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I. THE PRESENT SITUATION

I.A Organization

I.A.1 Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC)

The SAFGRAD project falls under the administrative umbrella of the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission of the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU/STRC). The STRC has its headquarters in Lagos, Nigeria. SAFGRAD is one of six technical services falling under the STRC. The others include a Soils Bureau headquartered in Bangui, the Inter-African Animal Health Bureau in Nairobi, a Plant Protection Committee in Yaounde, the Fouta-Djallon river basin development project in Conakry and a Forestry project in Equatorial Guinea. The STRC reports directly to the Secretary General of the OAU, the head of the OAU Permanent Secretariat located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The STRC prepares project dossiers and programs requested by the Heads of State of OAU member countries in the areas of science and technology. It solicits financing from donors and, in conjunction with the legal division of OAU, prepares agreements and contracts relating to its mandate. The Commission supervises execution of its projects either directly, or more often, through a contract with an executing

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agent. In such cases STRC involvement is limited to membership on the Consultative Committee responsible for overseeing project execution and receiving reports. Where it has responsibility for directly executing a individual study or project, the STRC relies on consultants to do the work. It also relies heavily on consultants for preparing projects.

The STRC provides the legal basis for the SAFGRAD Project and for the SAFGRAD Coordination Office (SCO) as an operating entity. It has the legal capacity to contract and to receive funds based on a delegation of authority from OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa. The STRC, in turn, has delegated to the SCO a limited authority to negotiate contracts. OAU/STRC assures all of the privileges and immunities vis-a-vis other African countries for SAFGRAD personnel and draws up legal documents on SAFGRAD's behalf. The STRC is ultimately responsible for accounting to donors and others for funds granted to SAFGRAD. In addition, it provides administrative back-up to the SCO without charge, and makes a modest annual contribution to SAFGRAD operations each year.

The OAU/STRC is headed by an Executive Secretary who reports directly to the Secretary General of the OAU. He is assisted by two Assistant Executive Secretaries, one for agriculture, natural resources and medicinal plants and one for engineering, technology, oceanography, fishing and forestry. Each of these, in turn, has one scientific officer to assist with technical support for projects and activities under their respective purviews. Additional staff include a chief accountant, an internal auditor, a general services officer and other support staff. At the present time the positions of Assistant Executive Secretary for Engineering and the supporting scientific officer are not filled. As a result, the STRC has only three scientists on its staff, including the Executive Secretary.

I.A.2 SAFGRAD Coordination Office

The SAFGRAD Coordination Office is located in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, formerly Upper Volta. The SCO was set up under SAFGRAD I as the implementing agency for that project. In this capacity it supports research on sorghum, millet, maize, and cowpeas. It does this through training, sponsoring workshops, promoting networking of researchers and research results, translating research reports and conference and workshop documents, and disseminating them. It also supports national research, field trials and outreach programs designed to evaluate and extend improved technologies to farmers. SAFGRAD outreach activities include recruiting and financing Accelerated Crop Production Officers (5) and Farming Systems Research Teams (3).

Although SAFGRAD I financed direct research on the four crops already mentioned, the SCO did not administer these funds. Nearly 75% of project funds were directly contracted by AID to IITA, ICRISAT and Purdue University, the principal executing agencies for direct research.

A similar situation has prevailed for short-term training, monitoring tours, workshops and providing administrative support for SAFGRAD commodity research networks. These were administrated by the IARC's and funded directly by USAID/BF. USAID/BF has also been contracting and administering long term training not already included in the Purdue Contract. OAU/STRC was not a party to these contracts although the International Coordinator approved project implementation documents.

In the recent extensions for SAFGRAD, the SCO has taken over responsibility for the budget for workshops. The IARCs continue to do much of the identification of candidates, arranging for the logistics and paying per diem and other expenses for which SAFGRAD reimburses them. The IARCs still administer directly the monitoring tours, training at the Centers and in-service training at Kamboinse. They also administer the operation of the networks by the SAFGRAD financed, but IARC contracted, network coordinator, usually a breeder for the crop in question. Thus, at the present time, the SCO is carrying only a small part of the administrative and financial management burden of SAFGRAD networking and research activities.

The SAFGRAD Coordination Office is headed up by an International Coordinator who is responsible for day to day management. He is assisted by four internationally recruited professional staff: a director of research, an accountant, a financial controller and an administrative secretary. This latter position is a new one and is presently evolving toward an administrative assistant/office supervisor type of role. The International Coordinator, the Director of Research and the Financial Controller each have personal secretaries. The accountant has a secretary/accounts clerk working under his direction. Since both the Director of Research and the Financial Controller are financed under an IFAD Farming Systems Research Project, they have direct administrative interaction with each other. Administratively, however, all the principal positions report directly to the International Coordinator.

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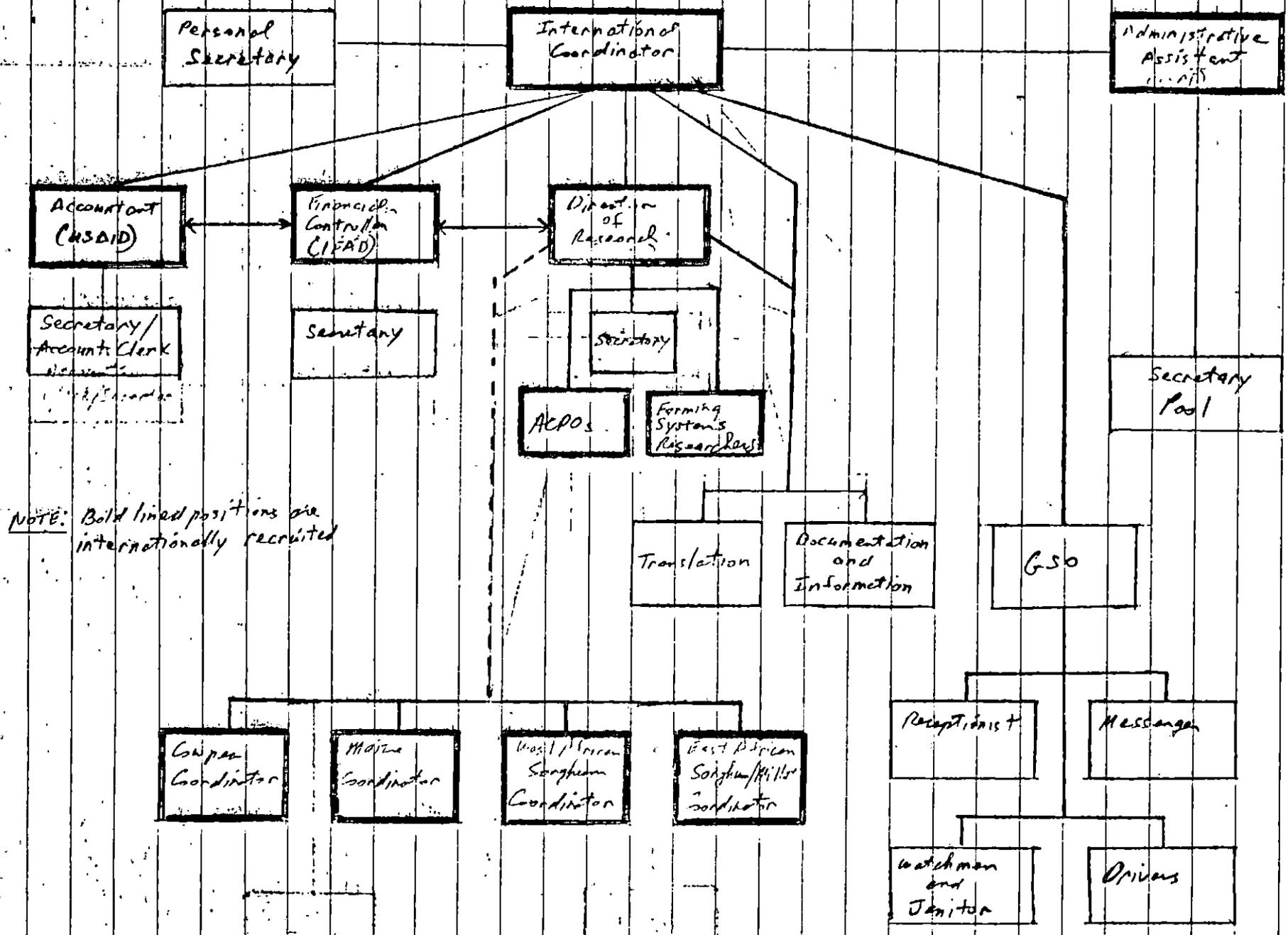
The national technical staff of the SCO consists of a translator, a general services officer (GSO) and a documentation and information specialist. In addition, there are two pool secretaries, a receptionist/telephone operator, a messenger, four drivers, a janitor and two watchmen. Because of the relatively high local salaries it pays, turnover of national staff has been low. Figure 1 contains the organigramme for the SCO.

