

Workshop Report #5¹

Dialogue with Partners on the CGIAR Initiative: Global Open Agriculture and Food University Washington, D.C. August 26, 2004

Organized by IFPRI

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¹ Compiled by Valerie Rhoe and Suresh Babu

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Executive Summary

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University, a CGIAR initiative, shall be built on the essence of the CGIAR, which is knowledge creation and dissemination. The CGIAR System is an international public good knowledge creator, and therefore, it has an inherent interest in the downstream use of its resources and how the knowledge created can be utilized for maximum effect. With a desire to formally engage our partners in realizing this ideal, the CGIAR brought together partners from developing and developed country universities, university associations, distance learning institutions, and donors for a one-day dialogue on August 26, 2004. The dialogue encouraged participants to:

1. share information on the need and potentials for distance learning in agriculture and the capacity gaps in postgraduate agriculture and natural resources education;
2. identify ways for developing and developed country actors to collaborate through this initiative at the global level; and
3. discuss approaches and institutional arrangements for its sustainable implementation.

The sixty-five participants in this meeting represented Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and North America.

The dialogue was an opportunity for discussion, and not intended for decision making. The discussion brought about a general consensus, but diverging views were also voiced. It brought to the forefront ten reasons why the CGIAR should be involved with agricultural distance education:

1. Agriculture is becoming a more integrated field in terms of disciplines and sectors and the CGIAR has specialized knowledge in the disciplines and sectors that need to be integrated.
2. The goal of the CGIAR is to produce public goods.
3. CGIAR scientists have an inherent interest in having the public use the knowledge generated.
4. The CGIAR has 15 centers, 63 members, 4-co-sponsors, and 7,600 scientists and technical staff spread across 155 countries.
5. There is an increasing demand for non-traditional education.
6. There is a need to redefine curricula to meet current needs in markets.
7. The capacity of postgraduate academic staff needs to be strengthened.
8. Current postgraduate programs do not have adequate capacity to accommodate the number of student applicants.
9. Such an effort will help systematize agricultural knowledge.
10. The CGIAR can increase the interaction between professionals from different countries and geographical regions, allowing local knowledge to spread to other regions.

The stakeholders at this dialogue supported this CGIAR Program and are eager for it to be implemented, although with caution. It was agreed upon that the program will take a step-by-step approach in its implementation and will take into consideration the issues raised during the dialogue which include the following:

1. Accessibility of students and universities (professors) to information and communication technology (ICT);
2. Need for library support;
3. An approach for maximizing the impact of CGIAR knowledge through this Program;
4. Production of high-quality agricultural graduates exceeding market demand;
5. The need to strengthen undergraduate education as its quality has an impact on graduate education
6. Lack of qualified academic staff; and
7. High financing requirements.

Faced with these issues, the Global Open Agriculture and Food University shall undertake the following five activities. First, the program document will be revised to incorporate the dialogue's discussion. Second, a lunch meeting will be held at the 2004 CGIAR Annual General Meeting to provide an opportunity for partners to express how their organization can contribute and/ or collaborate. Third, a credible advisory body will be established. Fourth, initial partners for pilot studies will be identified. Fifth, the website will continued to be developed to increase awareness and to provide a forum for discussion.

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University can make a difference in solving food insecurity and poverty through increasing the quality and quantity of postgraduate education. Educating the next generation of agricultural researchers, policy advisors, and university professors will provide a solid basis for implementing sustainable technologies and policies.

Session 1 Vision of a Global Open Agricultural and Food University²

Vision for E-Agriculture and the Global Open Agriculture and Food University Serving the Rural Poor and Sustainable Development

Ian Johnson, Chairman, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Vice President, Sustainable Development, The World Bank

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University is an idea of the Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) that deserves to be teased out and thought through. This initiative can be built on the essence of the CGIAR, which is knowledge creation.

We are global public good knowledge creators, and therefore, we have an inherent interest to ensure that our knowledge is put to the best use and to think through the best way to ensure that our knowledge is used.

We, the CGIAR Centers, are knowledge intensive institutions. For the past 30 years, we have been in the business of creating knowledge. The CGIAR has published more than 2,000 peer review articles and books. Forty percent of these publications are co-authored with developing country partners. We are also getting more and more connected electronically. We have a Chief Information Officer, integrated databases, [FishBase](#) (a global information system), the Virtual Academy for the Semi-Arid Tropics ([VASAT](#)), and the System-wide Information Network for Genetic Resources ([SINGER](#)). The CGIAR website alone receives more than 300,000 visits a month.

For the CGIAR, E-learning, E-knowledge, and E-education is the next frontier. We have to be in the E-business, otherwise we will be dinosaurs. Distance learning is no longer a joke, it is a reality, and it is a way of educating people who would not otherwise get an education. In a way, it will open up new opportunities. Therefore, the question is not whether we are in distance learning, but how and in what way.

This is the right time for E-learning because we have the right technologies and the expertise in training. Educating scientists is not something that is new to the CGIAR, but can we scale it up to a level to commiserate the new challenges facing agriculture? In the past 33 years, the Centers have trained 75,000 people. In 2003, CGIAR scientist trained 676 students at the masters-level and 719 students at the doctoral-level. We have done a lot of this work, can we have a vision that systematizes it, ensures it relevancy, and scales it up to a level that could not be thought of 33 years ago when the CGIAR was founded?

The CGIAR needs to answer two questions: Is there a demand and does the CGIAR have a role in meeting this demand? If the answer to these two questions is yes, then the role and approach need to be defined. Three points illustrate the demand for distance postgraduate education in agriculture.

1. Analysis illustrates that there is a need for ten times the number of postgraduates in agriculture in the developing world, and conventional agricultural universities cannot meet this need.

² Agenda and Participant list are in Appendix A and B, respectively.

2. There is an increasing demand for non-traditional education. Poor students in developing countries do not have the time or money to spend 2-3 years at a university. However, they do have the extraordinary desire to learn. Non-traditional modes such as distance learning can bring a new entrance of students into the education system.
3. There are new content expertise needs. The needs of the next 35 years are not exactly the same needs as those of the past. Agriculture is becoming a different business and one cannot think of it without considering ecology, global environment, climate change, water availability, trade issues, and risk management. Increasingly, the link between the public good dimension and the private good dimension is coming closer together. Farmers are also entrepreneurs. They do not want to farm to only be food secure but also to gain wealth. Farmers want to know more about the crops and systems necessary to get their products to the markets. Markets are now much more complex with farmers reaching the market, the market reaching the port, and the input from the port reaching the farmer.

There is a new generation of agricultural policymakers and practitioners in the public and private sector. This new breed will need to be able to integrate different fields such as ecology, water management, and social dimensions into agriculture. The next generation of farmers will need to be aware of regulatory, trade, and ecological issues as well as issues as they pertain to traditional knowledge, such as animal health. Government employees will also need to be insightful and thoughtful in the way they work on these multiple issues.

The CGIAR does have the comparative advantage in taking on this initiative. Agriculture is becoming more and more integrated; now you cannot think of one component of agriculture without considering others. For example, when operating small-scale livestock, a farmer needs to consider water management, landscape, social issues, communicative disease, health issues, and productivity gains, which are all absolutely imperative. They are also a part of the CGIAR agenda.

