



Date: 6 April 2015

Location: Hyderabad, India

## 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting Research Management Committee

### In attendance:

No.	Name	Institution	CRP-DS/Position
1	Richard Thomas	CRP-DS	CRP Director, RMC Chair, SC Ex Officio Member
2	Paul Vlek	ICARDA	Center Coordinator
3	Anthony M. Whitbread	ICRISAT	Center Coordinator - ITF Internal Member
4	Mauricio Bellon	Bioversity	Center Coordinator - Gender focal point - Data Manager focal point
5	Victor Mares	CIP	Center Coordinator- Representative
6	Jan de Leeuw	ICRAF	Center Coordinator - Center Focal Point for E&SA - ITF Internal Member
7	Polly Ericksen	ILRI	Center Coordinator- Gender focal point
8	Everisto Mapedza	IWMI	Center Coordinator - Gender focal point - Data Manager focal point - ITF Internal Member
9	Antoine Kalinganire	ICRAF	WAS&DS - Flagship Project Coordinator
10	Hichem Ben Salem	ICARDA	NA&WA - Flagship Project Coordinator
11	Sikhhalazo Dube	ILRI	E&SA - Flagship Project Coordinator
12	Theib Oweis	ICARDA	CA - Flagship Project Coordinator
13	Shalander Kumar	ICRISAT	SA- Flagship Project Coordinator -Jodhpur, Barmer and Jaiselmer districts, Rajasthan (India)

### Apologies:

No.	Name	Institution	CRP-DS/Position
1	Philippe Monneveux	CIP	Center Coordinator

### Observers:

No.	Name	Institution	CRP-DS/Position
1	Enrico Bonaiuti	CRP-DS	Research Program Coordinator
2	Rima Dabbagh	CRP-DS	Finance Program Coordinator
3	Sara Jani	CRP-DS	Program Administrator
4	Tana Lala-Pritchard	CRP-DS	Communication Program Coordinator
5	Bao Quang Le	CRP-DS	Agricultural Livelihood System Expert
6	Karin Reinprecht	CRP-DS	Gender Program Coordinator
7	Chandrashekhar Biradar	CRP-DS	Data Management Working Group Co-Chair
8	Michael Baum	ICARDA	BIGM Program Director
9	Lance Robinson	ILRI	Scientist in ESA and ITF Internal Member
10	Douglas Merrey	CCEE	Team Leader
11	Ross McLeod	CCEE	Team Member

## Announcements

- Paul Vlek joined ICARDA as Interim Deputy Director General for Research until Andrew Noble will joining ICARDA as the new DDG-R. Paul Vlek is representing ICARDA in CRP-DS as Center Coordinator.
- Theib Oweis has been appointed as new Central Asia Flagship Coordinator.
- Hichem Ben Salem has been appointed as new North Africa and West Asia Flagship Coordinator.
- Vincent Bado has been appointed as new ICRISAT Focal Point in West African Sahel and Dry Savannas and Action Site Coordinator for Wa-Bobo-Sikasso Transect.
- Akramkhanov Akmal has been appointed as action site coordinator for Aral Sea Region (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan).
- Benli Bogachan has been appointed as action site coordinator for Fergana Valley (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan).
- R. Padmaja has been appointed as new ICRISAT Gender Focal Point at global level and specifically for the SA Flagship.

## Agenda points

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Welcome & introduction.
- 1.2. Approval of Agenda.
- 1.3. Review of the [3rd RMC](#) minutes action points

**Discussion:** The Group introduced themselves. The RMC agenda was approved. The action points from the 3<sup>rd</sup> RMC meeting have been fulfilled.

The internal audit conducted between March and September 2014 was very detailed but the CRP should undertake a CRP Commissioned External Evaluation before the submission of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call proposal as requested by the Consortium Office (CO). The three CCEE team members were introduced to the RMC members. The Steering Committee have been reformed as requested by the CO. Their first meeting will be on April 10<sup>th</sup> at ICRISAT.

