



3 Aug 2017

Dr Elwyn Grainger-Jones  
Executive Director  
CGIAR System Management Office

Dear Elwyn,

ICRISAT appreciates being given the opportunity to lead development of the CRP on grain legumes and dryland cereal crops and we thank our partners for their input into building a strong proposal.

This CRP is challenging given its crop and dryland ecology brief; the number of crops to possibly consider; the large number of partners, both CGIAR and others; and the connections to the mandates of all CRPs in the current portfolio. Difficult decisions have been made that leveraged foresight and ROI analyses for prioritization, refined the Theory of Change and developed five strong Flagship Programs. We engaged closely with a wide range of partners, from apex and sub-regional organizations, NGOs, international research institutions, to a wide range of private sector partners within the agriculture, nutrition and IT sectors. Some of our new partners worthy of mention include multi-national seed companies (DuPont Pioneer, Advanta, SeedCo), leading nutrition institutions (GAIN, National Institute of Nutrition-India), leading food companies (MARS), on-the-ground development agencies and NGOs (AGRA, CRS, CARE, SEWA – India's largest women's group with over 2 million members), global IT companies (Microsoft) and six USAID Feed the Future Innovation Labs.

Significantly, international research organizations, CSIRO, CIRAD and IRD, have agreed to sign Program Participant Agreements and commit to joint funding of the CRP. These organization bring needed networks and skills for assisting GLDC to deliver on its mission.

ICRISAT, IITA, ICRAF, ICARDA, Bioversity, IWMI, ILRI and our partners are excited to present a new demand-driven CRP entitled:

**Grain Legumes and Dryland Cereals Agri-food Systems CGIAR Research Program (GLDC): *Demand-driven Innovation for the Drylands***

The GLDC team has undertaken significant prioritization of development investments that deliver on the CGIAR Strategic Results Framework and many of the Sustainable Development Goals relevant for dryland agroecologies of sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. GLDC will support nine nutritionally dense and resilient crops that target populations where malnutrition and poverty are most acute and where rainfall variability poses the greatest risk to food security and peace. These crops include grain legumes (groundnut, chickpea, pigeonpea, cowpea, lentil, soybean) and dryland cereals (sorghum, pearl and finger millet). Under the challenging conditions of the drylands, diversification of farm enterprises and diets are key drivers for development. Bringing together dryland legumes and cereals enables a systems approach anchored in commodity value chains and integrated with livestock production and tree systems. This will provide resilience and economic opportunity, especially for women and youth, to make agriculture a viable enterprise.

**What's Different?** Six elements have been key to shaping the development of this CRP:

- In response to reviewers' comments, ICRISAT commissioned 10 expert reports which underpin the proposal and can be accessed through the proposal itself or directly at <http://crp-gldc.icrisat.org/> These reports cover demands of the Expert Panel and the ISPC regarding prioritization and lessons learned from prior R4D.

- The prioritization process recognized that prior submissions encompassed too many combinations. The new CRP has cut harder and brought in 1°, 2° order and spill-over priorities in the crop x country x ecology x trait combinations. We have gone from over 1000 possible combination in the 2016 submission to less than fifty 1° order priorities in the new GLDC.
- Application of modern crop improvement tools, to accelerate genetic gain, is a key agenda for the CRP. Partners such as AGRA, development agencies and commercial seed companies have invited the CRP to help them realize these gains at scale in farmers' fields.
- Nutrition is more strongly embedded in this CRP through partnerships with nutrition-focused bodies such as GAIN and National Institute of Nutrition, India.
- Where the CGIAR does not have sufficient skills and experience, we have partnered with others to fill these gaps and lead the research. Of the W1/W2 budget, 20% is allocated to partners.
- Lastly, we offer a cost-effective governance model for GLDC.

Our summarized responses to the Expert Panel report, the multiple ISPC reviews and the Fund Effectiveness Working Group can be accessed at <http://crp-gldc.icrisat.org/>

**How will we deliver?** Our Theory of Change recognizes the need to align with national priorities and leverage key partnerships to go beyond productivity to realize profitability and improve nutrition through affordable, diversified diets. To realize gains, modern tools are required to complement our traditional strength of crop improvement as well as the application of new tools enabled by cloud computing, mobile phones and remote imagery (especially satellites) to deliver timely, targeted and tailored solutions and knowledge to value chain actors, especially farmers.

A prioritized 'incomplete' matrix of agroecology x country x crop x trait combinations will focus W1/W2 resources on domains that can realize demonstrable and scalable development gains. Innovations will be adapted and extended through W3 and bilateral grants to neighbouring countries. Prioritization has reduced the number of crops from 12 to 9 and countries from 15 to 13 (11 in sub-Saharan Africa). The prioritization resulted in a reduced budget of \$413 million over five years, of which 85% is mapped to W3 and bilateral projects in the targeted crops, ecologies and regions.

We have strong support and endorsement from diverse partners listed in the proposal as well as the Governing Board of ICRISAT.

We look forward to delivering with partners on the goals laid out in the GLDC proposal.

Kind regards,



David Bergvinson  
Director General