An open agriculture university is also CGIAR business. The CGIAR has been accused of straying from its mission in the past, but this initiative is part of the CGIAR mission. CGIAR scientists are desperate to ensure that their work is used in the best possible way. The CGIAR is the wholesaler of research which needs more efficient retail outlets. We do have an inherent interest in the downstream use of our knowledge, and how this knowledge can be used for its maximum effect.

We are an extraordinary global enterprise with 15 centers, 63 members, 4 co-sponsors, and 7,600 scientists and technical staff spread across 155 countries. We have specialized knowledge in most of the components of the agriculture sector. We can pull this knowledge together into an integrative model as good as anyone. It is not that we are creating a new product; we are just building it on as an adjunct to our core business and core values.

We do have a role in meeting the educational needs of developing country agricultural professional and it is a legitimate role. It is close to our core mission and mandate to create global knowledge. Our role in capacity strengthening and the opportunities available are really at the watershed and we must use our comparative advantage and these opportunities to make impact on the ground.

Open Distance Learning in Agriculture and African Capacity Development

Agnes W. Mwang'ombe, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nairobi

Over the past 45 years, sub-Saharan Africa has undergone many social and political changes resulting in negative and positive impacts. For example, in the 1990s, African countries implemented subsidy removal programs, which negatively effected education, health, and agriculture. Eastern and Southern Africa depend heavily on agriculture for income and food with the majority of the population living in rural areas. Over eighty percent of the farmers are subsistence farmers with only a small percentage of the farmers growing market-oriented crops. Of these small-scale farmers, 80% are women.

Food insecurity in Africa is still a problem as 33.8 million people in Southern and Eastern Africa do not have sufficient food intake and six million children under the age of 5 die from hunger and malnutrition. This situation is aggravated by the high level of poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These numbers threaten to remain high because the region continues to face famine and ineffective application and use of agricultural technology.

To help eradicate poverty and food insecurity in Eastern and Southern Africa, capacity needs to be strengthened in agriculture research. However, the education sector has suffered with the removal of subsidies, reduction in loans from donors, and poor economic performance. As a result, university faculties have deteriorated and staff morale is low, leading to “brain drain.”

In order for the university system to support the government’s efforts in eradicating poverty and food insecurity, the universities need a mission that includes investing effectively in building the capacity of people in rural areas. The universities also need well-trained and motivated postgraduate academic staff; support for postgraduate studies; redefined curricula to match current market requirements including short-term courses; good infrastructure and facilities; brilliant and committed postgraduate students; and funds for quality, efficient and sustainable agricultural training. Postgraduate education will also benefit from information and communication technology (ICT) when it is adequately accessible. Currently, access to ICT is more talk than reality. When available in Africa, internet and email will revolutionize the way information is accessed and transferred. However, Eastern and Southern Africa countries are not in a position to fully support such programs without external support.

The Faculty of Agriculture in the University of Nairobi has 13 Masters of Science programs³ and 500 hectares of land for research. However, Masters-level program at the University of Nairobi need further improvement and implementation. Therefore, the specific objectives of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University for sub-Saharan Africa should be the development of human resources to guide agricultural policy development and other agricultural activities and strengthening the capacities of collaborating universities through staff development including retooling, research, knowledge sharing, and institutional development.

³Masters of Science Programs include plant pathology, crop protection, agricultural resources management, food science and technology, applied nutrition, agricultural economics, soil science, livestock production systems, range management, and land and soil water management.

The Program could be adapted for sub-Saharan Africa, but the implementers need to remember the handicaps: accessibility to computers and internet, library support (TEALL, AGORA), and videoconferences. Course content and development should be interactive and should strengthen existing programs and not attempt to develop new programs. The integration of agriculture into distance education should be addressed since most disciplines in agriculture employ practical training. Furthermore, for courses to be owned by universities and effective, they need to be approved by the offering institutions. Other points for consideration include the fee structure and the availability of scholarships. The current fee for the University of Nairobi is US \$5,000, but the intake of students into the postgraduate programs is low.

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University is a great initiative that needs to be supported because it will strengthen faculties of agriculture, which will help free sub-Saharan African countries from the vicious cycles of famine and poverty.

Open Distance Education in Agriculture – FAO’s Global Efforts

Jacques Diouf, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (presented by Anton Mangstl, Director, Library and Documentation Systems Division, FAO)

In today’s world of affluence, more than 800 million men, women and children, almost all in developing countries, suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition. At the World Food Summit in 1996 and the Millennium Summit in 2000, the world’s nations agreed on the goal of halving this number by the year 2015. But progress in most developing countries has been slow and sometimes even regressive. What is needed is both the political will to achieve this goal and additional resources, both financial and human. Developing countries may often be poor in financial terms, but they have an enormous potential in human terms.

With more than 70 percent of the world’s hungry living in rural areas of developing countries and depending on agriculture for their livelihoods, clear investment in agriculture is a vital component of the fight against hunger. But the fact is that today, too few prospective students in developing countries have access to higher education in agriculture. And those students that do manage to gain access suffer from a range of obstacles: a lack of appropriate resources, a limited choice of subjects and academic programs, inflexibility in course selection, and a lack of up-to-date educational material and trained staff.

To tackle some of these constraints, distance education offers a strategy to strengthen content, outreach, and coverage of tertiary education institutions.

In developed countries, Internet-based courses and even “virtual” universities are already having a significant impact in extending the reach of higher education systems. Yet, although these teaching methods could offer numerous opportunities for agricultural education institutions in developing countries, many have so far been unable to benefit from them because of low quality and expensive access to the Internet, resulting from poor telecommunications infrastructure.

At the Food and Agriculture Organization we believe that improving access to education and the quality of higher education in agriculture are major factors in enhancing rural sustainable development and agricultural productivity in developing countries. Indeed, FAO is already actively involved not only in conventional education and training, but also in distance education for agricultural professionals. FAO has been developing its activities in agricultural education and training in close collaboration and

partnership with institutions and organizations such as the CGIAR, the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie, the Commonwealth of Learning and the Colectivo de Instituciones and the Asociación de Universidades de América Latina y España.

There is now a clear need for the establishment of a formal and coordinated international initiative in agricultural distance learning. This will require strong partnerships between the key players, including traditional and open universities, training institutions and other interested parties in the international development community.

One concrete action that could be taken by the partnership would be to develop an Internet-based gateway providing a comprehensive directory of distance education courses at tertiary level in agriculture available at universities and colleges worldwide. This initiative could be taken a step further by creating a forum for universities to exchange educational materials and courseware in agriculture, to address the issue of improving learning materials.

The basic elements of the partnership and actions such as the ones proposed before would allow universities and colleges to address the high demand for quality agricultural education at the tertiary level. And we are here today to take some important first steps. On behalf of FAO, I would like to recommend continuing to develop the Global Open Agriculture and Food University, with the ultimate goal of offering high quality, flexible, affordable, and accessible higher education in agriculture, natural resources, forestry, and fisheries. We are honored to participate in this important dialogue focused on serving the Rural Poor and assisting Sustainable Development through distance education.

Agricultural Research – Role of Capacity Strengthening and Higher Education in Developing Countries

Per Pinstrup-Andersen, H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University and Chair, Science Council, CGIAR

The Science Council of the CGIAR supports this initiative and will contribute to it when called upon.

