiveness and urgency are compared by respondent group in Figure 12.

**Figure 12**  
**Importance, Effectiveness & Urgency of Governance Reform**  
**A Comparison by Population Sub-Group**



### Changes to Governance Still Needed

Respondents had a significant number of different (and sometimes contrary) suggestions about future changes. Most fell into three areas: (1) finding an effective balance between centralized control and Center independence; (2) improving co-ordination and relationships between System actors; and (3) improving governance / management structures and practices.

- Finding an effective balance. This is the classic dichotomy – centralization (and standardization) versus decentralization (and flexibility). It is interesting that where ever the respondents fell on the continuum, they seem to have similar concerns about CGIAR governance. For example, nearly all of them stressed the need for stronger leadership and better decision-making; the lack of consistency in policies and practices; the lack of capacity for governance, financial management, oversight, policy-making, evaluation and audit; and so on. And, most also recognized the importance of flexibility and a certain degree of Center independence.

But they differed considerably about where the responsibility for and capacity to respond to some or all of the issues they discussed should rest. A number thought the Executive Council and its committees with the support of the CGIAR Secretariat are the most likely candidates. Others pointed to the Alliance, some kind of “regional governance system,” or center boards. Still others thought at least some key capacities should be found throughout the network, “at every level”. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most pressing issue in reference to this question seemed to be the need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of CGIAR System actors, partners, co-sponsors, and other stakeholders.

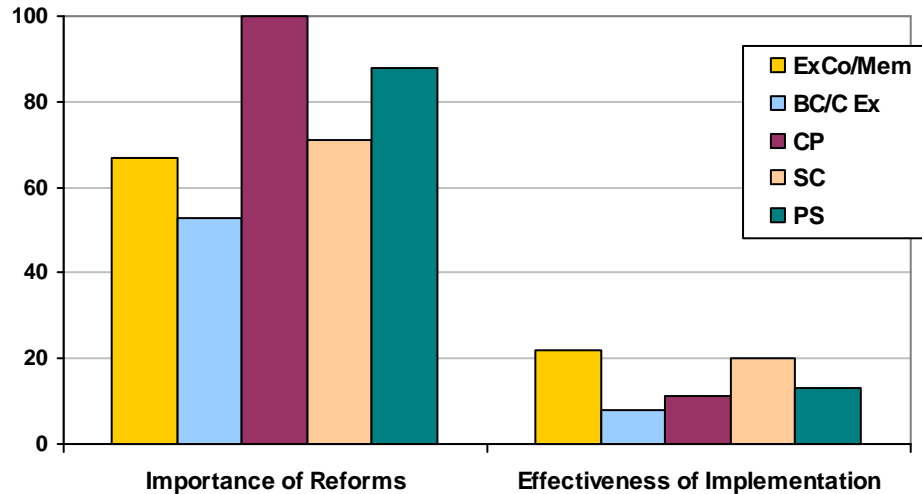
- Improving the coordination and inter-relationships between System actors, and between the System and its external stakeholders. A number of respondents commented on the lack of coordination across the system overall, and between the System and its external stakeholders (partners, co-sponsors, donors). Others focused on the need to increase coordination between the Science Council, the CGIAR Secretariat and other System Office units. A few suggested that coordination could be improved if System actors and external stakeholders were better aware of each others’ challenges. Some thought that strong efforts have to be taken to increase and/or improve communication between and among the System actors.
- Improving management structures and practices. The greatest number and variety of suggestions on what changes still need to be made fell into this category. Around 15% of all comments stressed the need to increase transparency throughout the System. Others thought that governance processes and structures needed to be streamlined and simplified – they should be “only as complex as is needed to do the job!” Still others thought the answer lay in improved capacity through good appointment and staffing practices (board members, staff should be in place because of ability, not politics) and/or effective training and development strategies. Some recommended stronger supervision of the CG Secretariat on governance and financial issues. And, there were others.

## **6.2 Impact of the Reforms to the CGIAR System, 2002 to 2007**

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of respondents thought that the 2002-07 reform effort has been important or very important to the relevance and effectiveness of the CGIAR. On the other hand, *only 20% of respondents thought the changes were implemented effectively.*