I.A.3 USAID

AID is managing the SAFGRAD project from the USAID mission in Ouagadougou and from AID Washington, using two USDA PASAs, one in each location. The PASA in Washington mainly handles program and policy issues as well as the contracting with Purdue which is executing the Farming Systems Research Component under SAFGRAD I. The PASA in Ouagadougou handles day-to-day implementation responsibilities and all other contracting.

I.B Overall Management

Management by the SCO has a checkered history, though, following a very critical audit in 1982, it has improved considerably. The 1982 audit emphasized the need for providing monitoring controls over the International Coordinator; recommended a review of appropriate staffing needed by the Coordinating Office; recommended cessation of AID funding pending establishment of an accounting system with appropriate internal controls and settlement of an unexplained shortage of nearly \$28,000; recommended that OAU/STRC institute procedures to ensure that AID financed procurement is subject to competitive bidding practices;



NOTE: Bold lined positions are internationally recruited

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recommended removal of the International Coordinator; and recommended that USAID/Upper Volta ensure that its Project Officer and Controller exercise effective financial oversight of the SAFGRAD project. These recommendations were closed during 1983.

Since installation of the new International Coordinator and the Director of Research, and with a restructuring of financial management procedures in 1983, the project has experienced a major change of direction and sense of purpose. The USAID/Burkina Faso Mission is now working closely with the SCO to ensure that established accounting procedures are followed.

The SCO is generally able to operate on more or less an autonomous basis vis-a-vis STRC/Lagos. When the International Coordinator is out of town, the Director of Research and the Financial Controller, in that order, assume his administrative responsibilities.

The OAU/STRC Executive Secretary does intervene in day to day management of the SCO more than he should, often times to reverse decisions previously taken by the SCO staff. It is not clear the extent to which this is due to the Executive Secretary's management style or to the difficulty of frequent consultation between Lagos and the SCO because of poor telecommunication links with Nigeria. With less dynamic executive staff in the SCO, this could pose a serious obstacle to project execution. However the present International Coordinator and Director of Research seem quite willing to proceed with their own ideas in cases where they are unable to discuss beforehand a course of action with the Executive Secretary. Given the large amount of time all three of them spend away from their respective headquarters and given the difficulty of communication with Lagos from Ouagadougou, such independence of spirit is

absolutely essential to the successful execution of the project.

At the present time the SCO makes budgeted expenditures and negotiates and signs contracts with consultants without having to consult with the Executive Secretary. Nonetheless, it will need even more independence of operation if it is to fulfill successfully the added responsibilities being placed on it in SAFGRAD II. This will have to include more financial responsibility and complete independence in the day to day operations of the SCO. The Executive Secretary will still retain ultimate control through his role as Chairman of the Consultative Committee. With the addition of a Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management, the CC will become a much more effective vehicle for guiding SCO policy and actions than ad hoc interventions. The Executive Secretary has indicated a willingness to be more flexible once the strengthening of the SCO being financed under this project takes place. The terms of this flexibility must be negotiated and spelled out in the project agreement.

The SCO receives technical guidance from its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and overall policy guidance from its Consultative Committee (CC). The TAC reviews the research programs of SAFGRAD. Both the TAC and CC consist of representatives from SAFGRAD participating States, IARCs, donors and OAU/STRC. Both committees, actively operating for only two years now, are effective in eliciting African national and OAU participation and generating an exchange of views on research policy and SAFGRAD activities.

The committees also provide limited direction to SAFGRAD activities. In practice, however, the major source of direction comes from the Coordinating Office itself since it prepares the agenda and edits papers presented for discussion and finalizes records of meetings. At the same time, many of the TAC and CC recommendations are very general and give little attention to how to implement specific recommendations. Moreover, little apparent effort in subsequent meetings is made to follow-up any actions taken on the recommendations. As a result, the vision for SAFGRAD as held by the Coordinating Office tends to provide the principal direction for the program's evolution. If donors wish to influence this vision, therefore, they will need to incorporate specific implementation and monitoring guidelines. This project will provide a full time PASA Project Manager to assume responsibility for monitoring of the AID support.

At the present time both the International Coordinator and the Director of Research are overburdened with administrative and other tasks that impede their ability to carry out critical research coordination and networking responsibilities. The insinuation of the 1982 audit that the Coordinating Office was overstaffed is certainly not the case today. Under the present administrative organisation there is little evidence of surplus capacity. For example, though Saturday is not an official workday, the SCO is, nonetheless, frequently buzzing with activity.

This is not to say that things cannot be improved with existing international staff. There is a clear need for more support staff. Within the SCO itself the International Coordinator has many administrative responsibilities that could be shifted onto others. This would free up

the time of both he and, in his absence, the Director of Research for other more important responsibilities. Moreover, the Director of Research is forced to spend a great deal of time editing reports and documents for workshops, meetings etc. Both need more time to communicate with African leaders, directors of research and extension and others concerned with research and extension policies at the national level. Moreover, their frequent absence from the office, amounting perhaps to on average of one week per month or more for each one, impede the smooth functioning of the office under the present system.

For example, personal secretaries or the administrative assistant could respond to and sign routine correspondence. A Senior Administrator could approve GSO expenditures subject to verification by the accountant that they are allowable and subject to countersignature by the Financial Controller. Expenditures on personnel for such things as entitlements, leave and advances could also be signed by a Senior Administrator/Personnel Officer, again subject to verification and countersignature by the Accountant and Financial Controller respectively.

The very heavy duties of the Director of Research relating to preparing documentation, editing reports and reporting on TAC deliberations could be facilitated by adding a native English speaking translator/editor to the translation unit and delegating these responsibilities to him. The same person could relieve the Coordinator of some of his CC reporting duties. Organizing and monitoring training programs and supporting ACPO's & FSR teams and commodity research networks could be done by a locally hired training and extension officer.

Such restructuring could greatly increase the amount of senior staff time available for planning, coordination, solicitation of funds and lobbying for increased national attention to research and technology transfer linkages. All of this could be done without adding to the international staff of the SCO. Additional savings in senior staff time could be realized by eliminating travel that does not have a direct and obvious bearing on SAFGRAD activities.

Because of the way it operates, SAFGRAD does not need a large professional staff to execute what has become its primary function: establishing and strengthening agricultural research networks and helping selected national centers to conduct research for networking in the SAFGRAD zone.

SAFGRAD I placed emphasis on the generation of technology and diffusion of research results in its early stages. Technology generation was largely conducted through contracts with the IARCs. Following the mid-term evaluation, the project shifted more toward the networking role that looms so important at the present time. At the same time, the use of IARC's for generating technology has avoided the need for accumulating a sizeable staff of researchers directly under SCO management. This, in turn, has restrained the need for acquiring a large professional staff. As the networking activities develop, however, the need for a stronger support staff is becoming increasingly obvious.

I.C FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

I.C.1 Scientific, Technical and Research Commission

The STRC has a better financial management than project management capacity. As a result, it restricts itself mainly to financial control and auditing project expenditures. For smaller projects it can provide accounting services either through the STRC in Lagos or through its sub-regional office in Nairobi. SAFGRAD is becoming somewhat of a special case, more and more resembling a regular bureau of the STRC with its own accounting system. Still, to handle large amounts of money and contracting through SAFGRAD, OAU/STRC would need to add an accounts clerk to work exclusively on SAFGRAD accounts.

Within the STRC, the Chief Accountant has a staff of five: an assistant chief accountant, a senior accounts clerk, two accounts clerks and a secretary. The senior accountants clerk checks all vouchers and, in the case of SAFGRAD, checks supporting receipts before passing them to the Assistant Chief Accountant for review. The Assistant Chief Accountant then passes them to the Chief Accountant who again reviews them before sending them on to the Internal Auditor. After review and approval the Auditor then sends a certification to USAID against which the USAID Controller releases funds to the Coordinating Office. The OAU/STRC Chief Accountant was the person who organized the SAFGRAD accounting system now in place following the 1982 audit. Judging from recent external and internal audit reports, the system is functioning reasonably well.

The unique characteristic of the current OAU/STRC accounting system for SAFGRAD is the simultaneous sending by SAFGRAD of identical vouchers to OAU/STRC and USAID, except that supporting documentation goes to the STRC. In fact, both STRC and USAID check the vouchers. Thus, once the STRC mails certification to AID, AID can immediately release additional funds to the SCO. This duplication is necessitated by the poor communications between Ouagadougou and Lagos and the long delays in mail delivery and in clearing financial transactions due to inadequate staff at STRC headquarters.

Besides approving vouchers, the STRC Chief Accountant prepares and monitors the STRC budget and, among other duties, visits the STRC sub-regional offices and projects. He reviews their accounting procedures and records once per year, in general. He is then followed by the Internal Auditor who certifies their accounts. Each prepares a separate report.

The sub-regional offices of STRC are required to undergo an external audit. SAFGRAD, being a project rather than an STRC sub-regional office, is not, unless required to do so by a specific donor. IFAD currently requires an external audit of the funds it provides SAFGRAD under the Farming Systems Research Project.