The world is not on track to achieve either the World Food Summit Goal or the Millennium Development Goal. The role of science in achieving these goals is very important and the CGIAR and the Future Harvest Centres can help significantly in this capacity by addressing the question “What does it really take to put science to work for the poor?” In the most simplistic sense, it takes resources: money and good scientists. We know the investment in agriculture research for developing countries is below what it should be and that we are short of highly-qualified scientists in developing countries. Therefore, we need to develop both. The Global Open Agriculture and Food University is willing to provide one of these components—training high-quality scientists, and those with access to funds in this room will hopefully help with the other. It is a disgrace that we invest so little in agricultural problems to solve some of the most important problems in the world.

But more is needed than having access to resources. These resources—human and financial—need to be used wisely, which means setting priorities and sticking with them. A critical mass of resources should be allocated to solve very important problems rather than spreading resources broadly. The Science Council can help by suggesting a small number of priority areas that the CGIAR and partners should work on, allowing us to focus sharply.

The Science Council recognizes that strengthening national institutions is paramount for resolving food insecurity and poverty. The CGIAR can only do its job if the national institutions are strong – we can not replace them, therefore, we have to help make them strong. The Global Open Agriculture and Food University can help strengthen national and regional institutions. We have more than 1,000 senior scientists – tremendous capacity that can be put to work to develop the future generation of scientist in developing countries. The Centers have done a lot of training, but we can do lot more with the Global Open Agriculture and Food University.

In sub-Saharan Africa, research has been taken away from universities, which has resulted in weakened university systems. This University can help bring research back into universities. This initiative can make a difference in the lives of the poor.

Although the Program should be cautious, it should take risks and move forward. It needs a responsible governance structure, but the governance structure should be lean and not have excessive committees - every dollar spent on a committee is a dollar less for education.

Discussion

Hubert Zandsta, Director General of CIP, raised two set of questions:

- How can we channel the distance education effort of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University to increase the impact of the Future Harvest centers on areas with extreme poverty and environmental degradation? The Future Harvest Centers know these areas and the technologies that can help change the productivity and sustainability of these areas. How can Global Open Agriculture and Food University activities be funnelled to support these changes?
- What can we do to help the large number of postgraduates that maybe generated from this Program? There is a weak institutional base for employment and salaries are low.

Godfrey Humphrey, Executive Dean of Agriculture, South Africa stated that there is a problem with weak undergraduates, which is the basis for postgraduate students. What can we do to strengthen this base?

Kevin Cleaver, Vice President of the Rural Development Sector Board, World Bank, reminded us that there are several distance learning initiatives and was wondering how this Program can collaborate, partner, and/or compete with them.

Joachim von Braun responded by explaining that this initiative should complement and cooperate with partners including FAO. Some areas of cooperation could include transforming course material for e-readiness, transforming models via electronic forms (internet-based or CD-Rom), obtaining content through FAO's outreach and inreach. This Program is complementary because it can provide the faculty of professors with improved teaching materials.

With regards to the mushrooming of distance education programs, von Braun stated that in reality there is much talk about distance education programs but very little in terms of implementation because leadership is weak in this area. The partnerships of the CGIAR is a key added value for making this a reality and a success.

A bit of diversity and competition in distant learning is welcomed and healthy.

Ola Smith, Executive Secretary of GFAR, stressed the need to be cautious and to begin with only a small number of institutions.

Another participant stated that we need to work with universities because they have their own agendas, content, and pedagogy. Universities would not see themselves as retailers; rather see the CGIAR as content providers.

One participant added that this program will have increased its value-added if it develops a community of practice, record lessons learned; systematize activities, and scale-up CGIAR capacity strengthening activities.

Ian Johnson, Chairman of the CGIAR, argued that if we believe the CGIAR can generate unique knowledge, and then we also have the comparative advantage in distributing this unique knowledge. He emphasized that we should not stray from the CGIAR mandate because we would then go beyond our abilities. Therefore, the Program should focus at the postgraduate level and not at the high-school or undergraduate level. He stated that there is great enthusiasm within researchers to share their knowledge. He referred to the Global Open Agriculture and Food University as a wholesaler, and the universities as retail outlets for content. He reemphasized the need to go slow, but move quickly. He stated that there are impediments, specifically infrastructure, but the infrastructure base is changing dramatically. He believes that in the next ten years, many countries will become more and more connected. He ended by stating that it is the responsibility of donors to determine how they can complement and facilitate this initiative.

Agnes Mwang'ombe focused her response on the availability of technology, but the underutilization of it. There is a need to go to the training institution in order to reach the appropriate practitioners who can bring these technologies to the farmers. She concluded by stating that the advantage of the CGIAR centers is that they have the technology, hence, we should get them on board to get the technology to the farmers.

Anton Mangstl stated the connectivity issue is a symptom of the chicken and the egg. He stated that if we offer good content then the investments in connectivity will come. The World Bank has an important role in facilitating this process. He reminded us that information and knowledge transfers into power.

Kevin Cleaver agreed that competition is healthy on good ideas not so much on details. He also stated that this Program has shared its documents very early in the process to obtain feedback and support.

Session 2: Global Open Agriculture and Food University Concept

The Concept of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University

Chair: Per Pinstrup-Andersen, H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University and Chair, Science Council, CGIAR

Presenters:

Suresh Babu, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI

Joachim von Braun, Director General, IFPRI

Discussion opening: *Adel El-Beltagy, Director General, ICARDA*
Peter Materu, Former Executive Director, African Virtual University

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University is addressing a large set of problems related to agricultural development: capacity and knowledge base constraints, low quality of higher education, high cost of postgraduate education, high mobility of trained people, and limited scaling up of capacity development efforts by traditional means. Distance education can address these problems by providing cost- and time-effective programs by using modern technologies.

The CGIAR centers are in the position to deal with the problems and should do so because they have the knowledge, enormous experience, and are located all around the globe. For example, the CGIAR has a large number of training materials available, which is not being used in the classroom as much as they could be. The system also has over 1,000 senior researchers. The role of the CGIAR centers should be to provide professional instruction in partnership with regional and national institutions. The CGIAR's major strength would lie in content development and delivery support. The Global Open Agriculture and Food University will be able to occupy a niche by reducing the cost of education and making the material more effectively available.

For getting started, the Global Open Agriculture and Food University program requires a sound assessment of needs and information-delivery requirements, careful planning, and strong partnership with educational institutions. Within the CGIAR system, the Global Open Agriculture and Food University will be able to cooperate with other initiatives such as ICT-KM and the Knowledge Banks.

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University will:

- provide applied postgraduate teaching in agriculture, natural resources, livestock, forestry, and fisheries;
- provide quality, flexible, accessible, and affordable education;
- collaborate with national and regional universities; and
- enhance research and analytical capacity.

The key factors that will enable the idea to be converted to reality are identifying and building key partnerships, learning about efforts in agriculture distance education already underway, and developing high-quality material. The CGIAR centers should embrace the idea of being in the business of helping local faculty to teach. With all the centers already hosting and working with M.Sc. and Ph.D. students, the Global Open Agriculture and Food University will supplement these efforts.