The CRP-DS Agricultural Livelihood Systems Expert organised one working group on integrated systems analysis and modelling to develop a concept framework, and bring coherence on methods, and practices. It was noted that it is important to form a group in cooperation with the other system CRPs.

The Communication Focal Points met in Sri Lanka on February 2015 and started discussing the preparation of the Communication Strategy, the way forward for communication and fund raising.

Annual Report: the CO requested CRPs to submit their annual report using two different dates (8 March and 30 April 2015). The CRP-DS preferred to refer to the first date in order to be ready for the fund council meeting end of April.

The Independent Task Force was originally intended to be comprised of external experts. Since it was not possible to find top scientists outside the CGIAR to be available full time it was proposed to, and approved by the CO, to include internal and external members.



It was noted that not all flagships have completed their impact pathways that are required for the 2nd call and for the implementation of the current extension phase 2015-2016.

The Capacity development group has finalized the strategy to be approved by the Independent Steering Committee. They will meet after the Science Meeting to discuss the 2015 activities and their related outputs considering the limited resources and suggest how to handle the 2016 budget allocation.

The meeting discussed ‘Dryland Development Dialogue’ group from Leiden University comprised mainly of social economists and anthropologists. They are keen to join CRP-DS and can be considered an important external partnership that will strengthen the social and anthropological work needed in CRP-DS.

## Key Messages:

We are working to cast a wider net to extend the range of partners outside the CGIAR and other System-CRPs to develop communities of practice and greater capacities in systems research.

The Systems Analysis Group should focus on concept development and practices in the CRP and CGIAR community. There will be a full day meeting on Friday to discuss group ToR and plan of work for the next two years.

## Action points:

⇒ The 5 Flagship should prepare their impact pathways with the support of the ALS Expert.

## 2. Governance

### 2.1. Change in Coordination (CA, NAWA, WAS)

**Discussion:** There is a need to reduce the 13 Action Sites/Transects for budgetary and operational reasons. This should be discussed by the interdisciplinary teams at flagship level. They should focus on system research eliminating the activities that are not aligned with the program. The POWB for all current flagships is not entirely systems research. We have to consider eliminating research which cannot be seen to contribute to systems research.

Key Position changed in Flagships and centres (see announcements above). ESA will have some changes but cannot be publicly announced yet by the ILRI Center Coordinator. These positions are difficult because they require people to prioritize the CRP agenda over the center agenda. It's not always easy to balance the competing priorities. This is an issue primarily created as a result of the way CRPs were introduced to the Centers.

Many centres have critical amounts of reserves and thus cannot retain staff. There is a high turnover of CRP directors with a very uncertain environment.

It is not clear on how the program is going to mobilise funds. Fund Council seems to be disenchanted with the CGIAR. It's a very unsettling environment. We have to think outside the box in order to mobilize funds and resources to support our activities and maintain our staff.

The program needs changes in governance due to budget cuts but also guided by need to be more strategic in terms of activities included in the work plan.

## Action points:

- ⇒ 1. PMU to support Centers in Fundraising developing a strategy and action plan
- ⇒ 2. ILRI to inform PMU of any changes in ESA



## 3. Budget Allocation

- 3.1. Review of budget allocation (Coordination and Research).
- 3.2. Establishment of a contingency fund.

**Discussion:** The March 2015 W1/W2 reduction was unexpected and there is a chance that these funds will be further reduced during 2015. The program created a modest contingency fund to absorb future shocks. The focus should be on bilateral in order to attract more funds into research. ICARDA Center Coordinator (CC) requested how these funds will be used in case there is no further cut and in relation with what happened in 2014 with the carry over. There should be a spending plan. The Director clarified that all CRPs and Centers Directors are requesting the CO not to apply this rule. ESA Flagship Coordinator (FC) suggested to discuss this with the CO especially in for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call cycle. The CA FC noticed that the budget cut affected the research and suggested to distribute the contingency funds to centers in order to enhance the system approach. The Research Program Coordinator (RPC) confirmed that the carryover was not allowed between 2014 and 2015 because they were two different phases (proposal 2012-2014 and extension 2015-2016). The Carry over is allowed within the phase (2015-2016) as was the case between 2013 and 2014. This will not create a problem in case the contingency is not spent. The real focus should be on how we actually spend wisely and strategically on quality systems- focused activities. The SA FC confirmed that ILRI activity in Jodhpur, Barmer and Jaisalmer districts, Rajasthan (India) has been postponed considering the budget cut. All ILRI efforts in SA will be in Bijapur district, Karnataka (India). IWMI CC confirmed their interested in working in NAWA (Egypt) despite the small amount allocated.