I.C.2 The SAFGRAD Coordination Office

At the present time the SCO is using two somewhat different accounting systems. The system used for IFAD funds is based on the OAU system and

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is the one put in place by the STRC Chief Accountant. This same system was used for USAID funds until early 1984. At that time AID moved to impose a uniform accounting system on its projects in the Sahel. Following training for its Accountant under the Sahel Regional Financial Management Project, the SCO began using the new system for USAID funds.

The two systems are administered by two internationally recruited accountants with good credentials. One, the SCO Accountant, is financed by AID and he accounts for AID funds. The other, the Financial Controller, is financed by IFAD and accounts for IFAD funds. Each countersigns the other's work. Neither of them are bonded. Their supporting staff consist of one secretary and a secretary/accounts clerk.

Both accounting systems used by the Coordinating Office employ standardized forms for travel and salary advances, reimbursement vouchers and purchase orders. These are always signed by the authorizing officer, the Accountant, the Financial Controller and finally by the Coordinator before being released for payment. All checks need two signatures, that of the Accountant or Financial Controller on the one hand, and the Coordinator or Director of Research on the other.

With respect to procurement, OAU procedures require that all purchases in excess of \$5,000 be tendered. An internal committee consisting of the Coordinator, the Director of Research, the Financial Controller, the Accountant and the General Services Officer of the SCO reviews the tenders. If the tender is for construction services the tender board usually invites the participation of the USAID architect/engineer.

OAU/STRC advertizes internationally for all international staff positions. Candidates are screened by the Coordinating Office. A committee consisting of OAU/STRC, SCO, IARC and donor representatives makes the final selection. This process appears to be working quite well as evidenced by the high caliber of both administrative and research personnel recruited so far. Unfortunately, very few are Francophone.

The ad hoc mixture of accounting systems and donor procedures and regulations presents problems for project management. Each donor or agency allows certain expenditures which the others do not allow. This melange generates unnecessary confusion and dispute over proper expenditures and consumes scarce management resources. Moreover, the complicated procedures required by USAID for calculating per diem substantially increase the total amount of staff time devoted to administration without in any way improving financial management or performance.

In spite of the occasional confusion which arises, the SCO has maintained a reasonably good record since the new system and personnel began functioning. The OAU/STRC internal audit for the period 10/1/83 to 12/31/84 found minimal problems; most of them were related to differences between OAU and AID regulations or to disputes over just what is or is not allowed to international employees under the mixed sets of regulations. An external audit of SAFGRAD expenditures under the IFAD project conducted by Peat, Marwick and Mitchell for the same period yielded an unqualified opinion for that portion of SAFGRAD financing. On the other hand, SAFGRAD still does not have a good system for accounting

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for the distribution and use of purchased materials and, according to the OAU internal audit, does not maintain auto repair and service accounts. It also has not yet enforced an effective system for monitoring use of vehicles and fuel.

For sub-projects located away from Ouagadougou, SAFGRAD establishes a support structure consisting of a secretary, an accountant, a driver and messenger. Usually, each SAFGRAD financed researcher in the sub-project has a project vehicle for his use. The team leader is financially responsible for expenditures under the sub-project and maintains an imprest fund against which he submits vouchers for reimbursement. For the IFAD FSR project, a nominee of the national program countersigns checks. Along with the FSR Researcher, he is jointly responsible for disbursements and vouchers. Occasionally, where a national structure is readily available, the SAFGRAD accountant concerned (the Accountant if it concerns USAID funds and the Financial Controller if it concerns IFAD funds) is supposed to visit each site once every six months to verify expenditures. This audit function has not always been done in a timely manner.

To assist in maintaining financial discipline in the dispersed SAFGRAD sub-projects, the SCO accountants establish a budget in conjunction with the researchers concerned and the national programs. If a sub-project needs to make expenditures not provided for in the budget the researcher must obtain prior approval from the SCO. Though the system is rather rigid at the present time, the Financial Controller expects to ease restrictions if all goes well in the future. This system is really still in the embryo stage so it is too early to tell just how well it will work.

II. CHANGES REQUIRED FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

II.A. Background

During SAFGRAD I, the SCO survived sloppy project and financial management as revealed in the AID audit. Project and financial management have obviously improved since that time. During this period, most of the contracting for the project was done by USAID. This has necessitated an endless stream of PIOs and PILs, direct disbursements, certifying invoices for payment and contract administration. As the major portion of the project was contracted directly with IARCs by AID, the OAU/STRC and SCO often did not know what was expected of them with respect to project management. This contributed, at least in part, to the conditions leading to the disastrous 1982 audit.

Through its membership on the TAC and CC, AID has been encouraging SAFGRAD to develop a Master Plan that can focus its efforts and help to draw support from other donors and African Governments. As the SCU succeeds in this effort, it will need an operating structure and accounting system that is largely unaffected by differences in the rules and regulations of individual donors. Moreover, as the relative USAID contribution to total SAFGRAD funding declines, AID's interest and ability to prescribe financial management practices will too. At the same time, AID is faced with the need to reduce its management input to its projects and in Burkina Faso in particular. For all these reasons the second phase of SAFGRAD provides on opportune occasion to continue

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strengthening the management capabilities of the SCO. This will enable it to evolve into an independently functioning and financially autonomous agency in which donors can have program and financial confidence. Only if this condition is met will the SCO succeed in attracting alternative financing for its activities

II.B. Implications for the Project Goal

If one accepts the goal of strengthening the SCO in the way and for the reasons described above, this has several implications for what constitute appropriate administrative rules and regulations, contracting procedures and policies for the SCO. Most of these are generally applicable to low income less developed areas.

To the extent that AID is sincere in its desire for SAFGRAD to come to rely on the OAU for more of its operating resources in the long run, then it must confront realistically the income distribution questions that this raises. As long as SAFGRAD is financed by donors then it is difficult to justify paying African scientists and top level administrators that are internationally recruited salary levels that are very much below those paid to Europeans. This looks too much like racism for comfort. It is easier to ignore the issue. So, you recruit Togolese to go to Burkina Faso and Burkinabe to go to Togo. Each can then receive an international salary. If they remained in their country of origin - with the same skills and training - they would receive far less compensation for their services. Most governments would simply not stand

for anything else for their national cadre.

In the past, donors and western colleagues of the individuals concerned have generally supported the internationzation of African cadres, themselves finding it difficult to reconcile any other position from an ethical point of view. They have similar levels of education and training and should be paid the same, or nearly the same. What they ignore, unfortunately, is the production base in the society that has financed their training and education in the first place. Now, instead of it requiring the surplus of 100-150 peasant families to purchase the services of a bureaucrat or researcher, it will cost the surplus of 500-700 families if and when African governments themselves begin paying the cost of running these institutions. Yet the same salary levels can be financed from the surplus of only ten to twelve families in the developed countries.

While it may not be true that expatriots paid five to ten times as much as national scientists are five to ten times as productive, it is equally true that national researchers earning 150-200 times as much as peasant farmers or urban wage earners are not 150-200 times as productive. The argument of worth really gets us nowhere. It depends on ones point of view.

As more and more African scientists are trained, the supply of candidates for internationally recruited positions will increase. Indeed, we are just about at the threshold of a major geometric expansion in the number of such persons available for employment in Africa. When this occurs, if salary levels are flexible and not institutionally determined to rise at

pre-set levels each year as they are at the present time at SAFGRAD, we will see supply pressure on compensation levels for internationally recruited African researchers and Administrators. Instead of real compensation levels for internationally recruited African Scientists rising, they should fall.

For the benefit of African farmers and low income wage earners, this process should be supported and encouraged as much as possible by donors. Eventually, it should prove possible to hire highly qualified nationals within each African country for both long term and short term consulting positions. In such cases there will be no need to pay more than 50-100% above current national salary levels to compensate for the insecurity of tenure of such positions. Thus a project such as SAFGRAD, when truly run as an African institution and financed by African governments, could provide the same services as at present at 1/3 the cost or less. Everyone in Africa except the scientists themselves will benefit.

The Executive Secretary of OAU/STRC is to be commended for his efforts to control the cost of internationally recruited personnel as much as possible, though his methods do sometimes raise serious questions of fairness. However, the international salary levels paid by SAFGRAD plus a fringe benefit package currently amounting to 75% of base salary, perhaps soon to rise to 100%, are not modest. Consider the salary levels which many well trained African scientists receive for working in their own countries. The donors and the CC should be aware of this inconsistency. It is only a matter of time before competition will force compensation levels to reflect this fact if allowed to do so.

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A similar argument applies to per diems. By the accounts of large numbers of observers and colleagues familiar with the SAFGRAD scientist network, per diems and honoraria based on European rather than national researcher consumption levels frequently cause distortions of purpose. It's hard to see how a per diem or honorarium equal to two or three days salary for a national scientist could do otherwise. One should not lose sight of the fact, however, that the purpose of per diems is to serve the project, not to drive it.