The primary beneficiaries of the program will be universities; postgraduate students being secondary beneficiaries. The characteristics of the postgraduate students could be mid-career professionals, civil servants, NARS researchers, university faculty, and participants from international organizations, the private sector, and non-government organization.

In the process of developing the program document, partners were invited to provide their ideas and many contributed suggestions. The program has developed to the point that recently the Global Open Agriculture and Food University became an official program of the CGIAR. A subcommittee of five Centers' directors has been formed to support this project. The CGIAR also received very positive feedback from partners and donors. A list of events that have led up to the present stage of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University is in Appendix C.

Joachim von Braun delved into some conceptual issues relating to the functions of the institution. The Program should function horizontally with other institutions. The governance structure of the Program should be lean and flexible. The structure proposed almost already exists, the only two new groups are the advisory committee and the expert groups.

The main messages regarding funding is that core money and unrestricted money will be absolutely necessary for this Program to take off and be successful. The Program will call on the existing traditional donors, but the strategy is to not cut into the existing pie. New donors will be approached such as those who finance higher education and private sector foundations.

Since much of this program will be funded through donors and the outputs will be global public goods, issues regarding property rights need to be addressed. The Global Open Agriculture and Food University could consider a “creative commons” approach that is being spearheaded by scholars at Stanford University.

Discussion

Adel El-Beltagy stated that the centers are involved with organizations in the North and the South and the CGIAR is already in the business of preparing postgraduates. He said, “It’s a reality that we are running out of time on this earth as humans. If we don’t make a difference we will pay a high price.” The Global Open Agriculture and Food University is how we can harvest the global synergy.

Peter Materu stated that this initiative will revitalize the interest among young people and the not so young people. He recommends thinking big, but starting small and suggests that it should focus on niche areas such as those that the partner universities want, but do not have the capacity to offer. He stressed that national universities would not be happy about competition with granting degrees. He recommended a flexible delivery-learning model to be used. He also suggested that we work with partners beginning from the content development stage and that partner selection criteria should be developed. The African Virtual University held a competitive process for selecting partners. Different partners may be needed for different activities such as funding, advocacy, and dissemination. There are also strategic and interest partners, Partners that we have identified and worked closely with and partners that are interested and have come to us. However, before selecting partners there is a need to determine the beneficiaries based on the needs assessment. Should the Program focus at the postgraduate level? He concluded by addressing the transition from standard commercial information technology platforms to open source courseware.

Kevin Cleaver recommended that the existing committees within the CGIAR should be used. Also, partnerships with institutions from outside the CGIAR is key. Krishna Alluri reemphasized the following comments made by Peter Materu:

1. think big but act small,
2. quality insurance,
3. needs assessment, and
4. Strategic and implementing partners (common standards).

Mansour Hussain of the Embassy of Egypt mentioned that Egyptian universities have had a successful agreement with Microsoft to allow students access to the software for a few dollars. Also, Iranian universities have set-up agreements with 2 international publishers for free access to their journals.

Session 3: Resource and Partnership Mobilization Perspectives

Panel Chair: Kevin Cleaver, Director and Chair, Rural Development Sector Board, World Bank

Compilation of comments from:

Harris Mule, Executive Director, Top Investment & Mgt. Svcs., Ltd

Hippolyte Fofack, Senior Economist, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Division, World Bank

Franklin Moore, Director, Environment and Science, United States Agency for International Development

David Sammons, Associate Dean, International Agriculture, Purdue University

Theo Van De Sande, Head, Research and Communication Division, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Stein Bie, Special Adviser, Noragric, Agricultural University of Norway

Michel Petit, Professor, Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen de Montpellier

In Kevin Cleaver's opening comments he stated there is an implicit suggestion of high financing requirements not because of content, but for infrastructure, computers, connectivity, fellowships, and complimentary capacity building in partner institutions. He warned that such projects are always more expensive than expected, always take more time, and less beneficiaries are reached than estimated.

He raised concerns about where the funds will come from. Should it come from existing CGIAR funds? If so, what are the opportunity costs? He stressed that funding is growing, but so are the needs at the CGIAR centers. If we are to move ahead rapidly, money will have to be diverted to this project. If it is slow and measured, it may be able to mobilize the additional funds needed. Therefore, the tradeoff between speed and diversion of money needs to be considered. He is supportive of the cost recovery that is proposed, but wonders how to recover. He is willing to spend some time thinking about new sources of funds to help avoid diversion of funds, but he does not think the World Bank will be able to increase funding for this Program. As a World Bank representative this approach is useful and that we should get involved with the distance learning movement.

Harris Mule said that there is a demand for e-learning, but the selected programs need to be demand driven. Last year, a study in agricultural economics was undertaken that found that undergraduates wanted to go to graduate training and they wanted postgraduate study in agribusiness, institutional economics, and international trade. He agreed with Pinstrop-Andersen's comment that to be successful, it must operate in the context of a successful faculty. A successful faculty requires serious training. He believed we can improve the quality of teaching and the quality of education. He mentioned that there are institutions in Africa who would be interested in helping to raise funds for such a program. However, our partners must deliver high-quality outputs and students. He thought the effective demand for postgraduates could be raised because two other existing M.Sc. programs in Eastern and Southern Africa have had much success in their graduates finding employment.

Hippolyte Fofack informed the group about the experience of the African Institute for Science and Technology (AIST). To finance this program, it established an Endowment Fund to promote excellence in sciences and research in sub-Saharan Africa, which will rely on the generosity of both public and private entities around the world. The Program also established a Consortium of Friends in the major countries around the world, which will be an important strategy for resource mobilization and long-term financial sustainability.

The Global Open Agriculture and Food University can collaborate with AIST in several areas:

- African Scientific Committee,
- curriculum development and harmonization,
- establishment of academic departments,
- establishment of Consortium of Friends,
- faculty recruitment, and
- resources mobilization, including organization of a Donor Round Table.

Moore presented his thoughts from a four element perspective: shareholders (knowledge creators and knowledge disseminators) and stakeholder (knowledge users and resource providers). He places his comments in the context of a creator-disseminator context. He states there are four kinds of relationships—competitive, full partners, consortia, and cooperative—that the Program can use. The choice of the relationship may differ depending on the user. In this framework there are several points he wanted to get across:

1. Branding depends on the relationship
2. Cost recovery is important but how do you recover cost with global public goods. What are the IPRs involved?
3. Resource mobilization depends on the donor's decision to determine if the institution or relationship has a comparative advantage. If tuition is charged how do you reconcile it with the public goods approach?
4. The CGIAR is a knowledge generator and it must make a decision of how far it wants to go as a knowledge disseminator.

David Sammons stated that we are trying to finance a new approach/ process to learning, which links CGIAR knowledge with knowledge of other institutions for dissemination. The resources that the Program will need are content, human, and financial. Knowledge that is current, relevant, and vigorous is essential. However, content needs to be screened for relevance and accuracy and delivered in an efficient and effective manner. He mentioned that there are interested parties in the private and public sector that would be interested in contributing to this Program. To mobilize resources the Programs needs to be able to answer the following questions:

- What is unique about this program?
- What gap would it fulfill?
- How will it be marketed?
- Where are the beneficiaries?
- Where are the contents?
- Where are the financial resources?

