

Aide Memoire

A high-level meeting between leaders from NARES in Africa, sub-regional organizations (ASARECA, CARDESA, CORAF), universities, development partners and CGIAR Genetic Innovation took place on 26 October 2023 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, in Marrakech, Morocco.

This was **the Second Leadership Consultation Meeting hosted by Genetic Innovation**, following on the one held 27-28 June 2022 at the Trademark Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya. The Marrakech meeting took stock of progress made, issues to be addressed, and next steps to be taken to strengthen CGIAR Genetic Innovation collaboration with partners in Africa. Genetic Innovation is one of three CGIAR Action Areas.

1. **Ongoing validity of the 2022 Nairobi Aide Memoire:** Participants to the Second Leadership Consultation Meeting, as listed in Annex A, emphasized the ongoing validity of the 2022 Nairobi Aide Memoire, as it describes the overarching purpose, benefits, objectives, and values of improving the alignment between NARES in Africa, Sub-Regional Organizations (ASARECA, CARDESA, CORAF), universities, development partners, and CGIAR Genetic Innovation, in particular:
 - 1.1. **Our common challenge:** By (i) aligning NARES, SRO and CGIAR plans and activities better, including by doing so at a programmatic instead of individual project or crop level, and (ii) drawing on the complementary strengths of partners, greater benefits can be created for the achievement of national action plans, CGIAR results targets and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 - 1.2. **Overarching values:** We want to pursue this endeavor as equal partners, with all partners contributing to greater alignment, the effective use of complementary skills, and egalitarian approaches to how we work together. We need each other to pursue the design, co-development, deployment and tracking of new products, to create benefits in research and innovation, and to achieve large-scale benefit for the people we serve.
2. **Progress made, insights and conclusions:** Countries were consulted through pre-meeting consultations. Insights were summarized and discussed during the meeting. They were the basis for identifying progress made, insights and conclusions, summarized on the following pages for:
 - 2.1. High-level engagement
 - 2.2. Joint prioritization and decision making
 - 2.3. Approaches to collaboration
 - 2.4. Germplasm development
 - 2.5. Capacity development
 - 2.6. Infrastructure modernisation

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<p>1. High-level engagement - following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Articles 10, 14, 15, 16, 18 and 19</p>	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Coordinating Technical Team (CTT) meetings including representatives from SROs, NARES and CGIAR reps have been taking forward the 2022 Nairobi Aide Memoire. The CTT-level review of development goals, crop and institutional priorities shows good alignment between subregional and One CGIAR targets. Impact: Strategic alignment with SROs and national action plans is being made transparent and strengthened. 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Need for continued efforts to strengthen and make transparent alignments between efforts at the level of NARES, SROs, universities and One CGIAR. Increase awareness of national governments that well aligned networks strengthen national efforts. Need for high-level engagement and documented endorsements of priorities at the level of both countries and SROs, through MoUs. Partnership goals and their alignment with national development goals are an important basis for CGIAR to align. Need for coordination with common partners: funders, ARIs, AGRA, NGOs and the private sector. Need for joint, high-level resource mobilization. Funding, sustainability and, therefore, funding sustainability are major issues.
<p>2. Joint prioritization and decision making – following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Articles 7, 8, 9 and 12</p>	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20 crop-by-country stakeholder consultations to define national priorities. The work is ongoing given the substantial number of crops and countries involved. Significant progress has been made by aligning CGIAR regional and NARES target product profiles with better defined market segments and target product profiles, through consultative processes. The approach systematizes joint planning and review of regional activities. Impact: Focus on country level priority setting (through product design meetings) is a huge step forward in terms of capacity 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Make agreed priorities and linkages with national development Plans part of MoUs. Ensure cross-institutional and cross-programmatic engagement for priority setting. Strong value chain orientation fosters update and adoption of new varieties. Clear priority setting, capturing alignment with development priorities, and describing the impacts that can be achieved are required by all parties to defend budgets, whether from governments or funders