Participants in workshops, monitoring tours etc. have the right to have their expenses covered and perhaps to have some pocket money left over. Per diems should not be so high that participation in workshops and conferences becomes a plum that is awarded on the basis of political power rather than scientific merit. At the same time, they should not provide an incentive for scientists to avoid the group interaction and sharing that is the ultimate goal of the networking activities of SAFGRAD. This is an issue that must be approached with sensitivity and care. Still, it must be engaged. Fortunately, the SCO is aware of this issue and has been dealing with it.

Another issue relates to non-project related travel by SAFGRAD scientists and administrators. At the present time such persons are in high demand for international conferences and consultancies of 1-7 days duration. While these may be personally exciting and financially rewarding for the professionals concerned, SAFGRAD needs to develop some guidelines on just how much, if any, of this type of non-project or tangentially related travel it will accept.

Even travel directly related to SAFGRAD needs to be planned and rationed more carefully. Certain travel may need to be insisted upon. On the other hand, when key outside groups are expected in town, travel plans should be adjusted accordingly as much as possible. Of course, there will always be conflicts and people will have to make choices. But SAFGRAD needs to establish clear policies in this regard. The CC is the appropriate body for establishing and monitoring these and similar issues.

II.C. Changes in Project Implementation

SAFGRAD II will involve major changes relative to SAFGRAD I both in concept and in the way the project is implemented. In concept, SAFGRAD itself is developing into what in AID terms is a development program. The SCO already receives assistance from IFAD and the FAC, in addition to AID. SAFGRAD is in the process of establishing a Master Plan to guide its activities over the next 10-15 years. All these factors indicate SAFGRAD's evolution from an AID regional project into a development program of longer duration and greater breadth than SAFGRAD I. 1)

1) To avoid confusion we should note that the OAU uses the words project and program in exactly the opposite sense as does AID. Thus SAFGRAD is a project of OAU/STRC. The IFAD Farming System Program, the FAC ACPO program the AID financed SAFGRAD I are sub-components. SAFGRAD II will be an extension of the AID financed component under the broader SAFGRAD project.

With respect to implementation, under SAFGRAD II almost complete responsibility for implementating will pass to OAU/STRC and the SCO. The SCO will have the budget to plan and administer the workshops, monitoring tours and short-term training programs. It will have an added responsibility for administering grants-in-aid to individual scientists conducting research on special topics of significance for the regional network. It will serve as secreteriat for the Farming Systems/ACPO research network and provide support to the other networks. It will be responsible for identifying, selecting and placing candidates for both long-term and short-term training, whether financed by AID or not. It will also monitor the progress and post-return activities of SAFGRAD trained technicians and scientists. For all these activities, the SCU will either directly sub-contract or directly administer the programs. To effectively assume this administrative and financial burden, both OAU/STRC and the SCO will have to be strengthened.

II.C.1 OAU/STRC Headquarters

To gain effective control over research activities, STRC/Lagos will sub-grant directly with the IARCs, initially as co-signatories with AID. After the first year of project execution, when the SCO financial management system will have been strengthened and streamlined, OAU/STRC will have complete sub-grant authority vis-a-vis the IARCs. Except for large sub-grants or contracts, it will delegate this sub-grant or sub-contracting authority to the SCO. Through the SCO, it will supervise the performance of sub-contractors, sub-grantees, and consultants based on performance budgets which the SCO will establish in collaboration with them.

In the area of financial control, the STRC will send its Chief Accountant to the SCO once every three months to review the quarterly voucher to be submitted to AID and to verify its accuracy. The STRC will delegate authority to certify the voucher to the SCO Controller following approval of the voucher by the STRC Chief Accountant. The voucher will then be submitted directly by the SCO to USAID/Ouagadougou for payment. To cover the increased exposure of the STRC Executive Secretary with respect to accountability for larger sums of money before the STRC directly reviews supporting documentation for vouchers, the project will purchase fidelity bonds to cover both the Accountant and the Financial Controller.

In order to reduce the management burden of the project on the USAID/Burkina Controller's office, OAU/STRC, through the SCO, will submit reimbursement vouchers only once per quarter rather than monthly as at present. For the same reason, it will negotiate a permanent line of credit for the SCO sufficient to finance five months expenditures under the project. This will eliminate the need for maintaining a USAID financed imprest fund and create an incentive for OAU/STRC to process its vouchers quickly.

To handle its increased financial responsibilities under the project the STRC will add an accounts clerk and other staff as necessary to take special responsibility for the SAFGRAD accounts. It will also make other necessary changes recommended by the management/accounting firm contracted to strengthen the OAU/STRC/SCO financial management system. It will assist in the effort to arrive at a uniform set of contracting, procurement and travel procedures for SAFGRAD that are not in conflict

with essential OAU regulations, though they may, indeed, differ from them.

To cover its project implementation costs the STRC will be allowed an overhead charge. This will be sufficient to cover office facilities, compensation and travel expenses for all OAU/STRC staff providing support to the SAFGRAD Coordinating Office or to the SAFGRAD II project. It will also cover the cost of the line of credit needed to prefinance OAU/STRC and SCO expenditures under the project. The allowable expenses and the overhead charge resulting from them will be determined in accordance with AID procedures and with the OAU Executive Secretary. An appendix to the financial plan details the \$200,000 per year OAU/STRC overhead charge used in the project budget as a provisional estimate.

Too much

Because it will be collecting an overhead, all OAU/STRC officials traveling or otherwise doing SAFGRAD business would be subject completely to OAU travel and administrative regulations. They would be financed directly by OAU/STRC from its core budget or overhead revenues. No expenses for such activities would be charged directly to the project or to the SCO budget as is done at present.

II.C.2 The SAFGRAD Coordination Office

II.C.2.a Increase in Responsibility for Project Implementation

In addition to the increased administrative responsibilities already mentioned, the SCO will have responsibility for supervising contractors' or grantees' budgets which it will establish in collaboration with them. It will prepare all necessary reports and provide AID with all

documentation necessary to satisfy the conditions precedent and covenants. It will maintain the project's accounting system, including storing all supporting receipts and documents at the SCO office for at least three years following project completion. It will control disbursement of foreign exchange and local currency on behalf of OAU/STRC and, after the first year of the project, will certify vouchers from large sub-grantees for direct payment by USAID. It will contract for all services and commodities-jointly with AID until the strengthened accounting system is in place around the end of the first year of the project - and administer all contracts. It will procure its own commodities, review reports from contractors and grantees and prepare reports required by OAU/STRC and AID.

To enable the SCO to assume these responsibilities, AID is recruiting a recognized international accounting/management firm to analyze the operation of OAU/STRC and the SCO. This study will constitute part of the project preparation process. The firm will recommend a plan of action for giving the SCO the capacity to completely manage the last four years of the project on its own. It will make a diagnosis of the accounting and management procedures currently used by the STRC and the SCO. It will suggest changes necessary to enable the OAU and the SCO to assume complete responsibility for procurement and contracting under the project. This will include identifying the types of training required to make the system work. The firm will also review OAU, AID and IFAD personnel, administrative, travel, accounting, procurement, contracting and other regulations to determine which ones are rigidly required by each. On the basis of this work the firm will draft a plan for executing the required changes, training the appropriate personnel and for preparing a SCO operations manual.

During the first year of project implementation the same firm will be contracted to execute the recommended changes, provide the training and prepare the SCO operations manual. The operations manual will consist of procedures, rules and regulations covering such things personnel management, administrative regulations, personal emoluments, uniform staff benefits, travel, procurement, contracting, financial procedures, outside consulting and attendance at conferences by SAFGRAD staff, authorities delegated to the SCO by OAU/STRC and those reserved by it, and related matters. The operations manual would have to be ratified by the CC after review by a Permanent Operations and Management Subcommittee of the CC to be established under this project for monitoring project performance. During this period AID will continue to be involved in making the grants to sub-grantees and in contracting as at present, but jointly with the SCO. By the beginning of the second year of the project, it will have transferred this function entirely to the SCO.

The international management/accounting firm responsible for executing the strengthening/^{4r}restructuring of the SCO will also monitor the progress of the new system over the life the project. It will provide regular external audits of SCO accounts and operations to the Operations and Management Subcommittee of the CC. During both the development phase and the first year in which the strengthened system will be operating on its own - the first two years of project implementation - the firm will audit SCO accounts once every four months. Assuming satisfactory results, this will stretch to six month audits during the second year of independant operation (i.e. the third year of project implementation) and annual audits for the last two years.

With the promise of a sound financial management system, based on simple yet complete procedures and rules, the OAU, IFAD and AID will hopefully do their utmost to reduce their idiosyncratic contracting, purchasing and travel requirements to a bare minimum. Once this is accomplished, other donors will hopefully find the verified SCO system adequate for protecting their interests without adding additional restrictions. This is not likely, of course, unless all donors agree to forego any form of tying their aid. For this reason the Project Paper is requesting blanket five year waivers of buy-America requirements.

II.C.2.b Changes in Organization and Staffing of the SCO

Bearing in mind the tremendous increase in responsibility it will bear, the SCO needs additional support staff to enable it to better carry out its networking, coordinating and strengthening objectives. It needs to restructure responsibilities within the SCO so as to release more senior staff time for these important functions. Although the actual changes in staffing and responsibilities will be determined by the aforementioned study, the restructuring would probably include some variant of the following.