Theo van de Sande said that the CGIAR mandate is research and not capacity strengthening, but this mandate is outdated, especially following the creation of ISNAR. Millions of dollars have been invested in developing countries for the past decades, but there are many none functioning NARS because of the lack of prestige, status, and infrastructure. He believes it is absolutely vital for the CGIAR to set-up an explicit strategy for capacity strengthening and that this Program should be firmly embedded in it because there is no concerted effort for strengthening research in developing countries. The ISNAR Division should play a catalytic role in it – stimulating and initiating such a program.

Stein Bie of NORAGRIC made a presentation on resources. He states that there is a dual neglect of agricultural universities and faculties in the developing countries by their own governments and by multilateral and bilateral aid organizations, which threaten the revival of assistance for the primary rural

industries in poor countries. To study agricultural science is not in vogue. Agriculture has low status among school leavers. Parents are not encouraging their children to study agriculture. There are few secondary school leavers who have farming background. In industrialized countries, both in Western Europe and in North America there has been a clear decline in the quality and quantity of school leavers wanting to study agricultural and related sciences. Agriculture has been eradicated from the university prospectuses of a great many universities.

All of the above lead to a challenging situation for any initiative trying to revitalize or modernize university education in the agricultural sciences. “Agriculture” is certainly no winner among school leavers, parents, national governments, multilateral investment agencies, bilateral aid agencies, philanthropists, and taxpayers. Funders normally back winners, not losers. So, if we are convinced agriculture needs new, bright, young brains of both sexes, how do we attract finances that will produce such talent, and how do we encourage the talent to stay with agriculture afterwards?

The technicalities of how a Global Open Agricultural and Food University would be constituted and operate is an important subject, but separate from the quality, quantity and financing parameters of its actual students need to be addressed. If conventional agricultural universities and faculties are experiencing a general and severe talent drought, the shine of e-learning will soon fade when linked to a subject like agriculture. Global Open Agriculture and Food University cannot attract, produce, and keep for the agricultural industries good talent unless there is a financing mechanism, for students as well, that can significantly outshine the negative vibes currently associated with agriculture. Neither can the CGIAR, nor multilateral and bilateral aid agencies – all with clear poverty reduction or alleviation strategies - warrant the construct of a learning facility that primarily attracts the attention of rich parents from particular regions.

A possible key for financing may not primarily lie in direct funding but in creating a highly attractive student grant and/or loan facility, which include a component of fees. A limited period postgraduation bonding to the agricultural industries may be appropriate. An endowment and/or revolving fund aimed at getting the number of high quality agriculture graduates sharply up over a 10-20 year period may be an attractive investment proposition for the whole spectrum of donors, and not the least enlightened national governments.

The key to this Program’s success lies in capturing significant better school-leaving talents than it is currently done by residential agricultural universities. The key to financing this Program is therefore primarily a question of financially encouraging good students to get a good agricultural education, and securing that they stay in that field for some time after graduation.

Discussion

Michel Petite highlighted four perceived challenges that this Program could face: magnitude, multiple sources, education windows, and financial commitments from the South. He recommended that in order to respond to these challenges coalition building is needed, as well as pilot studies. He also suggested that we learn lessons from the Mediterranean Region.

Session 4: Regional Perspectives: Needs Assessment for Open Distance Learning in Agriculture and Natural Resources: South Asia, Southeast Asia, East and Southern Africa, and Latin America

Panel Chair: Francisco J.B. Reifschneider, Director, CGIAR

Compilation of comments from:

Panjab Singh, Director, School of Agriculture, Indira Gandhi National Open University

Levi Akundabweni, Chairman, Crop Science Department, University of Nairobi

Felix Librero, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Open University (Represented by Rex Navarro, ICRISAT)

Glenn Galloway, Director of Education, Dean of the Graduate School, Tropical Agronomic Center for Research and Education

Barney Erasmus, Head, Department of Business Management, University of South Africa

Krishna Alluri, Education Specialist, Food Security and Environment, Commonwealth of Learning

Needs vary by region, country, and within countries, therefore, it is important for this program to understand the needs for distance education in agriculture. In light of the constant changing of needs as a result of globalization, the Global Open Agriculture and Food University needs to be flexible and complement existing programs. During this session, six representatives of developing country universities and distance education programs addressed needs for distance education in agriculture.

Drs. Panjab Singh, Levi Akundabweni, and Rex Navarro provided a brief summary of the preliminary needs assessment for South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Eastern and Southern Africa. Dr. Singh emphasized that distance education is no longer an exception, but necessary in order to build the critical mass of educated agriculture professionals not only in the large cities but also in marginal areas. Dr. Akundabweni highlighted that such an initiative is needed because students are looking for programs that are not currently offered at the traditional university in the region. Dr. Navarro informed the participants that there would be much demand of open distance learning. This statement is congruent with the findings from South Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa. For details about the needs assessment methodology and results see www.openaguniversity.cgiar.org.

Glenn Galloway from CATIE mentioned that the profession is evolving and diversifying and therefore there will be more demands on education and continuing education, and students are interested in how to solve problems, methodologies, and not a list of facts. He said distance education is needed in Latin America because it will lower the cost of education; provide flexible education (time and space); and supplement the lack of resources (human and financial) for addressing educational needs of professionals throughout Latin America, especially those living in less accessible regions. There are three factors that drive the increase for higher education in agriculture for Latin America:

- Rapid evolution and diversification of professions. All professionals must take advantage of educational opportunities to be informed of, and manage up-to-date concepts and methodologies.
- Growing need to communicate with professionals in related disciplines.
- Agricultural development and management of natural resources require permanent processes of research and adaptation of knowledge. Higher education plays an important role in these processes.

Distance education programs can complement traditional agriculture postgraduate education in Latin America by opening up postgraduate education to persons otherwise excluded. Developing distance education materials will help systematize knowledge and increase interaction among professionals from different countries and geographical regions.

The traditional institutions in Latin America can work with this Global Open Agriculture and Food University in five ways:

- utilizing distance education technology in strategic courses;
- developing continuing education programs for graduates;
- creating specializations using distance education technologies and methodologies;
- including distance education courses from other centers in their curriculum; and
- supporting the use of distance education technologies and in seeking funding opportunities to finance the preparation of distance education teaching materials.

Emerging areas of interest for agriculture higher education are environmental issues in agriculture, including such topics as organic production, certification, and waste management; integrated pest management and participatory methodologies; biotechnology in agriculture; business management of small and medium enterprises, and trade issues. It is also important to tap into the great research capacity of the CGIAR system by advising postgraduate research.

If the University devoted efforts to these topics it will be of great interest and relevance to the region. He stressed that the agricultural research community in many countries is aging, and therefore, it is important to prepare more young people for agriculture research.

This University can help achieve the capacity needs in Latin America by cooperating with existing programs; provide support to the development of distance education materials and the realization of courses (including pilot experiences); sharing information about other distance education programs; and participating in resource mobilization.

Barney Erasmus of the University of South Africa (UNISA) highlighted three issues that need to be addressed: 1) clear roles of partner institutions, 2) clear understanding of the cost for partner participation, and 3) copyright issues. He also recommended three subject matter areas that the University could strengthen: marketing, financial management, and entrepreneurship.