The Finance Program Coordinator (FPC) informed that the 19% reduction could be applied to each center allocation since the cut has been applied at flagship level and by consideration of the priorities of the IRTs.

The CCEE Team Leader (TL) inquired if the program has analysed the opportunity to focus the system research in less than 5 flagships in order not to encourage horizontal cuts since good system research should be supported. The Director clarified that it is difficult to establish where we will achieve more effective system research. The S&IM is meant to address this topic.

The Director and ALS Expert reviewed the POWBs and noted there is a gap in terms of systems analysis. The group agreed that there are not sufficient W1/W2 funds for system research and this should be balanced with bilateral funds. The ESA FC pointed out that the system research plans were done before the cut. In the current situation there should be an in-depth analysis and focus on system research in order to see where to cut. In addition he clarified that it is difficult to have system research from bilateral projects. The Director suggested having sharper system approaches and the cut may help focus the research. The Director pointed out that the program needs to strengthen the systems work. It's not just about allocating more money, but rather demonstrating flagships/centers coming up with proper systems research activities. As things stand, we need to cut out activities that are not systems work in order to free up money within current allocation. W1/W2 funds should not be used for "business as usual" activities.

ICRAF CC suggested communicating with the EU/IFAD Project manager in order to inform on the cut. Since the project has not started yet (1<sup>st</sup> quarter = 25% of implementation) the cut of 19% should not affect the project. ILRI CC confirmed that the project will start soon and the Director is keen to see how the project will start and if it will catalyse new initiatives.



Dryland Cereals Research Committee Member, Michael Baum, asked what it will happen if the funds increase. It would be important to plan this scenario too. The Director informed that Centers are already reducing their staff. If the donors change the current trend this would be unfortunate.

Bioversity CC informed that there is a point where it makes no sense for a center to continue to cooperate. Currently they have only 250,000 USD. He expects a strategy and implementation plan for fund-raising since if we jointly approach a donor we may have more chance for funding. The Director agreed with this statement. The working groups should define concept notes and hopefully outputs of the S&IM could be joint concept notes. For example we don't get funds from CCAFS for climate change and we should attract those donors not currently funding CCAFS. The contingency funds could be used in this context.

ICARDA CC confirmed that we should have common understanding of system research and ensure that the skill sets are within the program. Centers have not allocated these skills to the CRP. The Director ask minor center if they want to withdraw in consideration of little funding. Currently they are all on-board but it is important to know it sooner rather than later.

### Action points:

- ⇒ 1. To finalize revised POWB and revised budget allocations for NAWA, ESA, SA and CA before the SC approval on April 10<sup>th</sup> mtg.
- ⇒ 2. FPC to include a summary table in the budget allocation in order to compare the budget reduction at flagship level and at global level.
- ⇒ 3. CRPs Directors and Center DGs should ask a clear statement from the CO on the carry over in the current phase and for the extension phase.
- ⇒ 4. Centers to ensure that staff with proper skills are assigned to the program.
- ⇒ 5. PMU to develop a Fund Raising Strategy and Implementation Plan while Working Groups and IRTs to develop concept notes.
- ⇒ 6. Centers wishing to withdraw from the Program should communicate this decision to the CRP Director before the first 6 months of the year.

## 4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Science & Implementation meeting

### 4.1. S&IM Preparation

**Discussion:** The S&IM objectives are:

1. To critically review the current state of implementation of DS Research
2. To design and agree on the principles and generic process of integrated systems research applied to all regions.
3. To developing indicators and specific targets; these are paramount to the 2<sup>nd</sup> call for proposals.
4. How to organize the flagship (ALS, Themes, etc).
5. Undertake an evaluation session for the CCEE team.