Figure 13

**Importance of Reforms 2002-2007 in Comparison with Effectiveness of Implementing Changes – by Sub-Group**



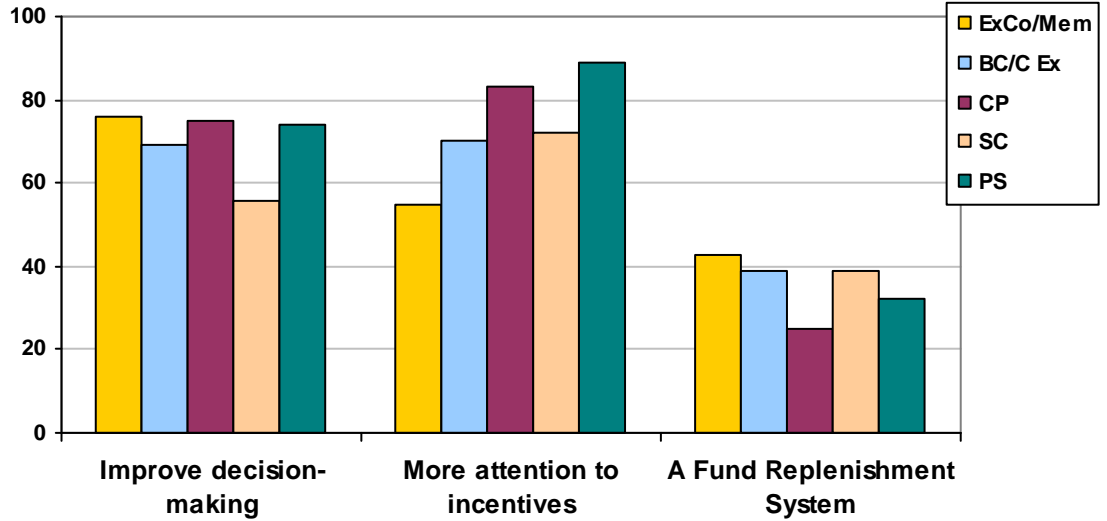
**6.3 Capacity for Change and Overcoming the Impediments and Barriers**

Question 21C suggested three options to improve the System’s capacity to change. Each has been mentioned in comments to other questions in the Survey as well. They are:

- Improve the decision-making process in the CGIAR System (73% all respondents).
- Give more attention to incentives, especially to aligning the incentives of individual Centers with the partnership as a whole (68% all respondents).
- Institute a fund replenishment system (40% all respondents).

Figure 14 summarizes preference ratings for these options by population sub-group

**Figure 14**  
**Increasing the Capacity for Change and Overcoming Impediments**  
**Response to Suggested Options by Sub-group**



### Barriers to Change

Questions 21 C and 23 asked respondents to identify the barriers or impediments to change in the CGIAR System and suggest ways they might be overcome. Respondents offered a great deal of advice in the comments attached to these two questions. *However, three key impediments or barriers stand out: (1) Reform burnout; (2) the inability to move from agreement on reforms to implementation; and (3) a lack of vision to go beyond existing mandates and structures.*

(1) Reform burnout.

Several respondents offered thoughts about how this might be overcome. They are simply good change management practices. One respondent provided a pretty comprehensive list of what needs to be done, which has been augmented by other respondent comments:

- CGIAR should have defined objectives, clear timelines and acceptable costs for reform;
- Reforms should be “acceptable” – i.e., validated with key stakeholders;
- Reforms should be seen as providing meaningful improvement to the System;

- The process should build, as appropriate, on the work and thinking that has been brought to the CGIAR in the past decade or so;
- Change for the sake of change is bound to be negative;
- Approach from a positive-looking perspective with buy-in from all the CGIAR and Centers through a transparent process of sharing information;
- Make sure there are enough resources of the right quality, quantity and mix, and sufficient time for reforms to be implemented; and finally
- Manage the process and the people involved in it very well – “give sufficient notice, appreciate that most people are very busy; plan and communicate with a sense of urgency, but avoid acting at the last minute”.

(2) The inability to move from agreement on reforms to implementation.

Respondents offered several suggestions to overcome this barrier to successful reform; they include:

- Decisions to move ahead must be binding and management must be held accountable for implementation;
- Once agreement is reached, a “Reform Tsar” should be employed to implement it (or, must have strong leadership / a strong champion for implementation);
- It is a mistake to have the initiative come from the top because it is important to get commitment (consensus) from all parts of the system, *including the Centers*;
- Design the new system from outside on a client-based focus;
- Increase rewards (funding, recognition, etc.) for Centers that institute reform measures.

(3) Lack of Vision to go beyond existing mandates and structures.

This issue has been raised in other parts of this survey, as well (see Section 5.3). A number of respondents seem to be of the opinion that reforms / changes will not be successful unless and until the CGIAR and the Centers, jointly, decide what they really wants to be and how to get there.

## 6.4 The Future of Reform: Improving benefits / Reducing Costs

Respondents had a great deal to say about the changes in CGIAR governance that are still needed. One hundred and forty (140) respondents or 70% of the survey population made over 400 suggestions – a formidable list!