1. The SCO needs a senior administrator to attend to the day-to-day details of running the office, to assure the continual functioning of the office when the Coordinator is absent and to relieve him of administrative duties which are not essential to his role as Coordinator when he is present. This person would assume administrative responsibility for personnel, including the secretary pool, receptionist,

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messenger, watchmen and drivers. The translator and the Documentation and Information specialist would also report administratively to the Senior Administrator rather than to the Coordinator. In addition, this person would also keep tabs on the work loads of both pool and personal secretaries and would be responsible for settling minor conflicts and complaints. He/she would recommend redistributions of responsibilities in office management and would allocate peak load typing assignments according to timing, financial and program needs.

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The current GSO would work under the Senior Administrator and would continue to assume responsibility for GSO type errands and activities such as purchases, customs, visas, airport receptions, airline and hotel reservations, etc. He would still be responsible for supervising watchmen, the janitor and the chauffeurs. He would also retain responsibility for vehicle and building maintenance. He would no longer be responsible for other personnel or for allocating vehicles, since he spends so little time in the office.

Apart for the fact that the SCO desperately needs a native French speaker in its administrative hierarchy, the logical person for the Senior Administrator position would be the recently recruited administrative assistant. She seems to have the requisite skills and experience. However, because she is new and does not speak French, she may have difficulty eliciting the necessary cooperation unless the Coordinator is supportive and takes a strong stand in notifying the entire staff of the reorganization. Even were that to succeed, the lack of a high level native French speaker would still remain.

2. The SCO needs to add a locally hired training and extension officer to its national staff to handle logistical support and monitoring for SAFGRAD trainees, including those sent for long term training under the African Manpower Development Project or other regional or bilateral training programs. He would work under the direction of the Director of Research to gather information from national programs on training needs ; ensure that prior to departure trainees had defined positions to which they would return; help define and arrange for the appropriate training program content; and keep the CC and the TAC informed of the progress

of trainees both while in training and for at least two years after their return home. The Training and Extension Officer will spend one month in the U.S. becoming familiar with USDA and University evaluation, placement and administrative procedures for handling trainees.

The Training and Extension Officer would also serve as the secretariat for the SAFGRAD/FSR/ACPO and the West African Farming Systems Research Networks. He would assist both networks with the logistical aspects of arranging for workshops. He would arrange with the Documentation Specialist for duplication of materials and with the translators for translating them. Intellectual leadership for each network would be provided by a researcher nominated by the respective networks. Hopefully, the two networks could eventually be combined.

3. Once the grants-in-aid program gains some steam and other networks begin relying on the SCO for more administrative support, the SCO will need a research grants/network support officer. The Research Grants Officer will work under the supervision of the Director of Research. In conjunction with the Director of Research and the Coordinator of each research network, he will define the requirements for requests for grants; invite applications; collect, duplicate and distribute research proposals to the reviewers; summarize the recommendations of the individual reviewers of the proposals; prepare the short list of selected proposals following from the reviewers' recommendations; and prepare for the meeting of the Permanent Subcommittee on Research Grants. Once the proposals are selected, he will notify grantees how to access the funds and what their financial reporting responsibilities include. He will then receive all financial and substantive reports on the individual grantees and forward them to the relevant SCO staff member concerned. For the vouchers this would be the Accountant and for the reports this

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would be the network coordinator or a sub-committee of the network established to monitor the progress of the network grantees.

In addition to serving as a secretariat for the grants-in-aid program, the Research Grants Officer will also assist with logistical and secretariat support to the Sorghum and Millet networks in East and West Africa.

4. The Translation Unit needs to be strengthened by adding a native English Speaking editor/French-to-English translator. Both persons in this unit should be well paid, locally hired persons. This will relieve the Director of Research and the AID Project Manager of much of their current workload. Because of the tremendous volume of translating work the SCO does, there may be a need to add yet a third translator as all the networks begin functioning. However, because of the major restructuring of responsibilities already being done, it is advisable to await the mid-term evaluation for making this determination.

5. The SCO will need two additional accounts clerks and a senior accounts clerk to assist the Accountant and the Financial Controller with paperwork generated by their increased financial responsibilities under the project. Financial management relating to training, workshops, monitoring tours, grants-in-aid, grants to IARCs and contracting are but a few of the additional responsibilities the SCO will have.

6. The position of receptionist/telephone operator should be up-graded to include responsibility for dispatching vehicles and typing. The SCO is short of typing staff. With office space at a premium, the SCO needs to concentrate responsibilities as much as possible. This will probably necessitate recruiting a new person for this position and, certainly, increasing the compensation.

7. The Documentation and Information Unit, although it has only one person, needs strengthening. The person in this position at the present time seems to have the necessary training and motivation for the printing and publication aspects of his responsibilities but he appears to lack direction and to manage his time poorly. Although he has already received training as a documentalist at IITA, this does not seem to have resulted in the anticipated improvement. The unit itself is poorly organized and does not instill a great deal of confidence as an information/research studies depository.

The PP design team does not believe that the SCO should build up an independent SAFGRAD documentation center that would duplicate the work being done at INSAH. Nonetheless, SAFGRAD should keep and catalogue copies of all SAFGRAD documents. This should include all research reports, workshop papers, minutes and reports of the TAC and CC meetings, consultant reports, etc. Confidential reports should be included in the cataloging system with the location of the document noted. The documentalist should maintain an up-to-date list of all SAFGRAD publications, research reports, TAC & CC reports, etc. for distribution to interested parties. He would also continue to support the maize and cowpea networks as at present.

With the addition of the other positions already mentioned, the Documentation Specialist should have more time and fewer interruptions to perform his tasks. At the same time, supervision from the Senior Administrator should provide some much needed direction and support.

8. Because of the way the TAC and the CC operate, the SCO itself is the real source of direction for SAFGRAD activities. Consequently, research planning and organization in the SCO need strengthening.

The 1984 Evaluation Report for SAFGRAD I recommended international recruitment for a permanent research planning and organization position. These, of course, are really functions of the International Coordinator and the Director of Research. With the strengthening of the national support staff of the SCO, both the Coordinator and the Director of Research will have considerably more time to devote to this activity. At the same time, there is a clear need for input from someone with more experience in research planning and administration. The project will provide this input through a long-term consulting contract with a person with extensive experience in research planning and administration. Additional conceptual inputs will be provided by other short-term consultants as needed. The technical annex contains more details on the responsibilities and phasing of these consultants.

Figure 2 presents a picture of how the restructured SCO would look if all these changes are implemented.

This expansion of support staff required under SAFGRAD II will necessitate expansion of the SCO's Office facilities. Even with the office now occupied by the USDA PASA Project Manager freed up, the SCO will need at least four new offices.

The agreement between SAFGRAD and the Government of Upper Volta negotiated for SAFGRAD I made the Government responsible for providing office space to SAFGRAD. With the expiration of this agreement following completion of SAFGRAD I, and with the change in government and political philosophy since the time the initial agreement was negotiated, it is not clear whether the GOBF will continue to accept responsibility for providing office space for the project.

There is also a clear insistence on the part of IBRAZ for negotiating a new collaboration agreement between itself and SAFGRAD for the second

phase of the project. At this point it is not certain that IBRAZ and SAFGRAD will be able to come to mutually acceptable terms for continuing SAFGRAD regional research activities at Kamboinse. For this reason, pending renegotiation of both agreements it is not possible to budget effectively for this aspect of the second phase.