The flagships should present a) their plans for implementing integrated systems work b) Revised clusters of activities and c) how they fit into the new IDOs and SLOs

Jurgen Hagmann of PICO Team was hired to facilitate the 2<sup>nd</sup> S&IM. The 1<sup>st</sup> S&I meeting was important to sharpen our focus and address 'must haves' listed by the ISPC and the Audit. The Director reported on the System Conference organized in Ibadan by IITA. There was still not clarity on several system research issues. In CRP-DS we made significant progress defining the system approach as recognized by the CO CEO for our value proposition. Donors expect clear development targets from our research and we have to demonstrate how we do that on the



ground. The main indicators should be Total factor productivity (TFP) as opposed to closing yield gaps, capacity to innovate, market integration, sustainable intensification and resilience (viability). The Capacity to Innovate has been analysed in depth by the aquatic systems CRP. Accelerate cross-CRPs learning in key areas of science: gender, systems approaches, capacity to innovate. Develop a guide for undertaking systems research with methods toolbox. Accelerate cross-CRP learning in key areas of science: gender, systems approaches, and capacity to innovate. Focus more on institutional arrangements for conducting systems research; getting into the system. Engage with higher level organization such as CAADP, COMESA, UNCCD, development program/project in order to achieve impact at scale. Build capacity for systems research in NARS and within the CGIAR.

The ICRAF CC commented that there is a need to broaden the inventory of interventions since there are synergies and trade-offs that need to be discussed. The SA FC suggested that during the S&IM the group define better the relation between Regions and ALSs.

The ICARDA CC clarified that the ISPC and CO criticized the regional approach for the flagship. In addition themes like land degradation are process oriented and not systems oriented. The program needs to get a common understanding at which scale we want to define our system. (e.g. WLE looks at land degradation at landscape and watershed scale). The ICRISAT CC considered that working by region does not help and the program should work on systems. The danger is that we cannot focus if we don't have the boundaries of the system. With the ALS we need to have focus on the questions and basic boundary conditions need to be defined. As for the level of analysis the program has focused on household level and this differentiates DS from the other CRPs.

The Director clarified that the ALS and the focus of people livelihood strategies in drylands. 50% or more of income is from non-farm activities. We need to integrate other aspects of livelihood. The Director provided the definition for agricultural systems from the SRF Feb 2015 post-Berne version, which we will undoubtedly be judged against. We must focus more on collating and analysing existing CGIAR data to showcase the value of ALS (AS plus livelihood strategies), so that Consortium office can better understand how we organize ourselves and where our work is focuses. Mission Critical areas are also a means to build and promote our case.

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he CA FC pointed out that flagships based on system would be more appealing. They should be based on dominant systems. Livelihood component can be introduced through external system interactions. For example in the Agro-pastoral System we can analyse at global level in order to attract global partners and enhance our roles.

ILRI CC stressed that during the previous RMC the decision was to use themes and not ALS since there are not livelihood based indicators in place. Biodiversity CC pointed out that we have collected much data but what happened to them? How are we using them collectively in order to generate useful analysis? SA FC agreed with ICARDA CC that different regions work in similar livelihood systems having collected a lot of data. CIP CC stressed that we should look at communalities such as land tenure, education gaps, child nutrition, poverty, land degradation. NAWA FC pointed out on the experience we have (positive and negative). There are many action sites between regions but not connected. Looking at common ALS among regions and focus on complementarities between centers. This will accelerate the system approach. Lance Robison presented his work on pastoralism and if flagships are by ALS how do we interact across them. The ALS route will make it more difficult to look at some of the important research questions such as pastoralists. The Director then presented the Feb 2015 version for the CGIAR SRF stressing the importance of interaction across production systems and clarifying that the ALS are not far from them.