The vast majority of the comments, however, have already been made in the context of other survey questions. For example, the CGIAR must:

- (a) Deal with issues around roles, responsibilities and accountability (rationalize roles and responsibilities, and get rid of duplication in these)
- (b) Develop more and more effective partnerships (increases impact; reduces duplication of some resources);
- (c) Manage the co-sponsors / get more stable funding (this speaks for itself!)
- (d) Have a strong vision, priorities, and embrace performance management and managing for results/outcomes (implement an effective performance evaluation / assessment system; be results-oriented; only fund outcome-based research);
- (e) Deal effectively with governance issues – rationalize, simplify, centralize-decentralize
- (f) Reduce/eliminate duplication; create economies of scale; reduce administrative costs, reduce bureaucracy...
- (g) Eliminate unproductive/ineffective centers and programs; and so on.

## 7.0 Members and Co-Sponsors

There are four co-sponsors: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Bank.

Co-sponsors play several roles. They provide very significant financial support. They help identify and nominate new CGIAR directors. In addition to financial support, they provide other resources and services (e.g., staff and executive officers, actively promote the interests of the CGIAR, and so on). And, they house the Science Council Secretariat (FAO), the Alliance Office (IFAD), and the CGIAR Secretariat (World Bank). Because of their international stature, they may also enhance the international character and standing of the Centers. .

This section examines the importance and effectiveness of these organizations to the CGIAR.

## 7.1 Role and Performance of the FAO, UNDP and IFAD Co-Sponsors

### Importance and Effectiveness

Seventy-three percent (73%) of all respondents believe it is important or very important to have co-sponsors in addition to ordinary members. The board chair / center executive population sub-group gave the co-sponsors a 53% importance rating, whereas Science Council respondents rated them as important (28%) or very important (72%). The importance ratings from the other sub-groups were in the range of 70%.

However very few respondents (28%) thought that the co-sponsors are fulfilling their roles effectively. The only exception was the Science Council members (56% effective/very effective). The co-sponsor effectiveness scores ranged from 13% (by Challenge Program scientists) to 37% (by professional staff). Although Question 13 A-C did not ask respondents to comment on the FAO, IFAD and UNDP separately, their comments indicated that these organizations are not equally important and/or equally effective as co-sponsors.

### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Respondents were given four options about how to improve the role and performance of the FAO, IFAD and UNDP, to which respondents added issues and suggestions of their own. These are summarized under three headings: (a) the Status, Power and Importance of these Co-sponsors; (b) Co-sponsor Roles and Responsibilities; and (c) Changing or Increasing their Involvement in the CGIAR System.

- Status, Power and Importance. The general consensus among those who think these co-sponsors are important is that their financial and facilities-related support is valuable, although they may not have the status of the World Bank. One pointed out that they should be called “co-sponsors” only if they provide special financial support. Another felt that they should have no special status in the system despite their financial contributions (which some thought should be substantially increased – see the discussion on unrestricted funding, Section 9).

A number of respondents wondered if the co-sponsorship role should be discontinued. Two of the options attached to Question 13C addressed this:

- Inactive co-sponsorships should be discontinued (52% all respondents). Between 40% (professional staff) and 59% (board chairs/enter executives and Science Council respondents) agreed.
- The co-sponsorship role should be discontinued all together (7% all respondents); this was not a popular option with any of the groups.

A couple of respondents suggested that co-sponsors should be changed when the need for them and/or the CGIAR agenda changes. One

commentator thought they should be eliminated unless they could “be found something useful to do.”

- Co-sponsor Roles and Responsibilities. These co-sponsors currently have a limited but important role as sources of funding and providers of Science Council Secretariat and Alliance offices. A number of respondents thought that the potential of co-sponsorships has not been fully realized, and suggested that the FAO and IFAD, especially, should have larger roles.

Some suggested that co-sponsors could:

- Play an advocacy / promotion role (e.g., promote the CGIAR, Center projects and Challenge Programs on their websites; work to convince their own key actors and stakeholders of the importance of supporting the CGIAR; pressure other co-sponsors to play larger role; influence broad international policies in agriculture and development). Seventy-nine percent (79%) of all respondents agreed with this last suggestion in the list of options given in Question 13C.
- Work with each other in a coordinated way in their support of the CGIAR System.
- Be involved in planning CG research and linking it with the global development agenda.
- Communicate / interact with their corresponding officers in the CG on a regular basis.
- Become partners or be more “partner-like” (e.g., interact more in the field, become involved in joint initiatives).
- Not only provide resources, but also have an active interest in the activities and health of the CGIAR.

How much support can actually be garnered for increasing the involvement of co-sponsors is debatable, however. When given the option in Question 15 C, *only 21% of all respondents agreed that the roles and powers of co-sponsors should be enhanced.*

- Changing or Increasing Co-Sponsor Involvement. Suggestions included: giving their existing role more recognition; ensuring better interaction between the CGIAR and its co-sponsors (e.g., more direct communication / dialogue; better coordination between co-sponsors and with the CGIAR); and ensuring that their perspectives and expected benefits from supporting the CGIAR are taken into account.