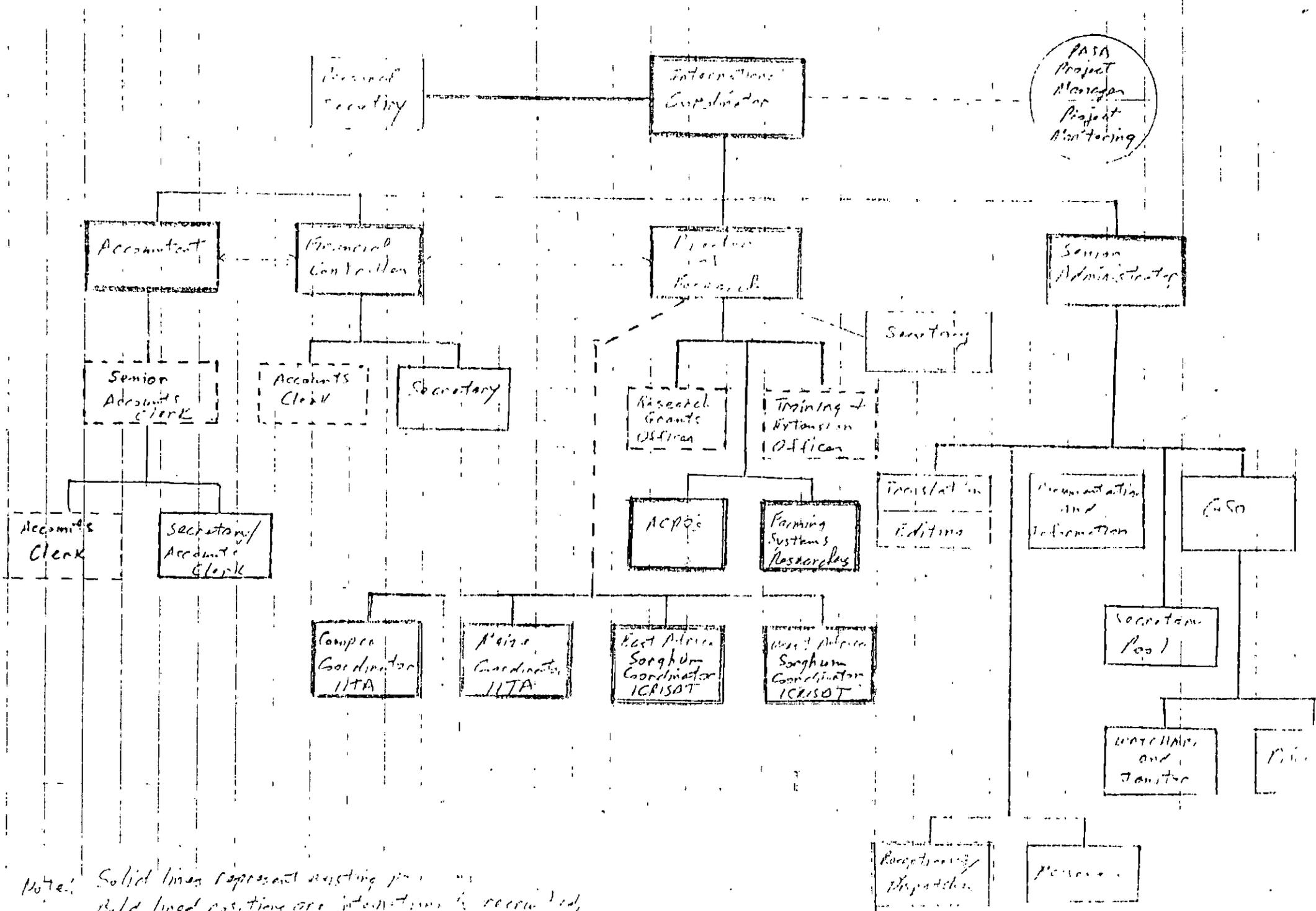
On the assumption that new agreements similar to those currently prevailing will again be reached by both parties, the budget includes financing for 200 m2 of new office space to be constructed on the same site as the present facility. In the event the GOBF agrees to provide an expanded facility for Phase II, this money will be redundant and will be available for other purposes.

II.C.2.c Changes in Project Monitoring

This project involves a tremendous increase in responsibility for project implementation for OAU/STRC and the SCO. Yet, the present structure of the SCO makes its performance highly dependent on the caliber of key STRC and SCO staff. In the recent past this centralized structure has served the project well. Present management personnel are capable and appear to be straightforward and honest.

In order to avoid a repetition of past situations that have compromised the effectiveness of SAFGRAD for extended periods of time, the CC will establish a Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management (PSOM). This Subcommittee will meet quadmestrially (once every four months). It will monitor the performance both of donor financed projects and overall SAFGRAD performance. It will report on such performance to each session of the CC. It will also make policy decisions on behalf of the CC in cases where waiting for a meeting of the full CC would unnecessarily delay key activities. All such decisions would be reported to the CC at its next meeting.





Note: Solid lines represent existing positions
 Bold lined positions are intentions to be recruited

The PSOM will receive copies of all financial and audit reports relating to SAFGRAD activities, including internal OAU/STRC accounting and audit reports. It will receive quadmestrial monitoring reports from the AID Project Manager and from project management committees and other persons responsible for monitoring other donor financed projects. It will receive copies of all vouchers submitted to donors for payment or reimbursement as well as copies of any correspondence relating to such vouchers. It will be informed of all formal solicitations for funds and of the status of negotiations concerning those solicitations. It will also serve as a grievance panel for SAFGRAD international employees. Finally, it will assist the SCO with the preparation of the agenda for the CC meetings. Appendix 1 provides details on the composition of the PSOM and other responsibilities it would have.

Even after the SCO acquires complete responsibility for contracting or sub-granting and for the review of contract performance, AID will continue to make direct disbursements to the IARCs based on certification of their vouchers by both the IARC in question and the SCO. At the present time, IARC vouchers are processed quarterly. This will continue to be the case in the second phase.

To avoid bottlenecks due to unforeseen factors, the grant agreement between USAID and the OAU will authorize USAID to make direct payments to IARC and other specified sub-grantees. It will also allow AID to pay the certified voucher of the sub-contractor without the certification of the OAU, unless the voucher is disallowed by the OAU/STRC/SCO within a 30 day time period following the date of receipt by USAID and the SCO. Thus, the IARCs will be able to protect themselves against undue delay in reimbursement by submitting vouchers simultaneously to the SCO and to AID.

II.C.2.d Changes in the Consultative Committee

The PP design team was able to assist at a Special Session of the CC called to discuss the SAFGRAD Master Plan. The group was quite large and unwieldy as there were several observers (including the PP design team) and special representatives asked to attend this particular session. The reports of previous CC and TAC meetings indicate that numerous observers are the rule rather than the exception. While the intention of soliciting these special members is to increase awareness of SAFGRAD activities, the effect is to reduce participation and critical review by the regular membership of the CC . We support the recommendation made by the Consultants' report on the "Framework For the Long Term Planning of SAFGRAD"; namely, SAFGRAD should avoid inviting large numbers of extraneous observers in order to increase the effectiveness of the meetings.

With a more limited total attendance at CC meetings and with the establishment of a Permanent Sub-Committee for Operations and Management, the CC should find annual meetings sufficient to provide necessary and effective guidance to the SCO. The PSOM, the SCO or the OAU/STRC Executive Secretary could call a Special Session of the CC should either feel the urgent need for a broader mandate, but Special Sessions called by the PSOM or the SCO would need the approval of the OAU/STRC Executive Secretary. The creation of the PSOM and the reduction in the frequency of CC meetings and attendees should improve overall project implementation while considerably reducing the costs of project monitoring and guidance.

As for the composition of the CC, the PP design team does not agree with the SAFGRAD Master Plan Technical Workshop recommendation that the IARC's not be included as members of the CC because they are already represented on the TAC. The functions of the two committees are quite different and different IARC interests should be represented at each.

As long as the IARC's retain a principal role for generating technology for the SAFGRAD member countries they should have a strong say in which SAFGRAD policies are most effective in adapting and diffusing that technology.

At the same time, there is a clear need to increase formal high level African representation on the CC. The PP design team strongly endorses the recommendation of the Consultants report proposing representatives from each of West, Central, East and Southern Africa. To this we would add the representative from Burkina Faso as at present. The representatives from West and Southern Africa (not Burkina Faso) should be chosen by INSAH and SADCC, respectively, in order to promote better coordination between SAFGRAD and those two institutions.

Moreover, SAFGRAD should name the Minister responsible for either research or extension in a member country as the official representative for his country on the CC. Even though the Ministers would frequently send lower level officials to represent them, probably Directors of Research, the CC would probably obtain higher level national representation than at present. This can help to increase national support for research.

With the SAFGRAD International Coordinator serving as secretary, the size of the CC would expand to 12. This is not an unwieldy number considering the more intensive review, analysis and reporting being done by the Permanent Subcommittee on Operations and Maintenance and the reduction in observers. Indeed, the size of the CC should expand to include new donors and IARC's supporting SAFGRAD as these emerge.

II.C.2.e Changes in the Technical Advisory Committee

At the present time the TAC consists of the Executive Secretary of OAU/STRC, four members from SAFGRAD participating countries, one representative from each of the donors (presently three), one representative from each of the IARCS and institutional research cooperators, (currently three) and one representative from INSAH. The Director of Research of SAFGRAD serves as Secretary for the meeting.

During the past two years the TAC has been meeting roughly once every six months for two days each. The meetings consist primarily of the principals of key SAFGRAD research programs. They review past results and programs and describe future plans. The TAC then critiques the research programs with the purpose of improving their relevance and quality.

At the present time the review and critiques of research programs are not particularly dynamic in the TAC. The TAC really acts as an informal advisory body since its power to force a change in the orientation of research programs is very limited. Once funding for IARCS and other research programs is contracted directly through the SCO, then the TAC, through its recommendations to the CC, will have more leverage. Moreover, once the TAC begins reviewing the allocations of grants-in-aid recommended by the Permanent Subcommittee on Research Grants to be constituted under this project, the review of competing programs and priorities should generate some dynamism that is now lacking.

For a more effective technical review of research programs and priorities, membership on the TAC should be restricted to active researchers and scientists as much as possible. The number of extraneous observers should be strictly limited for the same reasons.

Although the CC, as the ultimate policy body for SAFGRAD, is the only organization which controls the composition of the TAC, the project design team feels that certain changes in the composition and operation of the TAC would greatly increase its effectiveness in carrying out its mandate.