Krishna Alluri of the Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) emphasized its contributions to this program. CoL can facilitate open distance learning policy and has expertise in Learning Management System, Open Source distance learning, self-learning materials, and audio and ICT training.

Session 5: Drawing on Strengths - How Developing Country and Developed Country Universities Can Collaborate with Global Open Agriculture and Food University

Panel Chair: Wilberforce Kisamba-Mugerwa, Division Director, IFPRI

Compilation of comments from:

Mandivamba Rukuni, Program Director, W. K. Kellogg Foundation

William Dar, Director General, ICRISAT

Mort Neufville, Executive Vice President, NASULGC

Jonathan Kydd, Director, Distance Learning Programme, Imperial College London

Joachim Voss, Director General, CIAT

Willis Oluoch Kosura, Coordinator, East Africa Professional M.Sc. Program in Agricultural Economics

The last session of the afternoon provided an opportunity for developing and developed country partners to express how developed and developing country universities can work together generally and opportunities for specific organizations to express how they can individually contribute to this initiative.

Developed and developing country partners can contribute in a variety of ways to this initiative. The discussion highlighted four sets of activities in which partners can contribute. The first set are activities that both developed and developing country partners can contribute, two sets are activities that should come from developing or developed country universities, and the last set of activities are additional ones that this Program can offer.

Contributions from developed and developing countries:

- a. Encouraging interplay between students from developed and developing countries;
- b. Student exchanges with CGIAR Centers;
- c. Developing curriculum;
- d. Staff exchange (deliver knowledge and others gain experience);
- e. Developing modules;
- f. Supervising research of postgraduate students;
- g. Visiting scientist exchange program;
- h. Supervising theses;
- i. Collaborating in joint publications;
- j. Designing method for developing modules; and
- k. Designing knowledge transfer processes.

Contributions from developing countries:

- a. Providing access to tele-centers for students;
- b. Enhancing electronic connectivity to allow sharing of information and teaching materials;
- c. Facilitating effective engagement with developed countries and the Global Open Agriculture and Food University with relevant local institutions;
- d. Providing critical mass;
- e. Translating courses into local language;
- f. Having relevant infrastructure and technology to meet local needs;
- g. Conducting a needs assessment for appropriate courses and academic program;
- h. Encouraging governments and prospective employers of developing countries to accept recipients of these degree programs and courses as qualified and competent and not second-class degree recipients;
- i. Using distance education technology in strategic courses;
- j. Developing continuing education programs for graduates;
- k. Creating specializations using distance education technologies and methodologies;
- l. Including distance education courses from other centers in the curriculum;
- m. Supporting the use of distance education; and
- n. Seeking funding opportunities to finance the preparation of distance education teaching materials.

Contributions from developed countries:

- a. Training staff in fields facing deficiency but vital to developing country development;
- b. Extending research programs to developing countries;
- c. Accrediting courses;
- d. Assisting in strengthening higher education system in the developing countries;

- e. Assisting in infrastructure development;
- f. Assisting in the integration of the learning and discover functions;
- g. Serving in advisory capacities; and
- h. Participating in curriculum design, development of teaching materials, and modules as well as course and curriculum reviews.

Contributions from the Global Open Agriculture and Food University:

- a. Forging links with local universities to extend distance education in agriculture ;
- b. Establishing competitive scholarships;
- c. Establishing links for supervision of postgraduate students;
- d. Conducting international open forum on academic and training issues in agriculture and food;
- e. Making research reports, case studies, and other materials available on CD-ROMS for use by developing country universities;
- f. Enhancing collaborative research between scientists of developed and developing countries;
- g. Establishing research-funded initiatives for staff in developing countries;
- h. Facilitating research information sharing through affordable schemes such as TEEAL and subscriptions to journals;
- i. Organizing forums, symposiums, and seminars on various issues on agriculture and food issues resulting from collaborative research with developing country universities;
- j. Establishing information centers in developing countries for public use;
- k. Facilitating international collaboration to help improve the quality of instruction in regional and national universities;
- l. Developing modules;
- m. Establishing a global repository of learning objects;
- n. Delivering collaborative degree programs;
- l. Assisting in designing method for developing modules;
- o. Assisting in designing the process in which knowledge is transferred;
- p. Supporting institutions for maximizing the use of agriculture research;
- q. Cooperating with existing programs;
- r. Making available knowledge and experiences gained in distance education; and
- s. Participating in resource mobilization with key partners.

Imperial College, London

Jonathan Kydd, Director, Distance Learning Programme, Imperial College London stated, that the Imperial College, London has seven agriculture distance learning programs containing 70 modules; the college is willing to provide these modules through a “creative commons” approach. The seven agriculture-related programs are agricultural and environmental economics, agribusiness, food chain management, environmental management, sustainable agriculture, rural development, and biodiversity management and conservation. The college also can offer expertise in policies and activities needed to ensure that course content is updated. With its 20 years of experience in setting up distance education programs and offering education, the college can guide the Program about pedagogic models that have worked for postgraduate-level distance education, processes for content development and quality assurance, and approaches for working with partners.

Session 6: The Way Forward: Closing Comments and Suggestions for the Way Forward: Towards Implementation

Francisco Reifschneider, Director, CGIAR
Joachim von Braun, Director General, IFPRI

The dialogue was an opportunity for discussion, and not intended for decision making. The discussion brought about consensus, which is highlighted below, but diverging views were also presented. Divergent views are helpful in thinking critically about alternative implementation approaches that will improve the overall success of this initiative. The dialogue amongst the partners sent a clear message that there is a demand for this initiative and it has enormous potential. Four points demonstrate this demand.

- Preliminary assessment illustrated that the need for postgraduates in agriculture in the developing world is in excess of what the conventional agricultural universities can handle. Scaling up is needed.
- There is an increasing demand for non-traditional education because of rising cost and family and employment constraints. Distance education does help lower the cost of scaling up alternatives.
- There is new subject-matter expertise needed.
- There is a need for the next generation of agriculture policymakers and practitioners in the public and private sector to be able to integrate different subject matter.

Although we need to be cautious, we need to be willing to move forward with a realistic timeframe. Integrating this initiative into the CGIAR Centers' capacity strengthening strategy for developing countries will help scale up the capacity strengthening efforts of the Centers. Working together to strengthen the capacity strengthening activities of the CGIAR system and developed and developing country institutions should tremendously benefit the public agricultural systems and private agriculture sectors of the developing world.

The success of this initiative depends on its partners. Therefore, partner selection should not be a top-down exercise; should be based on a set of criteria that ensures that real working partnerships are developed for developing and delivering this initiative and the partnership is well balanced and not CGIAR-centric. It is important to learn from those partners who are already engaged in distance learning and to form new networks that bring together the various players. Continuous dialogue with potential partners and stakeholders is needed for the initiative to be well understood and to illustrate its value.

The initiative should have a clear vision of who is the initial targeted audience and what audiences might be addressed later, and to meet their needs currently identified, but also to move beyond the needs identified and proactively identify needs that a demand can be created. Proactively seeking the needs will require the program to be flexible, but it shall retain its relevancy. It should have high-quality content that is acknowledged as the best and its quality needs to be conveyed to the market. The courses developed should be localized in content and in its delivery mode to account for the variations within countries, regions, and globally.