Possibly the most important recommendation was that a set of clear, formal expectations (roles and responsibilities) for co-sponsorship be developed and serve as the basis against which individual co-sponsors would be assessed with respect to whether they are / have been meeting their commitments.

Who would be involved in developing this? It would likely need to be a collaborative effort to be effective. Certainly co-sponsors themselves would need to think through their interest and role in the CGIAR and, possibly suggest how they might like to see it change to better accommodate their expectations. The CGIAR / Secretariat would have to be involved. And some suggested that there should be input from other CGIAR System actors like the Science Council, the Alliance or individual Centers.

## **7.2 The World Bank's Financial Roles**

The World Bank plays several key roles in relation to the CGIAR and Centers. Its role in governance and its convening power were the subjects of Section 3.2. It also plays a number of financial roles. It is a donor and co-sponsor. It mobilizes contributions from other donors, and manages the Multi-Donor Trust Fund.

Respondents were asked to consider whether it is appropriate for the World Bank to play all of these roles, if it is performing them effectively, and what might be done to improve its performance.

### **Appropriateness and Effectiveness**

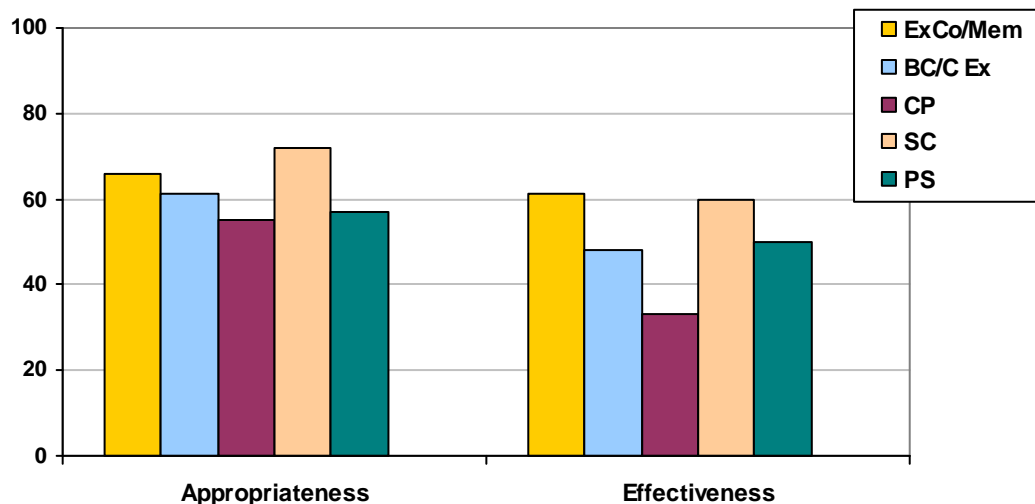
Sixty-four percent (64%) of all respondents indicated that they believe it is appropriate for the World Bank to perform all of these financial roles. From 55% (Challenge Program) to 72% (Science Council) of respondents in the sub-groups agreed with this assessment.

Is the World Bank performing these roles effectively? Fifty-four percent (54%) of all survey respondents believe it is. Approximately 60% of Science Council and ExCo/Member respondents agree. Respondents from the other groups gave the Bank an effectiveness rating of between 33% (Challenge Program scientists) and 50% (professional staff in the CGIAR System) with respect to these roles.

Note that this is probably the best balance between importance and effectiveness achieved by any element of the CGIAR System (with the exception of Challenge Program respondents).

Figure 15

### Appropriateness and Effectiveness of World Bank in fulfilling its various Financial Roles – a Comparison by Sub-group



### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Respondents were given five options in Question 11C. Three dealt with performance management (addressed in Section 5.2), and two dealt with certain of the Bank's other financial responsibilities. Respondents were also asked to offer additional comments about how the Bank might improve its performance of these roles.

- Conflicts of Interest (real and perceived). This was a concern for a number of respondents who believe that the Bank is in a conflict of interest by fulfilling both financial and governance roles. Respondents suggested that the governance and financial roles – and the financial roles themselves – should be disentangled and some given to other actors in the system. A few respondents thought the conflict between roles, whether real or perceived, has caused conflict within the CGIAR community itself.
- Clarifying / (re-)Assigning Roles and Responsibilities. By far the majority of comments associated with this question fell into this area. In addition to the conflict-of-interest issue, respondents had several other concerns:
  - Confusion over who is responsible for what in the System. For example, a few respondents noted that there is confusion over who is responsible for the Trust Fund (“the Bank is not; the CG Secretariat is...”). Another comment – “where is the separation between Bank roles / responsibilities and those of the CG Secretariat?”