ICRAF CC noticed that we should be more pragmatic: flagship, action sites, systems are resulting in Centers continuing doing business as usual. We should work in similar systems across flagships. If you work in different systems in different regions you have nothing to share. ICRAF works where there are crop and livestock looking at multiple livestock system and real-live multiple-commodity systems.

ICARDA CC suggested looking at the systems with the following approach: components addressed and not and what would make the system to collapse. There are a lot of options in the systems: Return on Investment (RoI) on land, RoI on labour; how do we want to define labour. How to define systems: some themes are dominant and we need to differentiate problems according to ALS in which we cooperate. CA FC suggested merging systems with clusters at n-2 level. Having a global look at systems and having a group among centers look at them would bring a change in our regional look. ICARDA CC suggested that trees should also be considered in the agro-pastoral systems. ICRAF CC suggests reducing the ALS to 2 as the best scenario (e.g. combining rain-fed and irrigated systems). The Director pointed out that irrigation is important as this is where most of the food is produced. SA FC suggested to have irrigated systems part of the system. CA FC suggested that rain-fed system areas are very dependent on green water bringing together rain-fed and small irrigation. ICRAF CC suggested not profiling the program with large scale irrigation as WLE. IWMI CC suggested looking at interaction to have a proper system approach. The Director suggested having Pastoral-Agro-Pastoral and Rainfed plus small irrigation. It was suggested that we need to be clear on the rationale for merging, perhaps differentiating between intensifiable and non intensifiable. It is not sure if pastoral and agro-pastoral could be merged if we are not clear on the common issues. CIP CC suggested a focus on farmers and their level of income, land tenure since it seems we are taking the farmers out of the picture. ICARDA CC pointed out that it is all about the farmers and the analysis of his/her livelihood. In Nile Delta it is the land holding size which causes poverty. It does not make sense to make Rajasthan and Nile Delta people working together. Lance Robinson stressed that the defining characteristic is now water. The Gender Program Coordinator (GPC) asked if the off-farm income can be integrated in the systems assessment. ILRI CC explained that any farmers in any system diversify but we do not have data on these off-farm issues. Specific geographies, populations are defined and we need to break-down regions, types of people, number of people and impact. ICARDA CC suggested that we must be able to work in landscapes and watersheds projects of other CRPs. RPC suggested to focus on country level since many regions have several bilateral projects but having them aggregated we deviate our indicators (i.e. Gender Indicator in 2014 Annual Report – Table 1) and we don't have a clear analysis of our portfolio in relation with the W1/W2 activities.

### Action points:

- ⇒ Reduce number of ALS categories.
- ⇒ Build flagships around the ALS.

## 5. 2nd Call and CGIAR Portfolio

- 5.1. [Second Call Process](#) and SRF
- 5.2. Positioning CRP-DS in the CGIAR portfolio

**Discussion:** The CRP Director introduced the session informing that the CRP-DS will be linked with other CRPs. There are concerns on the tight schedule to accomplish that since the pre-proposal should be submitted by August 15. There is not enough time to consult with partners especially because we still don't have a partnership strategy that is an important element in the 2<sup>nd</sup> call.



The rationale for strategic case is already there through the TF mission critical areas. We may need to focus our efforts on expanding our Science case and interaction with other CRPs. The RPC explained that it is important to be clear on the size we wish to have in consideration of our trend in W2 and Bilateral.