The demand and desire of our partners for this initiative to be developed is the basis for its success. For this project to be implemented, a clear financial architecture that encompasses institutional expenses, student aid, and cost recovery should be developed. This financial structure should be used when approaching traditional and non-traditional donors and partners.

The initiative needs a governance structure for accountability and quality, but the structure should be lean. It should encompass the various types of partners that are engaged in this activity in order to receive appropriate guidance.

The consensus raised during this dialogue is supportive to the further implementation of this initiative step by step.

Next steps

This fruitful dialogue helped set the next steps for this initiative to move forward. Below is a list of immediate steps that will be undertaken.

1. Establish a credible advisory body. The CGIAR Science Council will be approached in establishing this advisory body.
2. Develop three to five key partnerships. The partners will come from the traditional universities, open universities, and international organizations with a focus on M.Sc. programs.
3. Initial partners will help identify and implement selected course modules and curricula.
4. Revise the program document to incorporate the dialogue's discussion. The progress made in the next steps will be shared at the CGIAR Executive Council meeting in mid-September and at the CGIAR Annual General Meeting in October 2004.
5. Organize a meeting at the CGIAR Annual General Meeting in October 2004 for all interested parties.
6. Continue developing the website to increase awareness and provide a forum for discussion.
7. Prepare proceedings of this meeting.

Appendix A: Participant List

Ms .Veyrl Adell
Public Relations Manager
ILRI

Dr. Samir Ahmed
ICARDA
Head
Human Resources Development

Prof. Levi S.M. Akundabweni
Associate Professor
Department of Crop Science
Faculty of Agriculture
University of Nairobi

Dr. Krishna Alluri
Education Specialist
Food Security & Environment
Commonwealth of Learning

Dr. Luz Marina Alvaro
Head, Library
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Suresh Babu
Senior Research Fellow and Senior Training
Advisor
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Mark Bell
Head
Training Center
IRRI

Dr. Jan Beniast
Principal Training Scientist
Training Unit Manager
World Agroforestry Centre

Mr. Ashwin Bhouraskar
Senior Research Assistant
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Stein Bie
Agricultural University of Norway (NLH)

Dr. Veit Burger
Program Officer
GDLN Services
World Bank Institute

Mr. Kevin Cleaver
Director & Chair, Rural Development Sector
Board
World Bank

Dr. Joe Coffey
Consultant

Dr. John Dodds
Deputy Director General for Research
International Maize and Wheat Improvement
Centre

Dr. Adel El-Beltagy
Director General
International Center for Agricultural Research in
the Dry Areas (ICARDA)

Prof. Barney J. Erasmus
Head, School of Management Sciences
University of South Africa

Dr. Ulla-Maija Finskas
Minister-Counselor(Development and Financial
Policy Affairs)
Embassy of Finland

Dr. Hippolyte Fofack
Senior Economist
Poverty Reduction & Economic Management
Division
The World Bank

Dr. Thomas A. Fretz
Executive Director, NERA
Northeastern Regional Association of State
Agricultural Experiment Station Directors
USDA

Dr. Glenn Galloway
Director of Education
Dean of the Graduate School
Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher
Education Center

Dr. Bruce L. Gardner
Interim Dean
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
University of Maryland

Dr. Elizabeth Doupé Goldberg
Director
Documentation, Information and Training Group
International Plant Genetic Resources Institute

Dr. Jon Gregson
Manager: Learning and Development
Distance Learning Programme
Imperial College London

Dr. Edith Hesse
Head
Information and Documentation
CIAT

Dr. Harald Holt
Director, UNU/GVU
Global Virtual University

Prof G.L. Humphrey
Executive Dean
College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and
Environmental Sciences
University of South Africa

Mr. Sarwat Hussain
Senior Communications Officer
CGIAR Secretariat

Dr. Ian Johnson
Vice President
Environmentally and Socially Sustainable
Development
World Bank

Ms. M. Caryl Jones-Swahn
Communications Assistant
CGIAR Secretariat

Hon. Wilberforce Kisamba-Mugerwa
Minister of Agriculture
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and
Fisheries
Government of Uganda

Prof. Jonathan Kydd
Director, Distance Learning Programme
Imperial College London

Dr. Manuel M. Lantin
Science Advisor
Governance and Partnerships
CGIAR Secretariat

Dr. Anton Mangstl
Director
Library and Documentation Systems Division
FAO of the United Nations

Dr. Hussein Mansour
Agricultural Minister
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Dr. Peter Materu
Senior Education Specialist
World Bank

Dr. Ian Maw
Director, Academic Programs on Agriculture and
Natural Resources
National Association of State Universities and
Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC)

Dr. Arnulfo Montano

Mr. Franklin C. Moore

Director, Environment and Science PO
USAID / EGAT / ESP

Mr. Harris Mutio Mule

Executive Director
Top Investment & Mgt. Svcs, Ltd (TIMS)

Prof. Agnes W. Mwang'ombe

Associate Professor
Department of Crop Protection
Faculty of Agriculture
University of Nairobi

Dr. Rex Navarro

Special Assistant to the Director General and
Head, Communication Office
ICRISAT

Dr. Mortimer Hugh Neufville

Board Chair, IITA
Executive Vice President
National Association of State Universities and
Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC)

Dr. Willis Oluoch Kosura

Planning Coordinator
Proposed Collaborative Masters Prog. in Ag &
Applied Economics
CMPAAEESA Initiative

Mr. Michel Petit

Professor
Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen of
Montpellier

Dr. Per Pinstrup-Andersen

H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition, and
Public Policy
Cornell University

Dr. Janet K. Poley

President
American Distance Education Consortium

Mr. Francisco J.B. Reifschneider

Director
CGIAR Secretariat

Ms. Valerie Rhoe

Senior Research Assistant
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Karin Roskopf

Visiting Research Fellow
Communications Division
IFPRI

Prof. Mandivamba Rukuni

Program Director
W.K.Kellogg Foundation

Dr. David J. Sammons

Associate Dean, International Agriculture
Purdue University

Mr. Prabuddha Sanyal

Senior Research Assistant
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Bharat Sharma

Liaison Officer
International Water Management Institute

Mr. Peter Siegenthaler

The World Bank

Dr. Panjab Singh

Director, School of Agriculture
Indira Gandhi National Open University

Dr. Ola Smith

Executive Secretary
GFAR Secretariat

Dr. Lisette Stall

Assistant Director
International Programs
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences
University of Florida

Dr. H. Dean Sutphin
Associate Dean and Director of Academic
Programs
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University

Dr. Alvaro Umana
Head, Environmentally Sustainable
Development Group
United Nations Development Programme

Mr. Theo van de Sande
Research & Communication Division
DCO/OC (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign
Affairs)

Dr. Joachim von Braun
Director General
IFPRI

Dr. Klaus von Grebmer
Division Director
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Joachim Voss
Director General
Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical
(CIAT)

Ms. Indira Yerramareddy
Research Assistant
Communications Division
IFPRI

Dr. Hubert G. Zandstra
Director General
International Potato Center (CIP)

Dr. Thomas Zschocke
Head, Training Department
CIP

Appendix B: Agenda

**A Dialogue with Partners on the
Global Open Agriculture and Food University of the CGIAR**
IFPRI, Washington, D.C.
26th August, 2004

August 25

18:30-21:00 **Dinner Reception at Sequoia Restaurant** (3000 K Street N.W.)