- As noted above, a number of respondents suggested changing, diminishing or transferring the Bank's roles to one or another of CGIAR actors. For example: transfer financial oversight and resource allocation responsibilities to the Ad Hoc Finance Committee; give the Science Council responsibility for allocation of resources; give the Alliance responsibility for recruiting staff and monitoring the CG Secretariat; have the Bank return to its role as donor of last resort, and so on. Note, that 32% of all respondents agreed that allocation powers should be transferred to the new Ad Hoc Committee on Finance (option given in question). However, the practicality of this and the other options was challenged by other respondents (for example, are the members of the Committee on Finance have the time and sufficient expertise to fulfill this role in an effective way?).
  
- Respondents also pointed to a number of inadequacies in the way the Bank and/or the CG Secretariat has fulfilled these roles. With respect to:
  - (a) Funding – The thought that the World Bank (and the CG Secretariat): should have a position on unrestricted funds; needs to be more proactive in mobilizing funds from existing donors, and identifying and securing other funding sources; must make sure all money / financial transactions are reported and the information made available. Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents thought that the operations of the Multi-donor Trust Fund should be improved (option in question).
  - (b) Services to members – the CG Secretariat should provide better briefings to members and Executive Council in support of their decision-making.
  - (c) Advocacy – the Bank (CG Secretariat) has not fulfilled its advocacy role effectively; “more advocacy, less transactions costs”
  - (d) CG Secretariat work-load – the Secretariat is spread too thin and is insufficiently funded; it should focus on 2-3 things it can do well, like providing member support, financial monitoring and performance measurement.
  - (e) Lack of openness and transparency (this was on the top of the list of concerns. Respondents cited the need for more transparency with respect to (i) the management and state of the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, budget discussions, and the allocation of funds; (ii) consultations with co-sponsors and major donors; and (iii) staffing decisions and processes.

## 8.0 Program Innovations

### 8.1 Challenge Programs

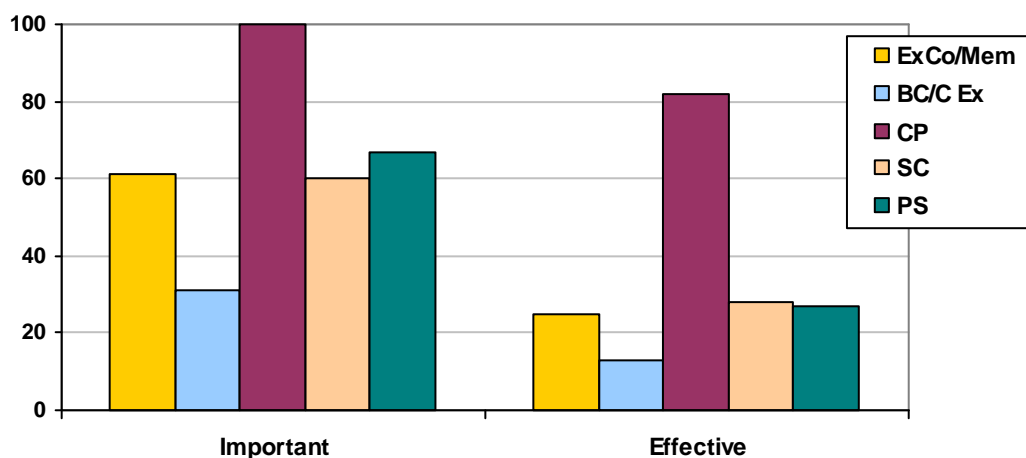
Challenge Programs were established by the CGIAR in 2001 to target complex issues of high global and/or regional significance. The intent was to bring in new donors and foster more cross-cutting research. They are meant to be time-bound, independently-governed programs which bring together a wide range of partners, viewpoints and capacities to better enable them to deliver results that have high impact in key areas. Funding is intended to be incremental to flows of funds to the Centers and completely separate from that available to the Centers.

#### Importance and Effectiveness

Opinion about the importance of Challenge Programs to the success of the CGIAR ranged from 31% (board chairs/center executives) to 100% (Challenge Program), with 55% of all respondents judging them to be important or very important. Other sub-groups gave them an importance rating from 60-67%.

Only twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents think the Challenge Programs have been effective (this would have been lower except that Challenge Program respondents gave themselves an effectiveness rating of 82%). Board chairs and Center executives gave the Challenge Programs an effectiveness rating of 13%, whereas the Executive Council/members, Science Council and professional staff groups gave them a rating in the mid 20-percent range. A relatively high rating was given to the “not clear” option – 45% all respondents and from 40% to 67% of sub-group respondents (not including the Challenge Program). This may be because effectiveness has been highly variable from program to program.

