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P O L I C Y

PROGRAMME PLANNING: THE THIRD PROGRAMMING CYCLE,
1982-1986

COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

UNDP support to the Technical Advisory Committee
(TAC) of the Consultative Group on International
Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

Note by the Administrator

1. In June 1970, the Governing Council approved the first global project for research and training in the development of high lysine maize to be implemented by the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) in Mexico. The Centre is one in a system of 13 international agricultural research centres sponsored by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), which was jointly formed by the World Bank, the Food Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1971. The outstanding successes of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines and CIMMYT in Mexico, originally established by the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in the 1960s for the development of high-yielding varieties of rice and wheat, respectively, demonstrated the validity of the expansion of the international centre concept to other food crops and cropping systems. It was also recognized that many problems of agricultural development and the potential benefits of solving them are so world-wide in character that they could be best approached at levels which transcend the base of financial support for international agricultural research. Among the members of CGIAR today are the official aid agencies of most of the developed countries, as well as the three original sponsors, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, other private organizations and regional development banks. Five developing countries (Brazil, India, Mexico, Nigeria and the Philippines) have also become members.

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The number of donor members has increased from the original 15 to 36, contributing a total budget of \$165 million for 1983. CGIAR presently supports 13 international agricultural research centres and organizations concerned with an array of commodities, ecologic conditions and farming systems. Included in this network are 11 international research centres, an international board concerned with the conservation of plant genetic resources, and an international service to help upgrade national research programmes. Over 7,000 persons are employed within this far-flung network, including 650 senior scientists from 40 nations. The crops and livestock on which these centres focus their attentions provide 75 per cent of the food for developing countries.

2. The impact of the first two international centres, namely IRRI and CIMMYT, is well-known. Improved, high-yielding, disease and pest resistant varieties of rice developed by IRRI cover more than 30 per cent of the rice regions of the tropics. Semi-dwarf wheat varieties developed by CIMMYT are now grown on over 30 million hectares -- almost half the wheatland in developing countries. Wheat production in India tripled from 1966 to 1979, thanks to the rapid adoption of semi-dwarf varieties developed by CIMMYT and to Indian Scientists working as part of the CIMMYT network. The economic value of these dramatic increases in production of rice and wheat, which are staple foods in many developing countries, has been estimated at close to \$5 billion annually. The newer centres are already beginning to make rapid breakthroughs in crop improvement research, resulting in yield increases of potato, cassava, food legumes, sorghum and millets.

3. As the Governing Council is fully aware, agriculture continues to receive the highest priority in the UNDP global and interregional programme for 1982-1986, accounting for approximately 60 per cent of the resources expected to be available during the next five years. In view of the limited resources in terms of global requirements, it was essential to concentrate on a few key areas of significance in agricultural research at the basic level -- development of improved crop varieties (rice, maize, sorghum and millets); enhancement of biological nitrogen fixation and tropical soils; development of pest management techniques through biological control methods as an alternative to toxic and environmentally unsafe chemical pesticides; development of an effective vaccine against African animal trypanosomiasis; research in fertilizer technology and utilization; and transfer of technology on root and tuber crops. Most of these activities, implemented by selected centres of CGIAR, the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) and the International Fertilizer Development Centre (IFDC), are carried over from the previous cycle and include an expanded training component in the 1982-1986 cycle without substantially increasing the financial allocation to each of the concerned activities. Strong inflationary pressures have reduced the research components of these projects. Since the agriculture programme in 1982-1986 constitutes an extension and/or follow-up

to activities begun in the previous cycle, and sustained commitment of financial resources are needed during the next 5-10 years, any curtailment of the funds already earmarked will negate the progress achieved and the breakthroughs of research.

