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Scientific, Technical and Research Commission  
Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development

UNION AFRICAINE

Commission Scientifique, Technique et de la Recherche  
Recherche et Développement des Cultures Vivrières  
dans les Zones Semi-Arides

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INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF SAFGRAD AS RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT ENTITY FOR FOOD SECURITY AND  
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE OF THE AFRICAN UNION:

**A vision harnessing science for food  
security and poverty eradication in africa**

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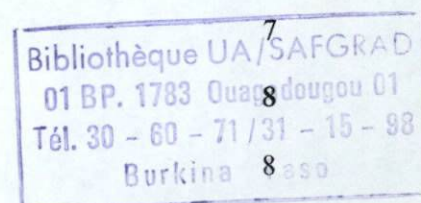
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ADB</b>	:	African Development Bank
<b>ASARECA</b>	:	Association for Strengthening of Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa.
<b>AU</b>	:	African Union
<b>CCD</b>	:	Convention to Combat Desertification
<b>CGIAR</b>	:	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
<b>CORAF/WECARD</b>	:	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
<b>DDC</b>	:	Dryland Development Center
<b>ECA</b>	:	Economic Commission for Africa
<b>FAO</b>	:	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>FARA</b>	:	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
<b>GDP</b>	:	Gross Domestic Product
<b>IAPSC</b>	:	Inter African Phytosanitary Council
<b>IARC</b>	:	International Agricultural Research Center
<b>IBAR</b>	:	Inter-African Bureau of Animal Resources
<b>ICRISAT</b>	:	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
<b>IDRC</b>	:	International Development Research Center
<b>IFAD</b>	:	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>IITA</b>	:	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
<b>NARS</b>	:	National Agricultural Research Systems
<b>NGO</b>	:	Non Governmental Organization
<b>NEPAD</b>	:	New Partnership for African Development
<b>OAU</b>	:	Organization of African Unity
<b>RO</b>	:	Regional Organizations
<b>SRO</b>	:	Sub Regional Organization
<b>SACCAR</b>	:	Southern Africa Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural Research
<b>SADCC</b>	:	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
<b>SAFGRAD</b>	:	Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development
<b>SPAAR</b>	:	Special Programme for African Agricultural Research
<b>STRC</b>	:	Scientific, Technical and Research Commission
<b>SSA</b>	:	Sub-Saharan Africa
<b>USAID</b>	:	U.S. Agency for International Development
<b>UNDP</b>	:	United Nation Development Program



## **FOREWORD**

Food security and eradication of poverty remain the formidable development challenges of African countries in general, and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in particular. In this regard, SAFGRAD as hub of productive, economically and environmentally friendly technologies is well positioned to play a key role to particularly promote the development of science based agriculture and people centered socio-economic development.

The transition of the OAU to the African Union provides new impetus and opportunities to put African countries into the global path way of economic development as manifested by new initiatives of AU, for example, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Institutional orientations of programmes and objectives of the Commission and the subsequent creation of NEPAD also call for the consolidation of SAFGRAD technological and networking services into an efficient institution of the African Union for promoting food security, poverty eradication, and sustainable agricultural development.

This vision paper attempts to define the possible role and place of SAFGRAD in this new institutional context of the African Union. It provides an analysis of attained objectives, lessons learned, accomplishments and emerging opportunities of SAFGRAD. Furthermore, a new approach and strategies to facilitate the implementation of AU Programmes / Portfolios in SAFGRAD area of competence where it has a clear comparative advantage are proposed. Finally, new arrangements for the governance and sustained funding of the proposed institution are also suggested.