<p>development, better understanding country needs and fostering NARES-CGIAR collaboration.</p> <p>4. Impact: Alignment of infrastructure and operational investments, to country National Development Plans and NARES strategic plans. The Crops to End Hunger (CtEH) alliance and other funders provide major support.</p> <p>5. Impact: Crop value chain profiling and market segmentation are key to prioritizing the allocation of research resources and aligning with national priorities.</p>	
<p>3. Approaches to collaboration - following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Articles 5, 6, 9 and 13</p>	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 26 crop-by-region collaborative networks are operating in East, Southern, West and Central Africa. 2. Joint planning and review of regional activities is increasing, both through annual meetings and regular virtual network meetings that discuss challenges, progress and opportunities. 3. Steering committees are being established that systematically include partners in planning, review, decision making and resource mobilization. 4. More joint publications; data sharing and attribution of all partners; increasing visibility and recognition. 5. Funds have been made available or raised with NARES for facilities and operations. 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Need to strengthen well-aligned commodity networks, instead of having many individual, disjointed projects. 7. Mainstream NARES involvement in steering committees and decision-making. Good practices need to be scaled across crop networks. 8. NARES need to become more proactive and contribute to better coordination. 9. Further streamline communication between NARES and CGIAR at the level of Genetic Innovation. 10. Co-development of research projects with more resources and leadership by NARES; strengthen and not replace the NARES. 11. Transparency on costing and budgeting. Both CGIAR and NARES contribute to collaborative activities, financially and in-kind. 12. Need for performance indicators to capture progress in CGIAR-NARES partnerships. 13. Timeliness of implementing new projects and releasing funds. 14. Ensure participation of countries from all regions.

	15. Improved governance and policies will strengthen and streamline the administrative aspects of collaborations.
4. Germplasm development - following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Articles 5, 6 and 9	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint discussion of strengths of each partner; joint agreement on roles and responsibilities to achieve greater genetic gain. 2. Good levels of germplasm exchange for fast development, adaptation and deployment. 3. More effective use of germplasm, such as through the Identification of founder lines and testers, sources of resistance, and others. 4. An increasing number of joint advancement meetings implementing joint selection decisions. 5. Impact: Advanced approaches for aligning breeding programs to stakeholder demand. 6. Impact: Germplasm exchange and sharing for faster development, adaptation and deployment of new crop varieties. 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Principles of complementarity and subsidiarity since some NARES have build capacity - clearly defined handover points in germplasm development, and working together right from population development all through to variety release – it will increase staff motivation. 8. Further improve incentive mechanisms for greater ownership: active roles by NARES researchers in (co-) design and (co-)creation; joint publications, secondments. 9. Empower NARES programs for better varieties output, uptake and adoption - all three areas. 10. Need for effective introgression of resistance to new pests and diseases into local materials. 11. Systematic implementation of joint advancement meetings. 12. Transparency in pedigree information during germplasm development / before materials are being deployed. 13. Harmonization towards commercialization. 14. Wider use of the FAO material transfer agreement for germplasm exchange, also among NARES and also from NARES to CGIAR.
5. Capacity development - following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Article 9	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In 2022: 8,533 African trainees (44% female, 56% male) benefited from short-term training, 417 (50% female, 50% male) from long-term training, 14 from post-graduate research projects (64% M.Sc., 36% PhD), conducted in collaboration with CGIAR Genetic Innovation. 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. The demand for training stays high, including in support of individual programs pursuing modernization plans. 10. There is high demand for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10.1. Secondments and scientific stays in CGIAR laboratories.