With respect to composition, the Executive Secretary should not be a member of the TAC. His is primarily a policy responsibility. As chairman of the CC he is nonetheless in a position to have a powerful influence on the direction of research programs. As chairman of both TAC and the CC he, in effect, reports to himself. This makes the TAC somewhat redundant. In his place, the Assistant Executive Secretary for Agriculture of the OAU/STRC would serve as chairman.

As with the CC, the TAC should have representation from the four principal geographical areas of Africa covered by SAFGRAD: West, Central, East and Southern. In addition, it should have an ex-officio representative from the country hosting SAFGRAD technology generation programs, Burkina Faso at the present time. These representatives should all be active senior researchers and none of them should be research directors. Research directors would be represented on the CC either directly or by their Ministers.

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In addition to the member country representatives, the TAC should include all of the Coordinatros for the various research networks, excluding the research management network. That, again, will be represented on the CC.

Each donor should provide a representative, as at present, as should INSAH. SADCC should be asked to provide a representative as well. The INSAH and SADCC representatives should be active research scientists nominated by INSAH and SADCC respectively. The donor representatives would be the only non-active research scientists on the TAC. Their role

on the TAC would be to express that individual donor points of view on desirable research programs.

The TAC will constitute a Permanent Subcommittee on Research Grants to review the recommendations for funding emanating from scientists chosen as reviewers for the grants-in-aid proposals. This subcommittee will consist of a senior national scientist and a network coordinator chosen on a rotating basis by the TAC from its membership. The SAFGRAD Director of Research will also serve on this subcommittee as its chairman. All members will serve without compensation except for travel expenses and per diem where required.

It goes without saying that Committee members themselves may not submit proposals for grants-in-aid. The TAC would define the priorities and criteria by which the PSRG would evaluate the proposals. It will also review the sub-committee's recommendations for funding before making the final allocation. It will report on these allocations to the CC but the CC may not change them. The CC will, however, set the broad guidelines against which the TAC should review the proposals.

II.C.2.f Scheduling CC, TAC and Subcommittee Meetings

The PSRG will meet once per year, three days prior to the meeting of the TAC in order to economize on travel costs. Members would review the proposals for one or two days depending on the number cleared by the reviewers. They would then spend another day preparing a summary of their recommendations for distribution to TAC members at the beginning of the TAC meeting.

The TAC will also meet only once per year rather than twice as at present, immediately following the meeting of the PSRG. It will spend two days reviewing SAFGRAD research programs and grant recommendations made by the PSRG, and will select those to be included in the following

year's program. It will then spend the morning of a third day summarizing its findings and recommendations for the CC. On the afternoon of the third day the full TAC will report to the full CC.

The Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management of the CC will schedule one of its quadmestrial meetings to correspond with the CC annual meeting. This meeting will begin on the same day that TAC convenes. It, then, will then be ready to report its findings to the CC on the first or second day after the CC convenes.

The CC, for its part, will convene its annual meeting on the morning of the same day in which the TAC reports to it. In this way the entire operation from review of research proposals by the PSRG and the review of SAFGRAD operations and management by the PSOM to completion of the CC meeting can be accomplished in the space of eight days. At the same time, only donor and SCO representatives will spend more than six days in meetings and only sub-committee members will spend more than three days. This will result in very substantial economies in interpreting and travel costs for SAFGRAD and in the time of researchers who will be away from their research activities at a critical time of the year.

II.C.3 A.I.D.

A.I.D. will provide a full-time USDA PASA to manage the project for the USAID/BF mission. The PASA will be stationed in Ouagadougou. He will also take responsibility for monitoring project performance and reporting on its progress to the Permanent Subcommittee of the CC for Operations and Management and to USAID/BF. This will include monitoring the execution of the new management structure put in place during year one.

Apart from his project management and monitoring activities, the presence of the AID Project Manager should be felt as lightly as possible at the SCO. An important goal of this project is to enable the SCO to

manage itself and donor resources without assistance from donors themselves. For this reason the Project Manager will not maintain an office at SCO as at present; funds are provided within the budget for office rental and secretariat support in the event that USAID/BF cannot provide these.

USAID/BF will provide a Project Officer and financial management support from its direct hire staff in Burkina Faso. During the first year of project implementation, USAID will continue its implementation responsibilities more or less as at present, except that the SCO will be an active co-signer of all sub-grants and agreements on behalf of the OAU/STRC. During this period the financial and administrative management of the SCO will be strengthened as previously described. This one year transition to independent contracting and procurement by the SCO will give it a chance to gain more experience in these areas before taking over complete responsibility.

From the beginning of the second year of the project, USAID will transfer all contracting and procurement responsibilities to the SCO which will be acting on behalf of OAU/STRC. USAID/Burkina will reduce its role to one of verifying and processing vouchers for payment on a quarterly basis. It will also order AID audits or provide for other financial control as it deems necessary.

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The decision of the PP design team to keep project management and financial control in Burkina Faso is based on the relatively light administrative responsibilities of AID during years 2-5 of the project and the need for timely processing of payment vouchers. This will impose a continuation on USAID/BF of the present rather heavy administrative load during year one of project implementation. However, the intimate knowledge of the ADO and USAID/BF of the project and its history will provide a continuity of execution and supervision that would otherwise be placed in jeopardy. Moreover, the USAID Project Officer will be more in touch with the project and better able to sign off on vouchers without unduly relying on the PASA Project Manager or other third party sources. In addition, as questions on the vouchers arise in the USAID Controller's Office, they can be quickly resolved.

The team considered and rejected locating AID project and financial management at REDSO Abidjan. First of all, it is not at all clear that REDSO wants this responsibility. Even if it did, the constant traveling of REDSO officers would make frequent and accessible contact between the PASA Project Manager and the Project Officer problematic at best. The Project Officer would essentially have to rely on information provided by the PASA Project Manager to verify payment vouchers submitted by the SCO. This creates the potential for the same kind of situation which led to the disastrous 1982 Audit. Locating the PASA Project Manager jointly at Abidjan and Ouagadougou, would partially resolve the communication problems between him and the Project Officer; but that would be a high

price to pay for communication. Not only would it be difficult to recruit someone to split themselves between the two loci, but it would be expensive and would lengthen the pipeline for processing vouchers, thereby requiring a larger imprest fund for the SCO. Even with the modest level of AID related paper work activities during years 2-5, the PASA would spend probably one week per month taking care of at most two days work in Abidjan. During the first year of the project, on the other hand, he would spend most of his time in airports and on airplanes.

The current Project Officer, the USAID/BF ADO, indicates that the project, as designed, should not demand a great deal of his time after the first year of the project. Other AID projects are winding down and even with reduced staffing, he expects to have sufficient time to properly follow the project.

The USAID/BF Controller is not in such a favorable situation. However, with quarterly submission of vouchers, the strengthening of the SCO as provided for in the project, and the development of a separate operations manual for the SCO, the Controller's management burden from the project will decline sharply. Thus, the only critical period will be year one of project implementation.

The design of this project reduces AID management responsibilities to a minimum while, at the same time, trying to make the SAFGRAD program a more attractive candidate for other donor support. To accomplish both objectives, AID will be requested to grant blanket waivers of several congressionally mandated provisions of the Foreign Assistance Act. These

will include:

- waiver of buy-American procurement provisions for the duration of the project:
- waiver of competitive bidding requirements for contacts with IARC's and national researchers on the basis of predominate capability;
- waiver of use of U.S. carriers for ocean freight.
- waiver of the Fly American provisions for SCO staff and SCO financed researchers. This would not apply to the PASA Project Manager.

In addition, AID will be requested to allow comingling of its funds with those of other donors so as to facilitate financial management by the SCO. Since AID would not be providing an imprest fund to the OAU/STRC/SCO, there would be no bank interest earnings to which it could lay claim.

AID will finance this project by means of a direct grant to OAU/STRC. Because the project involves essentially two phases, a first year strengthening phase and a four year independent management phase, the Grant Agreement will be prepared in two stages. The Grant Agreement for the first phase will specify that USAID contracting and procurement procedures will be followed. That for the second phase will specify that STRC/SCO procedures will be followed and the SCU Operations Manual will be included as an annex to that Grant Agreement.

Both Grant Agreements will allow OAU/STRC on overhead rate to cover its administrative , management and financial control expenses. This will include all expenses of the Executive Secretary when he is working on SAFGRAD business, including per diem and his personal emoluments. It will also include interest on bank loans used to finance project

expenditures. OAU will charge no expenses directly to the project. The agreements will specify that the SCO will add overhead charges to its quarterly vouchers and then transfer the proceeds to OAU/STRC Lagos.

Both Grant Agreements will specify that reimbursement vouchers will be submitted to the USAID/BF Controller quarterly, directly by the Coordinating Office, signed by the OAU Chief Accountant and certified by the SCO Controller. It will allow for simultaneous submission of certified vouchers from IARC sub-grantees to AID and the SCO and will authorize direct payment to the sub-grantee by AID unless disallowed by the SCO within 30 days. It will authorize the receiver of funds, in this case the SCO via its account with Chemical Bank of New York, to transfer money into any other account. The SCO will bear any exchange rate risk.