**Figure 16**  
**Importance and Effectiveness of Challenge Programs to the Success of the CGIAR – Comparison by Sub-group**



## Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Several issues arose with respect to the Challenge Programs:

- Challenge Programs – should they stay or should they go? While there seems to be little or no disagreement on the importance of targeting complex global research in agriculture and development, there are significantly-different opinions about which actor(s) in the System should undertake this research.

Respondents who offered an opinion fell into three camps.

- Although there is a place for Challenge Programs, they should not be the normal way of doing CGIAR business. Respondents were concerned, however, about the significant transaction costs involved, the possibility of duplication of Center work, and competition over scarce resources (see Section 9.3).
  - Challenge Programs should be integrated into other types of inter-center and partnership efforts that are “more cost-effective and less disruptive“. If the response to the option given in Question 4 C to discontinue these programs is a reliable indicator, this is not a popular view except, perhaps, for board chairs and center executives (9% of all respondents and 22% of board chairs/center executives selected the option).
  - Finally, Challenge Programs have not been in existence long enough to judge.
- The financial management of Challenge Programs The quality and effectiveness of financial management in the Challenge Programs generally received low scores; the key concerns were:
    - The high cost of the Challenge Programs. The Challenge Programs have very high transaction costs associated with them. Some respondents wondered whether they have been worth it in terms of objectives met and results achieved, and suggested that they should be created *only when* funding independent of that allocated to CGIAR/Center purposes is guaranteed. .
    - Challenge Programs are competing with Centers for financial and other resources. The original intent was that Challenge Programs would be funded, on an individual basis, from new, non-traditional sources. With the exception of *HarvestPlus* (funded by the Gates Foundation), this has not been the case. As a result, Challenge Programs have had to compete with the centers for funds – and staff members who have “followed the money“. In the opinion of some, this has put some Centers at considerable risk by undermining them financially and in terms of qualified staff.

Sixty percent (60%) of all respondents and 74% of board chairs/center executives think that Challenge Program funding must be additional to that otherwise available to the centers (option, Question 4C). This is clearly an important problem that needs to be addressed as quickly as possible – for the sake of the System overall and, especially, for the financial health and well-being of the Centers.

- Better management and management control. This is an issue for the Challenge Programs, as it is for the centers and other actors in the CGIAR System. In addition to the suggestions already made elsewhere in the survey, respondents pointed to the need to:
  - Develop guidelines for governing the Challenge Programs;
  - Increase management accountability and accountability for program results (which has clear implications for the performance assessment of these programs), at both system and program levels;
  - Sharpen each Challenge Program's focus on clearly-defined goals; and
  - Have an independent evaluation done, on a program-by-program basis, from time-to-time.
- Who has "ownership" of the Challenge Programs? There were several opinions about which actors are the key "shareholders" in the programs. One respondent suggested that the variability in effectiveness of existing Challenge Programs is due, in large part, to the organization (foundation) that is their major contributor and that which is the central partner. Others think that the existing Challenge Programs should become more independent from the Centers and CGIAR – and become as closely tied to the end users (ultimate beneficiaries) of the research results. Still others want to make sure Challenge Programs are driven by good science for development and not by CGIAR, local or global politics.
- The awarding of contracts and selection of research topics. Two of the options suggested in the question on how Challenge Programs might be improved looked at these issues.
  - One option suggested that procedures for application and award be changed (61% all respondents). Between 44% (Science Council) and 67% (professional staff) of respondents in the groups agreed.
  - The other stated that changes are needed in the way research topics are chosen (52% all respondents). Thirty-three percent (33%) of Challenge Program and 44% of Science Council respondents thought that this was the case, as did 62% of board chairs/center executives.

Respondent comments were not particularly helpful in identifying the difficulties with these two processes, although lack of openness and transparency appear to be important issues in both cases. One respondent

observed that the call-for-proposal and competition procedures are time-consuming and inefficient for both the System and possible competitors (e.g., time wasted preparing proposals that would not qualify). Another thought that competition needs to be more open. In reference to topic selection, one respondent felt that stakeholders outside of the CGIAR should have more input into selecting and planning the topics Challenge Programs should address. Others thought that Centers and other CGIAR actors have too much influence over the selection of topics.

- The awarding of contracts and selection of research topics. Two of the options suggested in the question on how Challenge Programs might be improved looked at these issues.

## 9.0 Financial Management

Respondents were asked to look at financial management issues from two perspectives: (a) the need for and adequacy of unrestricted funding; and (b) the current state of audit, financial oversight and risk management. They also commented on financial issues with respect to the Challenge Programs.