August 26

8:30-9:00 *Registration and Breakfast* (IFPRI Conference Room 4B)

Session 1 *Vision of A Global Open Agricultural and Food University*

9:00-10:30 **Welcome** - *Joachim von Braun, Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) (Chair)*

Vision for E-Agriculture and the Global Open Agriculture and Food University Serving the Rural Poor and Sustainable Development - *Ian Johnson, Chairman, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), Vice President, Sustainable Development, The World Bank*

Open Distance Learning in Agriculture and African Capacity Development - *Agnes W. Mwang'ombe, Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Nairobi*

Open Distance Education in Agriculture – FAO's Global Efforts – *Jacques Diouf, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (presented by Anton Mangstl, Director, Library and Documentation Systems Division, FAO)*

Agricultural Research – Role of Capacity Strengthening and Higher Education in Developing Countries - *Per Pinstrup-Andersen, H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University and Chair, Science Council, CGIAR*

10:30-11:00 Discussion - Starting with the Perspectives of Regional Open Universities
Tea/Coffee

Session 2 *Global Open Agriculture and Food University Concept*

11:00-11:45 **The Concept of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University**
Per Pinstrup-Andersen, H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Division of Nutritional Sciences, Cornell University and Chair, Science Council, CGIAR (Chair)

Joachim von Braun, Director General, IFPRI
Suresh Babu, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI

Discussion opening: *Adel El-Beltagy, Director General, ICARDA*
Peter Materu, Former Executive Director, African Virtual University

Session 3

11:45-13:30

Resource and Partnership Mobilization Perspectives

*Kevin Cleaver, Director and Chair, Rural Development Sector Board, World Bank
(Panel Chair)*

Harris Mule, Executive Director, Top Investment & Mgt. Svcs., Ltd

*Hippolyte Fofack, Senior Economist, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management
Division, World Bank*

*Franklin Moore, Director, Environment and Science, United States Agency for
International Development*

David Sammons, Associate Dean, International Agriculture, Purdue University

*Theo Van De Sande, Head, Research and Communication Division, Netherlands Ministry
of Foreign Affairs*

Stein Bie, Special Adviser, Noragric, Agricultural University of Norway

Michel Petit, Professor, Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen de Montpellier

Discussion

13:30-14:30

Lunch

Session 4

Regional Perspectives

14:30-15:30

**Needs Assessment for Open Distance Learning in Agriculture and Natural Resources:
South Asia, Southeast Asia, East and Southern Africa, and Latin America - Francisco J.B.
Reifschneider, Director, CGIAR (Panel Chair)**

Panjab Singh, Director, School of Agriculture, Indira Gandhi National Open University

Levi Akundabweni, Chairman, Crop Science Department, University of Nairobi

*Felix Librero, Chancellor, University of the Philippines Open University (Represented by Rex
Navarro, ICRISAT)*

*Glenn Galloway, Director of Education, Dean of the Graduate School, Tropical Agronomic
Center for Research and Education*

Barney Erasmus, Head, Department of Business Management, University of South Africa

*Krishna Alluri, Education Specialist, Food Security and Environment, Commonwealth of
Learning*

Discussion

Session 5 ***Drawing on Strengths***

15:30-16:45 **How Developing Country and Developed Country Universities Can Collaborate With Global Open Agriculture and Food University - *Wilberforce Kisamba-Mugerwa, Division Director, IFPRI (Panel Chair)***

Mandivamba Rukuni, Program Director, W. K. Kellogg Foundation

William Dar, Director General, ICRISAT

Mort Neufville, Executive Vice President, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges

Jonathan Kydd, Director, Distance Learning Programme, Imperial College London

Joachim Voss, Director General, CIAT

Willis Oluoch Kosura , Coordinator, East Africa Professional MSc Program in Agricultural Economics

16:45-17:00 Discussion
Tea/Coffee

Session 6 ***The Way Forward***

17:00-17:30 **Closing Comments and Suggestions for the Way Forward: Towards Implementation**

Francisco Reifschneider, Director, CGIAR

Joachim von Braun, Director General, IFPRI

Appendix C: Chronology

Global Open Agriculture and Food University

September 2002

Initiated development of concept note

February 2003

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) proposed the concept of a Global Open University under the CGIAR system to the Centres Director Committee (CDC).

May 2003

Concept note was presented to the CDC meeting in The Hague.

June 2003

A task force was formed consisting of staff from each CGIAR Center

July 2003

CG Open University Program Development Business Meeting, Washington, D.C. July 28-30

October 2003

Draft program document presented at the CDC/CBC and CGIAR Annual General Meeting (AGM) meetings in Nairobi, Kenya, October 24

February 2004

Concept presented at the CGIAR Secretariat, Washington, D.C. February 3

Initiation of Preliminary Needs Assessment in South Asia

March 2004

Participation in VNU Learning 2004 Conference, Atlanta, Georgia March 1-4

Participation in the webinar “How to select the right Learning Management System for your needs,” March 11

Workshop on Assessing the Needs for Open and Distance Learning (ODL) for Postgraduate Education in Agriculture in South Asia, New Delhi, India March 29

April 2004

Meeting with Task Force members at CGIAR Centers in East Africa, Nairobi, April 5

Meeting with Dr. Speranza Ndege, Director, African Virtual University (AVU) Center at Kenyatta University, April 6

Initiation of Preliminary Needs Assessment in Eastern and Southern Africa

Four Letters of Intent signed (Imperial College, London; Indira Gandhi National Open

University, India; University of Nairobi, Kenya; Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, India)

Meeting with Dr. Peter Materu, Former Executive Director, African Virtual University (AVU), Washington, D.C., April 15

Participation in the webinar “On Assessment and Learning”, April 22

Meeting with Dr. Günter Podlacha, Project Leader, Capacity Building International, Washington D.C., April 28

May 2004

Presentation of concept at the CDC meeting in Aleppo, Syria, May 4-5, program approved

Participation in the webinar “How to Select the Right Learning Content Management System for Your Needs,” May 5

Formation of CDC support group for this Program (Direct Generals of CIAT, ILRI, ICRISAT, ICARDA, and IFPRI)

Meeting with delegation from NORAGRIC, Washington, D.C. May 11

Meeting with delegation from Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, May 13

Meeting with Mort Neufville, Executive Vice President, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), Washington, D.C., May 13

Task Force E-Conference: Global Open Agriculture and Food University Concept and Initial Implementation, May 17-26

Three Letters of Intent signed (African Virtual University, Kenya; Ain Shams University, Egypt; University of South Africa)

June 2004

Initiation of Preliminary Needs Assessment in Southeast Asia

One Letter of Intent signed (Agricultural University of Norway)

Presentation of concept at CGIAR Donors Breakfast Meeting, Paris, France, June 15

August 2004

Business Meeting of the Global Open Agriculture and Food University Task Force, Washington, D.C., August 25

Dialogue with Partners on the Global Open Agriculture and Food University of the CGIAR, Washington, D.C., August 26