4. In fact, if additional funds were available, the scope of research and training in the areas mentioned above could be expanded to better link global and interregional activities in agriculture with national and regional programmes through strong outreach programmes which would train large numbers of national personnel and thereby assist national programmes to increase food production. Availability of additional funds would also make it possible to work closely with FAO and other agencies to strengthen national agricultural research within the broader perspective of improving and strengthening essential agricultural services (plant protection, including control of pre- and post-harvest losses, extension, marketing, etc.). It would also be possible to initiate a few carefully selected new activities, recommended by the Administrator's advisory panel on the global programme, which have had to be held back because of the anticipated financial shortfalls.

5. The activities of the international centres are overseen by the CGIAR secretariat in close collaboration with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which was established by CGIAR in May 1975 and whose secretariat is located in FAO. The World Bank provides the chairman and the executive secretariat of CGIAR, which is advised by TAC. CGIAR operates informally and by consensus, and has created an example for highly effective, flexible and successful co-operation between the developed and developing countries. TAC comprises a Chairman and 13 agricultural scientists or research administrators selected for their personal professional capacity. At present, more than half of the TAC members are from developing countries. The work of TAC is explicitly related to the problems of the developing countries, advising on: research priorities; the need for organization of research, especially at the international level; the performance of present centres; links with national and regional programmes; and ways of creating an international network of research institutions.

6. TAC presently holds three meetings each year which are usually convened at one of the international centres. These meetings, which last 6-7 days, can be attended by CGIAR members in an observer capacity. In addition to reviewing the programmes and budgets of the CGIAR centres; TAC acts on its own regarding new initiatives and considers proposals from CGIAR through the latter's sponsors. Since TAC acts only in an advisory capacity, CGIAR remains free to reject or modify TAC recommendations.

7. The TAC secretariat is made up of an Executive Secretary, a Deputy Executive Secretary, three professional officers and

three secretarial staff. From the beginning the three co-sponsors of the CGIAR, namely, the World Bank, FAO and UNDP have borne all costs related to TAC, from their administrative budgets, making contributions in three equal portions. Since 1978, the UNDP contribution to TAC has been met from the administrative budget as has been the case with the UNDP contribution to the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) Sub-committee on Nutrition. However, in view of current resource situation of UNDP and the desire to reduce administrative costs at headquarters, the Council may wish to transfer the UNDP contribution to TAC and its secretariat for two years 1984 and 1985, estimated at \$900,000, from the administrative budget to programme funds under the global indicative planning figure (IPF) programme.

8. The Administrator would, however, like to inform the Council that the global IPF programme has been seriously affected by the reduction of programme levels imposed by the current resource situation. As the global programme, to a larger extent than other programmes, co-finances, together with several other funding sources, longer-term research projects in which certain types of continuity are essential, it is especially difficult to effect reductions of financial support at short notice. The global programme has found itself in a situation where the total amount of projects approved by the Council for the 1982-1986 period exceeds the amount currently available for that period. Nevertheless, the Administrator recognizes the crucial importance of maintaining UNDP support to TAC and its secretariat to co-ordinate the efforts of the CGIAR centres and recommends that the UNDP contribution to the TAC secretariat be funded from the global IPF programme on the understanding that the Administrator will present a comprehensive review of the global programme and its funding situation in the context of the mid-term review of the planning and implementation of the third programming cycle in 1984.

9. The 1984-1985 biennial budget estimates being presented to the Governing Council at its thirtieth session exclude any provision in respect of this item. Therefore, if the item cannot be financed from the global programme IPF, it will be necessary to reinstate the required provision of \$900,000 in the biennial budget.

10. In the light of the above, the following draft decision is submitted for the consideration of the council:

The Governing Council,

(a) Takes note of the note of the Administrator on UNDP support to the Technology Advisory Committee of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (DP/1983/39) and the views and comments expressed thereon;

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(b) Approves an amount of \$900,000 as an interim measure from the global indicative planning figure programme as the UNDP contribution towards the costs of the Technical Advisory Committee of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research for the two years 1984 and 1985, on the understanding that the Administrator will present a comprehensive review of the global programme and its funding situation in the context of the mid-term review of the third programming cycle in 1984.

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