<p>Source: https://www.cgiar.org/food-security-impact/new-results-dashboard/</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Country consultations show wide-spread appreciation of support and team networking on: genotyping and phenotyping; breeding program assessments and costing, the development of improvement plans; approaches to accelerating genetic gain and continuous improvement; data collection and analysis; defining market segments and TPPs; breeding optimization including the use of genomic approaches, genetic gain assessments, mechanization, data management systems (BMS, EBS, Breedbase); the use of TRICOT. 3. 50+ peer reviews of individual national crop breeding programs leading to customized modernization plans. 4. Approaches for sustainable capacity development models are being piloted and developed. 5. Impact: Countries are strengthening their breeding programs, augmenting breeding program’s accuracy, efficiency and performance. 6. Impact: Access to modern breeding methods, cutting-edge technologies, tools, research facilities and shared services (genotyping, stress screening, double haploids) that NARES may not possess individually. 7. Impact: Improved data management and sharing. 8. Impact: NARES access to the global knowledge, enabling to share and learn from best practices across different regions and countries and areas of expertise. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10.2. Post-graduate research attachments with CGIAR and NARES. 10.3. Face-to-face training. 10.4. Joint capacity development events where everybody learns from each other 11. Need to strengthen know-how for effective technology dissemination. 12. Ensure the inclusion of the wider range of disciplines in genetic innovation, such as pathologists, entomologists, food scientists, agronomists, gender specialists, seed specialists, economists, field and laboratory personnel.
<p>6. Infrastructure modernization - following up on Nairobi Aide Memoire Article 9</p>	
<p>Progress made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Large-scale investments in the improvements of key sites – used by NARES-CGIAR programs - are in progress, including mechanization, 	<p>Insights and Conclusions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Complete breeding site developments. For approved plans, accelerate pace of implementation.

<p>digitalization, and irrigation. Funding has been provided with German, U.K. and U.S. funding under CtEH. Site improvement is on-going for mechanization, digitalization, irrigation, lab equipment, green/screen house, field testing, irrigation systems, fencing, soil improvement, cold rooms, seed counters, moisture meters, tillage equipment.</p> <p>2. Impact: The improvement of sites enable faster breeding progress, improved quality of data, and faster data return.</p>	<p>4. Further strengthen infrastructure for use by the wider range of partners: more good phenotyping sites are needed, access to rapid advancement facilities for all crops.</p> <p>5. Infrastructure rehabilitation requires fencing stations for security; irrigation systems, mechanization of operations, lab and cold rooms.</p> <p>6. Increase emphasis on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).</p>
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3. **Progress indicators:** Participants agreed to establish an indicator dashboard to capture progress made, and identify bottlenecks, towards improved collaboration and greater alignment. Feedback to a set of draft indicators was provided during the meeting. The feedback will be incorporated after the meeting.
4. The **Coordination Technical Team (CTT) team** to take the technical agenda forward includes the following members:
 - NARES, 4 reps: Godfrey Asea: East Africa, Busiso Mavangeni: Southern Africa, Mohammed F. Ishiyaku: West Africa, Frances Ajebesone: Central Africa
 - CGIAR, 4 reps: Bish Das, Michael Quinn, Clare Mukankusi, John Derera
 - SRO, 3 reps: Ousmane Ndoye: CORAF, Ben Ilakut: ASARECA, Lefulesele Nteletsana Lebesa: CARDESA
5. **Communication at all levels:** Participants are kindly requested to represent the spirit and action points arising from this meeting (i) within their organizations, (ii) with national, regional and international policy makers and (iii) as part of other NARES – SRO - CGIAR interactions, recognizing that transformation towards stronger and more effective partnerships needs the combined efforts and contributions at all levels.

This Aide Memoire is an accurate record of the conclusions of this meeting. Witnessed and signed by:

1. **Witness by CGIAR Representative - Dr. Sonja Vermeulen, CGIAR**



2. **Witnessed by NARES Representative - Dr. Hamidou Traore, INERA**



3. **Witnessed by SRO Representative - Dr. Ousmane Ndoye, CORAF**



Marrakech 26 October 2023

Annex A. List of participants

Name	Role	Institution	Base Country
Adam Hunt	Head of Communications, Genetic Innovation	CGIAR	Mexico
Agyemang Danquah	Deputy Director, Academic Programmes	WACCI, University of Ghana	Ghana
Baboucarr Manneh	Director General	AfricaRice	Ivory Coast
Benjamin Kivuva	Director Crop Breeding Lead	KALRO	Kenya
Biswanath Das	ABI Transform Lead	CGIAR	Kenya
Bodo Trognitz	ABI-Transform Regional Coordinator	CGIAR	Nigeria
Brendan Rice	Research Analyst (IFPRI)	CGIAR	Italy
Busiso Olga Mavankeni	Head of Institute Crop Breeding Institute	DR&SS	Zimbabwe
Charlotte Lusty	Senior Director, Genebanks	CGIAR	England
Chris Ojiewo	Seed Equal Initiative Lead and Strategic Partnerships and Seed Systems Lead for Dryland Crops, CIMMYT	CGIAR	Kenya
Claid Mujaju	Director of Research Services	DR&SS	Zimbabwe
Clare Mukankusi	CIAT Bean Breeding Lead	CGIAR	Uganda
Dean Muungani	Product Manager, Grain Crops	IITA	Nigeria
Delphine Amah	PROSSIVA Project Coordinator & Plantain Breeder	IITA	Nigeria
Dorcus Gemenet	Lead, ACCELERATE Work Package, ABI	CGIAR	Kenya
Faouzi Bekkaoui	Director General	INRA	Morocco
Filippo Bassi	ICARDA Wheat Breeding Lead	CGIAR	Morocco

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Godfrey Asea	Director of Research, NaCRRI	NARO	Uganda
Hamidou Traore	Director General	INERA	Burkina Faso
Harish Gandhi	Breeding Lead, Dryland Legumes and Cereals	CGIAR	Kenya
Hortense Mafouasson	Head of Plant Production Department	IRAD	Cameroon
Ian Barker	Director of Partnerships and Scaling	CGIAR	England
Ibrahima Sarr	Director CNRA, Chercheur Agro-entomologiste	ISRA	Senegal
Jean Claude Rubyogo	Global Bean Program Leader and PABRA Director	CGIAR	Kenya
John Derera	Senior Director, Plant Breeding & Pre-Breeding	CGIAR	Nigeria
Julie Puech	Communications Specialist, Genetic Innovation	CGIAR	France
Kevin Pixley	CIMMYT Breeding Lead	CGIAR	Mexico
Lennin Musundire	ABI-Transform Regional Coordinator	CGIAR	Kenya
Lloyd Mbulwe	Chief Agriculture Researcher Officer, Crop Improvement and Agronomy. Representing the Director at Zambia Agriculture Research Institute (ZARI).	ZARI	Zambia
Maryam Abba Dawud	Programme Leader	LCRI	Nigeria
Maxwell Asante	Deputy Director	CRI/CSRI	Ghana
Michael Abberton	Director, West Africa and Head, Genetic Resources Centre	CGIAR	Nigeria
Michael Baum	ICARDA Breeding Lead	CGIAR	Morocco
Michael Quinn	Accelerated Breeding Initiative Lead	CGIAR	Australia
Nthabiseng Motete	Group Executive, Crop Sciences	ARC	South Africa
Ousmane Ndoeye	Project Manager	CORAF	Senegal

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Richard Edema	Director, MaRCCI	MaRCCI, Makerere University	Uganda
Robin Buruchara	Consultant	Consultant	Kenya
Rufaro Madakadze	Senior Program Officer Extension and Capacity Building	AGRA	Kenya
Sankalp Bhosale	Deputy Head Rice Breeding Innovations Department, Unit Leader Product Development and Varietal Replacement, IRRI	CGIAR	Philippines
Scarlett Crawford	Program Manager, Genetic Innovation	CGIAR	France
Shimelis Hussein	Director, African Center for Crop Improvement	ACCI	South Africa
Sonja Vermeulen	Science Managing Director, Genetic Innovation	CGIAR	France
Swidiq Mugerwa	Deputy Director General, Research Coordination	NARO	Uganda
Taye Tadesse	Director, Crop Research	EIAR	Ethiopia
Thiago Mendes	Lead Potato Breeder, CIP	CGIAR	Kenya
Vish Banda	ABI-Transform Regional Coordinator WCA	CGIAR	Nigeria
Wallace Cowling	Australian Leader ACIAR Rapid Cooking Bean Project, based at Alliance-CIAT, Kawanda, Uganda. Professor in Plant Breeding, The University of Western Australia	University of Western Australia	Australia