Michael Baum pointed out that the invitation will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June. The CRPs scenario will be clear. CIP CC stressed that we should think ahead on our position and best possible strategy and structure since the CO could decide not only to merge CRPs but also to merge flagships or move them from one CRP to another. ICRAF CC suggested being clear on what type of bilateral projects we want to see in the CRP (research in development). CA FC asked if Centers can submit any type of proposals against the new set of CRPs. It can happen that centers will not propose a Dryland Systems CRP. Lance Robinson informed that is the CO to decide which are the types of proposal to be submitted. The Director clarified that the CRP portfolio will be communicated on May 13. ICRAF pointed out that some bilateral projects disburse more than 70% of funds to Partners (DGIS) while other has less than 10%. The CO guidelines of overall 30% to partners may affect that when mapping a bilateral with low funds to partners than we should use W1/W2 to partners. This will reduce resources to cover centers staff. We should have a clear strategy for mapping projects. ICARDA CC exhorted to have clear understanding how we position ourselves and especially who is leading which component. Michael Baum pointed out that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call they specify host center and not leading center. It is not clear who will lead the CRP. DS, DC, GL (L&F and MAIZE) have been suggested to merge but this seems unlikely since centers are not in favour to this. The Director suggested that livestock should be in DS. Many centers wish to conduct business as usual and this may damage the overall program. CA FC explained that there is a collective discussion among CG Centers to inform the CO on how to merge activities since it is destructive that everyone works alone. The Director explained that he does not know how much this could be effective since there is different opinion between Centers and Fund Council. It is not clear who will decide.

### Action points:

- ⇒ Develop a Partnership Strategy and implementation plan asking some Center to help the PMU.
- ⇒ Revised the Bilateral portfolio in view of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call.
- ⇒ Define a group to write the pre-proposal

## 6. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

- 6.1. CCEE Implementation plan.
- 6.2. [M&E platform](#) update.

**Discussion:** The CCEE Team Leader (TL) presented the scope and activities for the evaluation. The evaluation will be light, meant to provide constructive information to help the CRP. They plan to visit sites and interview key CRP people (CG and Local Partners). ICRISAT CC commented that the field visits are too extensive and Rajasthan should be dropped for the irrigated component and visit Chakwal to lo the system work. ICARDA CC and the CCEE team discussed on the logistical situation to visit Fergana valley. CCEE TL stressed the importance to meet as many partners as possible. ESA FC asked for the rationale to select sites. CCEE TL explained that several projects (budget investment) are mapped in each Action Sites and this is one criterion to visit them. In ESA the site with more investment was chosen. Lance Robinson explained that each center is mapping projects with different rationale. ILRI for example has an internal rule to map every project to one CRP even if it is not really integrated. Choosing sites on the basis of bilateral may not help to understand how the CRP is functioning. ESA FC explained that the minor site in ESA in terms of investment is more integrated than the other. ICRAF CC explained that in Nairobi there is good opportunity in terms of discussing with the staff stationed there. Michael





Baum asked on the time for the evaluation and the fact that it would be excellent to receive the feedback before the pre-proposal is finalized (end of July). The CCEE TL confirmed that the agreement with the RPC is to provide a preliminary report in time before the pre-proposal is submitted. CA FC explained that evaluating on the basis of bilaterals may be misleading since most of the bilateral work is not systems research. Initially the mapping was intended to align with the CRP but now several centers are reconsidering since it is not effective. ICARDA CC pointed out that the wisdom of having it mapped somewhere is questionable. W3 projects have a different origin. RPC explained that only W2 are funds the donors wish to provide to a CRP. W1 are funds to support the CGIAR reform while the W3 are from Donors who accept the reform but prefer to provide them to Center and not to specific CRPs. IWMI wish to see a forward looking evaluation rather than a second audit. It would be interested to have lessons draw from the different type of funding. NAWA FC explained that different centers have different criteria for mapping. ICARDA map project in the site, outside the site but within the country of the action sites and outside the countries of the action sites. The mapping is a dynamic process in the time. The Director explained that this reflects dysfunctionalities on how the transfer is happening from centers to programmes.

ICARDA CC explained that the % of projects (\$) than cannot be mapped to CRPs is 20%. This should be revised by the CO and Fund Council. The CCEE Team confirmed that they have noted all the discussion and keep into consideration in the overall evaluation. They will discuss this when meeting the CO office. The CCEE TL pointed out that the Program should nominate an oversight committee for the Evaluation. ICARDA CC explained that the CCEE is an opportunity to comment on the CO and constraining factors for the successful implementation of the CRP.