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*The Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development (SAFGRAD) institutionalization paper lies on three pillars: (1) the present context of the African agriculture; (2) the transition from the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union that offers opportunities for rationalizing, restructuring and institutionalizing existing OAU scientific offices; (3) the important experience and achievements obtained by SAFGRAD in terms of technology development and transfer, capacity building, diffusion of scientific information and resource mobilization.*

*A brief description of African agriculture, its weaknesses, its relationship to food security, income and employment generation, development of agro-industries, foreign exchange, in short poverty eradication and economic growth are outlined. The special case of semi-arid regions and peri-urban areas where most people live in absolute poverty, where droughts occur periodically and natural resources degradation is acute, has been emphasized.*

*The transition from OAU to AU has revealed that the attainment of AU goals and objectives requires not only new orientations and strategies, but also rationalization of previous programs, mandates, the revitalization of viable scientific offices inherited from OAU and the establishment of new ones. Specialized AU offices and programs will achieve more impact if few conditions pertaining to sustained political and financial support, enabling institutional environment, support in resource mobilization could be achieved in the new context of the African Union and NEPAD. It is hypothesized that the new AU orientations and strategies will undoubtedly contribute to the attainment of an organization where most of the above conditions are in place.*

*The paper then emphasizes the comparative and collaborative advantages of SAFGRAD: broad experience in research and technology transfer activities in the priority areas of food security and poverty eradication, particularly for semi-arid zones; the pan-African characteristic of the program; the good working relationship and linkages established with a majority of national agricultural research systems of Africa, international research centers, sub-regional research organizations, and NGOs. Through these linkages and participation to sub-regional and regional fora / networks, SAFGRAD is well positioned to facilitate and conduct advocacy and dissemination activities leading to a widespread knowledge and adoption at the field level of AU policies in the specific areas of rural development, agriculture, food security and preservation of the environment. SAFGRAD has also good experience of collaboration with major donors of African agriculture. From 1977 to 2002, it has mobilized and managed about 50 million US dollars from donors and private sector in favor of agricultural research and technology transfer for Africa. It is expected that SAFGRAD capacity in the area of resource mobilization will be boosted once the office becomes a permanent entity within AU, with strong political support. By its size and mode of operation, SAFGRAD has proven to be a lean, cost effective and efficient institution.*

*The paper therefore strongly recommends that SAFGRAD, which was until now an AU programme receiving irregular subventions on an ad hoc basis, be transformed into a new entity (bureau or agency) of the African Union for research and development, particularly for semi-arid zones of Africa and peri-urban areas.*



*The goals of the proposed new entity will be to contribute to the advancement of agricultural research, technology transfer and marketing as well as the management of natural resources by facilitating and coordinating the use of the scientific talents of national agricultural research systems (NARS), international agricultural research centers (IARCs) and sub-regional organizations (SROs) to enhance food security, promote sustainable agriculture, particularly in the semi-arid zones of Africa and peri-urban areas.*

*The new AU institution will strengthen its linkages with existing regional and sub-regional organizations such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), ASARECA, CORAF and SACCAR.*

*Within the African Union framework, the new SAFGRAD will fully take into account the programmes goals and objectives of the Commission pertaining to food security and poverty eradication in particular, the enhancement of the science based socio-economic development in general. A strong partnership and collaboration will be established with the other AU Bureaus or agencies as well as with relevant programme / portfolios: Rural Economy and Agriculture; Human Resources, Science and Technology; Gender Main Streaming in all aspects of socio-economic development, Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa. Coordination and synergies will also be sought through the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC) of AU.*

*In terms of programmes, the institutionalisation paper suggests that New SAFGRAD will emphasize programmes that will add value at the Continental level or across sub-regions: (1) facilitation / research coordination, exchange of information and experiences across sub-regions in the following domains of research: intensification and diversification of production systems; drought preparedness and mitigation; water and soil conservation; agricultural policies; development of technologies adapted to the socio-economic conditions of users; market development; inventory and enhancement of endogenous technologies; integrated natural resource management; biotechnology, biosecurity and biodiversity; ecological monitoring. (2) Building on SAFGRAD experience in technology transfer and marketing, promote the scaling out and wide dissemination of technologies, particularly those targeting food production and processing, income generation (particularly for women), peri-urban agriculture and preservation of the environment. Special projects to facilitate farmers' access to drought tolerant varieties, seeds, and know how on food banks establishments will be undertake in partnership with the AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine. (3) Contribution to the assessment of risks and advantage of biotechnology and promotion of clear and relevant regulations addressing both biosafety and biodiversity concerns in the use of biotechnology for poverty eradication and food security. The New SAFGRAD will also address human capacity development issues in agricultural research and investigate ways to put in place an Agriculture Technology Transfer Fund.*