All of these changes represent a substantial departure from SAFGRAD I. The design team feels that, given the recent performance of its financial management responsibilities, the SCO can, with appropriate strengthening and simplification of multi-donor rules and regulations as provided for in this project, effectively and soundly execute the project as described herein.

III. COORDINATION BETWEEN INSAH, SACAR AND SAFGRAD

Few issues relating to SAFGRAD generate as much emotion as how its activities should be coordinated with those of INSAH. Should SAFGRAD expand its presence in Southern Africa, the issue will eventually emerge as a burning one vis-a-vis SADCC as well unless something is done to prevent it.

Several points need to be established before venturing a solution to the present state of mutual ignoring which now occurs between INSAH and SAFGRAD. First of all, each organization was once the darling of an Office of AID. The initial lack of coordination between the two organizations began at that level. It thus seems somewhat unfair to now tell them to work out something that AID was unable to work out when all the principal decisions were its own.

The second point is that both SAFGRAD and INSAH are funded by donors, primarily by AID. If either is doing something that the other finds unacceptable or undesirable, then AID is probably in the best position to force a resolution of the conflict. The fact that it has chosen not to merely reflects AID's own ambivalence concerning the two institutions.

Considering both of these issues, dumping the decision of how to coordinate activities between SAFGRAD and INSAH onto the design team of either SAFGRAD II or the team preparing the extension of funding for INSAH is a cop out on the part of AID, to say the least. Be that as it may, we rise to the challenge.

INSAH has a mandate, through CILSS, from the heads of eight African States to support agricultural development in the Sahel. CILSS is not an organ of the OAU. It is a formal association of independent African States, each of which is itself a member of the OAU.

SAFGRAD is an informal association of African countries which have important land areas that experience semi-arid agricultural production conditions. All of the CILSS countries are also members of SAFGRAD. But not all SAFGRAD countries are members of CILSS. Therein lies the problem.

Although there is certainly duplication between some of the activities of SAFGRAD and those of INSAH, the respective mandates of the two institutions make this somewhat inevitable. Both are responsible for coordinating research in their respective areas: INSAH, research on all crops in the Sahel; SAFGRAD, research on maize, cowpeas, sorghum, millet and peanuts in 26 countries, including the Sahel. Probably the best that can be hoped for is to reduce duplication to a minimum. Only the strengthening of national research systems to a level where they can maintain on their own, contacts with IARCs and other countries with similar ecological conditions, will solve the problem completely. At that time neither INSAH nor SAFGRAD will have a role to play in agricultural research. Hopefully, both institutions would wither away.

Because SAFGRAD has a broader regional mandate than the Sahel, it is inevitable that its regional trials will include materials that are not always relevant to Sahelian countries. At the same time, many of the Sahelian countries receive materials from the same sources as SAFGRAD as well as from different sources, and are conducting their own trials with them. By financing separate collaborative field trials for member countries, INSAH increases the likelihood of wasteful duplication, wasteful not only of financial resources but also of scarce trained manpower. This problem has two obvious solutions: stop either SAFGRAD or INSAH from conducting coordinated field trials in the Sahel; or require the more particular, in this case, INSAH, to select useful materials from the more general, i.e., SAFGRAD, for part of its regional trials package. The latter strikes the design team as the more reasonable approach if donors decide that INSAH should indeed be financing regional field trials.

To facilitate coordination between INSAH and SAFGRAD, INSAH should hold its regional planning workshop just after the SAFGRAD workshops. It should invite the relevant SAFGRAD network coordinators to assist in the INSAH workshops, and to present the materials they have chosen to incorporate into the SAFGRAD coordinated regional trials for the coming year. The coordinator would justify the selections chosen for trials. INSAH network scientists should then weigh those selections and proceed to put together a package that includes those which they feel will be useful for the Sahel. There would be no other SAFGRAD trials in the Sahel unless national scientists freely choose to run them. The only duplication, then, would come from those scientists who failed to convince INSAH to include a variety in its trial that they felt to be important for their own research programs. They would have no choice but to reject the INSAH trials or to run both INSAH and SAFGRAD ones.

At the present time regional trials seem to be the only major area of duplication between INSAH and SAFGRAD. But, if INSAH continues to develop its research support activities, it will only be a matter of time before it will begin financing ACPOs and FSR teams. When this occurs SAFGRAD should withdraw from such countries and transfer its resources elsewhere. There is simply too much work to be done to waste time competing for the same audience. In such cases SAFGRAD should continue to invite the researchers concerned to fully participate in SAFGRAD workshops and monitoring tours so that they may improve their methodologies and share their successes and failures for the benefit of all.

To facilitate this coordination between SAFGRAD and, INSAH and between SAFGRAD and SADCC, the project provides financing for SAFGRAD network coordinators to attend the INSAH and SADCC workshops in the year during which the relevant SAFGRAD network holds its workshop.

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SAFGRAD will, of course, continue to provide regional trials packages for all Sahelian and Southern African scientists wishing to run the SAFGRAD regional trials in their countries. However, there will be no other financial support apart from that which might be provided by the network coordinator for special purposes. The line item in the budget providing materials support for networks contains a modest sum for each network for such purposes.

To force this issue on both sides, AID should establish as a condition precedent, on both this project and the extension of funding for INSAH, that the two institutions adopt this or another acceptable solution to their coordination problems before release of funds for either one. With both organizations coming up for refunding at the same time, AID has a unique opportunity to finally resolve what it failed to settle over seven years ago. Of course it would make no sense to impose such a condition on only one of the refunding agreements. One could effectively eliminate the other by simply refusing to cooperate. The need for coordinated action within AID could not be clearer.

APPENDIX 1

Composition and Operation of the
Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management
of the SAFGRAD Consultative Committee

The Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management (PSOM) will consist of one donor member, one external representative named by the IARC's which are members of the CC, and one member from the national representatives serving on the CC at the time. The representative named by the IARC's will not himself be a member of the CC nor will the person be employed by the IARC's which are themselves members of the CC. He will only be nominated by them. This should reduce any potential conflict of interest. The external representative will be appointed for a period of three years.

The member representing national programs will be elected by those national representatives serving on the CC at the time. This member will serve for a period of two years.

The PSOM will monitor performance both of donor financed projects and overall SAFGRAD operations. It will report on such performance to each session of the CC. It will monitor follow up actions to CC recommendations taken by the SCO. It will also make policy decisions on behalf of the CC in cases where waiting for a meeting of the full CC would unnecessarily delay key activities. All such decisions would be reported to the CC at its next meeting.

The PSOM will receive copies of all financial and audit reports relating to SAFGRAD activities, including internal OAU/STRC accounting and audit reports. It will receive quadmestrial (four months) monitoring reports from the AID Project Manager and from those persons responsible

for monitoring other donor financed projects. It will receive copies of all vouchers submitted to donors for payment or reimbursement as well as copies of any correspondence relating to such vouchers. It will be informed of all formal solicitations for funds and of the status of negotiations concerning these solicitations. In addition, the PSOM will assist the SCO with preparing the agenda for the CC meetings. The PSOM will also serve as a grievance panel for SAFGRAD's international employees who feel they are not justly dealt with by the various levels of project management. The PSOM would decide whether the grievance has merit and if so, would recommend to the appropriate officer in charge how to resolve it. In the event that the issue is not resolved at this level, it would be brought before the next session of the CC for resolution.

The PSOM would have other duties as might be assigned to it by the CC as project implementation unfolds. All travel expenses related to meetings of the subcommittee will be paid from SCO operating funds designated for this purpose. The external member will receive an appropriate honorarium as determined by the CC.

The purpose of the PSOM is to ensure that the SCO manages SAFGRAD effectively. The PSOM will meet every four months to review the information available to it. It will use this information and any guidance directives from the CC to guide the SCO with respect to brood program orientation and management. It will meet for no more than three days each quadmester and will conclude each session with guidance meetings with the relevant SCO staff. Both the PSOM and the SCO will have the right to call a special session of the CC subject to approval by the OAU/STRC Executive Secretary should it appear that a broader mandate is required for certain crucial decisions. At this time it is not envisioned that the PSOM or SCO will need to exercise this power.

With creation of the PSOM there will no longer be a need for semi-annual meetings of the CC. Annual meetings should suffice for providing the kind of direction that SAFGRAD needs. The PSOM would assist the SCO in drawing up the agenda for the CC meetings and will be required to report on its activities and findings at each session. One if its quadmestrial meetings will be timed so that it immediately preceeds the annual meetings of the CC in order to economize on travel costs.

All elections for membership on the Permanent Subcommittee for Operations and Management will take place at the annual meeting of the year concerned. Newly elected members will assume their position on the Permanent Subcommittee immediately following the meeting of the CC in which they have been elected. Elections for donor and national representative members will be held during alternative years to assure continuity of the work of the Subcommittee. The PSOM will appoint a chairman to serve for one year on a rotating basis.

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