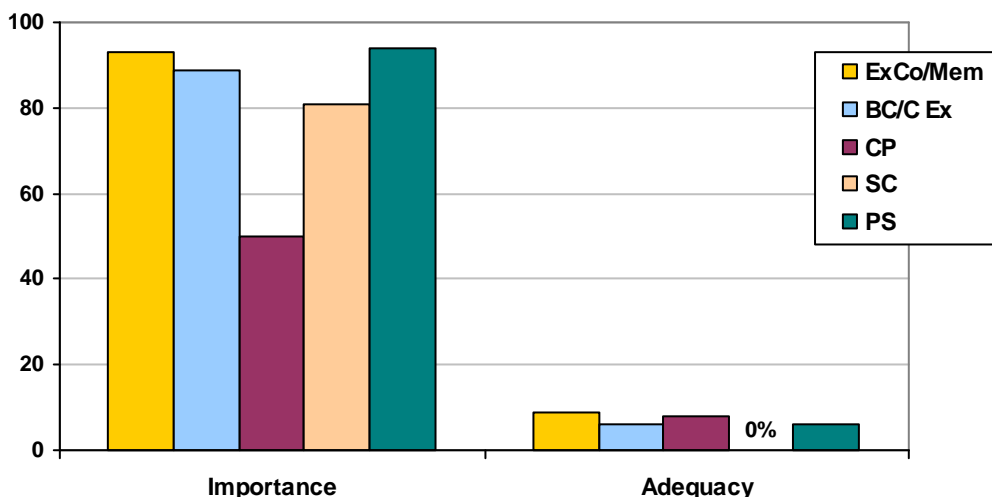
### 9.1 Unrestricted Funding

“Unrestricted funds” are not tied directly to particular programs or activities and may be spent by a Center in any way it wishes – whether to support research, bolster partnering efforts, deal with administrative challenges, and so on.

#### Importance and Adequacy

The importance of unrestricted funds to Center performance was given a very high rating by all respondents (90%) and each population sub-group (81-94%), with one exception – Challenge Program respondents (50%). By contrast, all sub-groups thought that the level of unrestricted funding is quite *inadequate* (7% adequate/very adequate, all respondents). Figure 16 shows the significant gap between the importance and adequacy of restricted funds.

**Figure 17**  
**Importance versus Adequacy of Unrestricted Funds**  
**Comparison by Sub-Group**



### Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Three of the options noted in Question 6 C on how to deal with the inadequacy of unrestricted funds suggested ways to increase them:

- Seek new sources of unrestricted funding, including from the private sector (71% all respondents). Between 67% and 73% of respondents in the five sub-groups were in favor of this option.
- Hold a pledging session at the AGM for unrestricted funding (33% all respondents). There was significant variations among the respondent groups in this regard: 23% to 39% of respondents in various groups supported this option.
- The CGIAR and Centers should build an endowment fund to provide unrestricted income (33% all respondents). Support for this option varied greatly, from strong support (69% of Challenge Program respondents) to under 30% for the ExCo/Member, and Science Council respondents.

Another option suggested that a common full-costing policy be adopted (56% all respondents). Between 52% and 63% of respondents in the groups of respondents selected this option.

Finally, between 0% (Challenge Program) and 25% (board chairs/center executives) of respondents believe that change is unlikely because of donor constraints (14% all respondents).

The vast majority of respondent suggestions and concerns were focused on how well the CGIAR is being managed and/or on the nature and effectiveness of the donor relationship.

- The need for a well-managed system / network. Respondents recognized that the System / Network has to be well managed (in part and whole) so funders will realize that providing unrestricted funds is a good investment for them.

Respondents focused especially on the need: (a) to ensure that sound management frameworks and practices are in place; (b) for a clear CGIAR vision; (c) to understand which strategic areas of research and development it will champion; (d) to support appropriate corporate values such as due diligence, transparency, accountability, etc; and (e) to reduce or eliminate inefficient or redundant structures, centers and programs.

Some respondents stressed the need for the System and all of its actors to be committed to both managing well and delivering on the CGIAR and Centers' reason for existing – i.e., to support and do good agricultural research in the context of international development.

- Managing the System – Funder Relationship. Respondents also recognized that the CGIAR System has to “manage” the relationship with its funders.

This may mean having pledging sessions; creating new funds; negotiating over-head rates; pursuing funding from non-traditional sources; explaining the value of unrestricted funds; getting funders more involved in finding solutions to the problem; and so on. In more general terms, it will mean that the CGIAR, its Centers and Challenge Programs must educate, guide and market/ sell funders on the value of unrestricted funds for the overall long-term health of the System, and as a key condition of stability for the projects and programs they have chosen to support.

Ultimately, it all comes down to the ability of the system to convince funders within the demands of their own political, regulatory, financial and management realities - what they will fund and at what levels are ultimately their decisions to make.

