

Science Forum 2009

Talking Points for Ren Wang (*maximum period for delivery: 15 minutes*)

Introduction:

- Thanks for the opportunity to address the Forum;
- extends greetings and best wishes of Kathy Sierra who unfortunately could not join the event;
- Thanks the Science Council under the leadership of Rudy Rabbinge for taking the lead in organizing the event, and appreciate the Wageningen University and Research Center for hosting this important event.
- Pleased that the CGIAR Secretariat was also able to contribute specifically by providing travel support to young scientists nominated by the CGIAR centers and the CPs, and also to a number of workshop speakers.

Main Focus of the Talk:

- A little over 5 years ago, IFPRI began to alert the world that the world is challenged with an unsustainable food situation. Unfortunately, this foresight warning did not receive adequate attention.
- About 2.5 years ago following the World Development Report 2008 and the IAASTD, when the world attention began to focus on agriculture and rural development, CGIAR members and the centers felt strongly that the system's capacity in addressing the world food problem has been underutilized.
- CGIAR members launched a Scoping Exercise and identified key areas for change in the system.
- In 2007-2008, CGIAR launched two parallel initiatives, the Change Management and the Independent Review
- Development of the new Vision and the three new Strategic Objectives for the CGIAR:
 - **Food for People:** Create and accelerate sustainable increases in the productivity and production of healthy food by and for the poor.
 - **Environment for People:** Conserve, enhance and sustainably use natural resources and biodiversity to improve the livelihoods of the poor in response to climate change and other factors.

- **Policies for people:** Promote policy and institutional change that will stimulate agricultural growth and equity to benefit the poor, especially rural women and other disadvantaged groups
- The CGIAR members and the Centers decided to change, and agreed, unanimously, to reform the nearly 40 years old CGIAR system. This time, we are determined to succeed, and we have indeed way past the point of no return.

What we envisage for the new CGIAR:

1. A paradigm shift, to link our research directly to development targets, to set our research agenda towards addressing development challenges, and to mobilize science, both in the Centers and partner institutions, to tackle the seemingly intractable development problems.
 - Putting the CGIAR in the global ARD architecture, through the GCARD consultation process
 - Setting quantified targets for research outputs that the CGIAR is accountable, and the development outcomes and the impact that we share responsibilities with our partners for delivering.
 - Last year, the Alliance of the Centers identified a set of “best bet” areas for increased or doubled investment in the CGIAR research, with such quantified outcomes as lifting 280 million people out of poverty, and obtaining 1.6% increase in agricultural productivity in five years.
 - These should be the same targets as those of the the NARS, and the delivery and dissemination arms of the ARD system, and to use these targets to encourage and advise the national governments to increase their investment in agricultural R&D in terms of percentage of national agricultural GDP.
 - We are on track in developing a Strategic Results Framework, and the Mega Programs, expected to complete a draft before Nov, 2009.
2. Establishing a legally constructed Consortium of the CGIAR sponsored Centers, in order to:
 - Have collective voice on the global development arena and the world events.
 - Enable or enhance decision making at the system level;
 - Strengthen system collaboration in research and partnerships, so as to pool our intellectual resources and capacity to tackle big issues.

- Establish common platform for research, support services and some resource and IP management functions ;
 - Attract and retain best scientists, and facilitate intra-center cross posting and hiring.
3. Establish a new CGIAR Fund as a strategic financing mechanism, in order to:
- Provide increased and stable funding to support the research programs;
 - Provide a unified entry point for donors, based on Paris Declaration and Anchra Statement, to achieve donor harmonization in supporting agricultural R&D
 - We aim at doubling the current CGIAR budget of \$500 M, to reach \$1 Billion in five years.
 - Donors will be asked to contribute to the new Fund through three categories of fund allocations:
 - Unrestricted,
 - Earmarked towards one or more MPs,
 - Earmarked towards one or more centers
 - We anticipate the proportion of funding towards the first category; the unrestricted should increase through a transition phase.
4. Streamline and strengthen the accountability of the CGIAR to its donors, partners, and the end beneficiaries.
- Instead of 15 centers and 4 Challenge Programs having double accountability to 64 or more individual donors and the system, establish mutual accountability between the Consortium and the CGIAR Fund.
5. Establish a new Independent Science and Partnership Council
- key differences between the current SC and the ISPC:
 - inclusion of strategic scientific partnerships in the agenda of the new body,
 - focus on foresight studies
 - non-involvement in evaluation
6. Streamline M&E for programs and centers, with the establishment of an independent evaluation mechanism.

A Transition Management Team was created to provide leadership in implementing the transitional arrangements.

- The transition is guided by the following principles:
 - Clear strategic focus;
 - Increase research output, outcome, and impact;
 - Greater efficiency, effectiveness and relevance;
 - Simplicity and clarity of governance;
 - Enhanced decentralized decision making; and
 - Active subsidiarity to capitalize on complementarities of the Centers.
- It is expected that the Science Forum outputs from the workshops covering the medium and long-term perspectives for each of the six selected themes would be important points for further refinement of SRF and for the development of mega-programs.

Closing:

- I am optimistic about the successful transition to the new CGIAR, a transformation that would revive the system, and help the world better prepared to feed 9 billion people in 2050.
- Encourage the scientists/researchers particularly the younger ones to support the process. They will play a critical role in the new CGIAR.