The RPC presented the improvement done in the M&E platform and some analysis performed on the bilateral portfolio. It was launched in December 2014. CORAF wish to use it for their organization and two CRPs requested a demonstration to adopt the platform (DC and GL). The analysis has not been conducted on the W1/W2 portfolio since the POWB have been revised and still some regions have not submitted it. SA FC requested who should load information in the platform and it was clarified that this is a responsibility of the activity leaders. The full set of activities will be validated by the Action Site Coordinators. The FC will approve the overall plan and send to the PMU. This will reduce emails, excel sheets and word files. The system is addressing the gap existing in the CO reporting between the POWB template and the Annual Report template. Using this system will reduce scientist's time spent on reporting. Lance Robison would like to have flexibility in the activities to tag them to more than one ALS. RPC clarified that multiple tagging is allowed and the system will be customized again after the decision of the S&IM. ICRAF CC complimented the platform and on the organization efforts. The problem is that the funds are limited and the PMU is demanding several information and scientists should have less and less reporting. RPC explained that we introduced the 6 month report since it is a requirement in the 2<sup>nd</sup> call and we can make a pre-test in this current phase. ICARDA CC requested how the access is working. RPC explained that there are several levels. Everybody can see all the activities and their products but only activity leaders can manage the activities. The approval process is hierarchical. ICARDA CC pointed out that the FC demand quantification but programmes don't want to be micromanaged. The CGIAR was always promising same outputs year by years and now it will not be possible and we should be realistic in what we promise otherwise we will be under-performers. CA FC asked how the new system integrates with the OCS. The Finance Program Coordinator (FPC) clarified that OCS has no module on M&E for outputs but only financial reporting. OCS capture the mapping of bilateral projects and this will be aligned with the M&E platform. RPC clarified that not all CRP-DS Partners are using OCS. Lance Robinson explained that CCAFS have a good structure for outcomes and impacts asking stories. He requested to have something similar. The Communication Program Coordinator (CPC) informed that they discussed in the Communication Focal Point Meeting on the use of the M&E tools. They



will create an impact stories template to be available online. ICARDA CC requested to have significant stories highlighted in the system. Templates have a tendency to hide the nuggets. ICRAF CC suggested having funds rewarding good stories in order to be more effective. CPC noted that when she commented on the 8% budget allocation to communication activities the focal points informed her that did not know about it and nor were they not involved in the POWB and AR preparation. ICRAF CC informed that it is important to avoid disconnected agenda. IWMI CC agreed to have a community of practice with a common approach. The Director explained that there is a lot of effort on NRM but there is less interest from the donor side. The new SRF will be focused on SLO1 and 2.

### Action points:

- ⇒ To establish an oversight committee for the CCEE
- ⇒ CCEE to finalize the field visits.
- ⇒ Center to revise the Bilateral projects in line with the new SRF and the S&IM outputs.
- ⇒ CPC to create a module for impact stories using the example from CCAFS

## 7. Fund Council Meeting.

### 7.1. Discussion on the CRP-DS presentation to the Fund Council

**Discussion:** The FC Meeting will be on April 29<sup>th</sup>. The ITF has identified the mission critical areas for research in short term, informs on why drylands and the focus will not be on the CRP but on the importance for drylands for CGIAR. The Director will have 15 minutes to reply on the ITF recommendations. The RMC should support the Director in order to prepare specific examples on how the progress is addressing mission critical areas. The ITF document has been submitted and should be the FC baseline for the next 10 years. It has been circulated to all S&IM participants. ICARDA CC commented that the ITF agenda does not set a priority of any kind. During the S&IM the RMC will provide feedback to the Director. ICRISAT CC and SA FC confirmed that we have tangible example to support the Director. The Director asked for example in the next week. ICRAF CC suggested showing complementary research. We are unique since we focus on the systems, social and institutions and government aspects. We need to take out the synthesis and show that we are different. The Director confirmed that we are not lagging behind anymore and in some areas, we are forging ahead. ILRI CC requested to clarify better the role of the ITF in helping writing the proposal. The Director confirms that the efforts will be required between May 13 and August 15 for the ITF and other selected scientists. ICRAF CC requested to work in a small group.