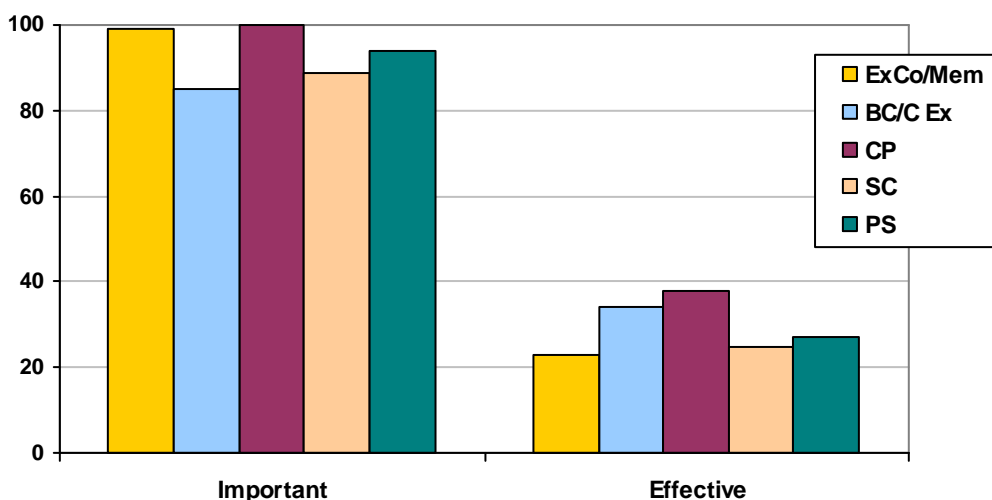
## 9.2 Financial Management and Risk

Question 7 A-B asked about the importance and effectiveness of the audit function, financial oversight and financial risk management in the CGIAR System. Respondents were again asked to suggest ways financial management might be improved.

## Importance and Effectiveness

Between 85 and 100% of respondents believe that good financial management, defined as “audit, oversight and risk management,” are important or very important (93% all respondents). In contrast, only 28% of all respondents believe that the financial management system is effective or very effective (from 23% - ExCo/Mem to 34% - Board chairs/center executives).

**Figure 18**  
**Importance versus Effectiveness**  
**Audit, Financial Oversight & Risk Management**  
**Comparison by Population Sub-group**



## Suggestions for Improvement and Respondent Comments

Three options were suggested for improving financial and risk management:

- One recommended that the Executive Council Ad Hoc Committee on Finance be given strong oversight powers (72% all respondents). Agreement with this option was high for ExCo/Members (82%) and for professional staff (88%), and ranged between 53% and 67% for the other groups. A number of respondents also indicated that they support this suggestion in the context of other questions.
- The other two dealt with managing funding requirements.
  - (a) There should be a centralized stabilization reserve fund (44% all respondents). Fifty percent (50%) of professional staff and 70% of Challenge Program respondents selected this option; whereas 34% to 44% of respondents from the other sub-groups thought it was a good idea. Some respondents thought that having access to such a fund

would punish good managers and reward poor ones unless there were strict criteria for use only in real emergencies (e.g., the 2004 Tsunami).

- (b) The Centers' reserve funds requirements should be increased (31% all respondents). Between 15% and 44% of respondents in the sub-groups selected this option (Challenge Program, and Board chair/center executive sub-groups). A couple of respondents commented that the Centers should be encouraged to build reserves, not discouraged from doing so – which they believe is now the case.

Respondents commented on the need to: ensure and/or strengthen financial management structures, practices and capacity, donor issues, and complete or refine the performance measurement system.

- Financial management structures, practices and capacity. Most suggestions offered in this context have already been discussed in other sections of the summary (Sections 7.1, 8.2, 10.1, etc.), and will not be repeated in detail here.

A key issue – and one that has permeated the responses to all questions – is the “roles and responsibility” issue – in this case, which System actor or actors should be responsible for which of the different aspects of CGIAR financial management. Two areas of concern were stressed by respondents that have not received a great deal of attention elsewhere:

- Risk and risk management. The general contention is that, with the exception of a small number of financial-management types, an appreciation of the importance of risk management and its application to the CGIAR and/or Center and Challenge Program decision-making is nearly or completely missing. There does not appear to be any regularized process for identifying, assessing and managing risks, whether they are financial or programmatic in nature. More than one respondent in the Survey has suggested that everyone should be exposed to a good course on risk management. [Note: Identifying and managing risks is also important when making decisions about which projects should be pursued, how staffing should be done, and so on. The lack of appropriate risk-taking with respect to projects has been noted previously in other contexts.]
  - Putting the right people in place. A number of respondents emphasized the importance of making sure that quality finance directors are recruited, and that there is sufficient financial competence available throughout the CGIAR System, centrally, and in the Science Council, the Alliance, Center boards, and the Challenge Programs.
- Donor Issues. The donor issues noted by respondents in this question have also been discussed in other contexts, especially the need for the System to manage them (see the previous section).
  - The Performance Measurement System. Performance measurement issues are discussed in Section 5.2.