### Action points:

- ⇒ The RMC should support the Director between 12 and 17 April to prepare specific examples for the FC meeting
- ⇒ The ITF and selected scientists should be available to write the pre-proposal between May 13 and August 15.

## 8. Revised POWB.

### 8.1. Bilateral project portfolio analysis & review of [the guidelines](#) to map bilateral projects<sup>1</sup>.

### 8.2 POWB Review and System Research.

**Discussion:** The session 8.1 was discussed during the M&E session (6.2). The FPC presented the latest adjustments before the final approval of the SC. The Director urged all regions to support the ALS Expert to finalize the program impact pathways and the flagship impact

<sup>1</sup> [CIAT](#), [ICRAF](#), [IWMI](#), [Bioversity](#), [ILRI](#), [ICARDA](#), [ICRISAT](#).

pathways. It is important that it is understandable from outsiders. CIP CC suggested having a time frame for the impact pathway. NAWA CC suggested having an impact pathway where we clearly understand the contribution to IDOs and SLOs. The ALS expert confirmed that the Program Impact Pathway should be simple and generic while the action sites ones should be more comprehensive. ILRI CC requested to include the Center Coordinators in the work carried on by the ALS Expert with the action site coordinator. The Action Site Coordinators should liaise with the Center Coordinator. The Director agreed that the center coordinators should be included and copied in the communication. Michael Baum suggested that we should be specific and realistic showing that we are contributing only to some IDOs in order to identify our priorities. CCEE Team suggested including in the Impact Pathways the policy and legislative interactions.

### Action points:

⇒ ALS Expert to revise the Impact Pathways for the Program and support the Action Site Coordinators to finalize them

## 9. Brief on Program Documents.

### 9.1. Brief on partnership mobilization and fundraising strategy

**Discussion:** The CPC presented the requirement for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Call and specifically the partnership strategy. ICARDA CC commented on the request to have a 30% for partners' allocation and the fact that in some cases partners should be self-financing. WAS FC commented that the problem could be when discussion on data and information sharing especially when the partners are coming from the private sector. CA FC confirmed that some of these guidelines should be studied in order to be achieved without disrupting our main goals. Lance Robison and ICARDA CC commented that we are dominated by development perspective from the donor side and there is a heavy micromanagement of the budget. We need to object to the CO in order not to face this problem in the next 10 years. Centers and CRPs should react. ICRAF CC mentioned that with all this % for different request the budget for research will be 0 or below 0. Michael Baum confirmed that those percentages have never been monitored and this may change in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase.

### Action points:

⇒ PMU to develop a Partnership Strategy

## 10. Other.

### 10.1. Date and place for next

**Discussion:** CA FC requested a clarification on the RMC role if it is a consultative or decision-making body. Should we advise the SC or only discuss with no decisions? Should we leave each center to take decision on the cut? He suggested having a monthly online meeting to take decisions on how things are implemented in order to have the CO value our decisions. The Director confirmed that when there are no objections on the topics presented the decision is taken. ICARDA CC confirmed that the RMC should issue recommendation to the SC. CA FC recommended that W1/W2 should be used only for system research in order to have people working together. CIP CC confirmed that his center can provide several tools for systems analysis developed in South America. The Director expresses his interested to expand in South America when the budget will be available since there are a lot of opportunities. We should consider this in the second proposal. The RMC decided that the next place for the meeting should be



accessible with one flight and no visa issues (e.g. Dubai, Istanbul). The RMC should meet between October and December and the PMU will launch a doodle to verify the dates. The next RMC should present the 2016 POWB. ICARDA CC exhorted the smaller partner not to drop out but instead remain on board to develop truly integrated systems research proposals.

### Action points:

⇒ PMU to launch a doodle for the next RMC between October and December in one accessible place like Dubai or Istanbul.

**Next meeting scheduled:** Dubai/Istanbul, October-December (doodle invite)

**Minutes taken by:** Bao Quang Le, Karin Reinprecht, Rima Dabbagh, Tana Lala-Pritchard, Enrico Bonaiuti

**Document approved by:** Richard Thomas, CRP Director

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