*It is proposed that the New SAFGRAD be governed through an Oversight Committee of not more than 16 members. These comprise at least 9 permanent members composed of AU relevant programmes or portfolios Directors, STRC Executive Secretariat and Key partners (ADB, UNDP/Dry Land Development Center, NEPAD executive secretariat, FARA executive secretary); the other 7 members, representative of main stakeholders, will have a three years*



*mandate, renewable once. Observers from main donors (2) and CGLAR Centers Directors operating in Africa (2) will be invited to each of the Oversight Committee session.*

*The core professional staff of the New SAFGRAD should remain lean and small since it has developed collaborative networks and strategy to enable NARS and technical professional staff of relevant institutions in benefiting countries to own and implement its various programmes and project activities. It will be composed of a director, an agricultural economist, an agronomist, an administrative and financial officer and a minimum support staff. Other professional staff may be established through specific projects funded by donors.*

*In terms of funding, it is recommended that AU should allocate a minimum yearly budget of 500,000 dollars for salaries of permanent staff and administrative costs of office. This will incite donors to be more responsive to new project proposals. The funding of programmes will be secured through an aggressive resource mobilization strategy and relevant strategic programmes, with active support of AU Commission and the Oversight Committee. Special projects may also be funded through AU and NEPAD special funds such as the AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa.*



## **I BACKGROUND**

### **1.1. Analysis of problems and issues**

Agriculture is the main source of income, food security and GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Per capita food and agricultural output, however, has declined substantially since 1960's, as a consequence of disruption of farming due to frequent droughts, floods, civil conflicts, degradation of the resource base, heavy debt burden and inadequate policies. The combined growth of human and livestock population, and lack of resources to access more productive technologies have also contributed to the slow growth of agriculture in several countries.

Millions of small farmers in SSA virtually lack the capital inputs including quality land for intensifying agricultural production to adequately feed their families. Because of the stagnation of agricultural production in several countries, available food supply has barely kept-up with population growth. The resulting food security crisis in more than half of SSA countries clearly shows the priority and the need for intensification of agriculture.

The crucial and overriding challenge facing the agricultural sector in several SSA countries, therefore, is producing enough to feed the growing populations. The growth of agro-industry and processed products much depends on adequate continuous supply of raw material to both rural and urban industries. Furthermore, agriculture as an engine of economic growth will need to generate employment and income, including foreign exchange through improved productivity of cash crops and their transformation into value added products for diversified markets.

For the particular case of semi-arid Africa, in almost three quarters of the significantly affected countries, at least 30% of the population lives in absolute poverty, with incomes below the international poverty line of \$1 a day. The key to meeting these challenges lies in the rapid growth of smallholder agriculture, the diversification of livelihood strategies and the targeting of future interventions towards the most vulnerable populations, particularly women.

Post colonial Africa inherited weak scientific base and institutions, and dysfunctional agricultural based economies. Since its inception (1977) the Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development (SAFGRAD) is one of the few institutions in the semi arid Africa that persistently introduced via its sub-regional agricultural networks productive technologies to enhance availability of major food staples such as maize, sorghum, millets, grain legumes, etc.. through the development of site responsive farming systems (i.e. productive cropping systems, soil-water conservation, integrated livestock production such as small ruminants etc.).

More than ever, the mandate for which SAFGRAD was established is still up-to-date. The issue of development of food production in semi-arid African zones is a major component of agricultural policies. It is in such zones specially that poverty is rampant, that sustainable natural resource management is badly needed, that food production is jeopardized by the combined effect of erratic climatic, natural resource degradation and finally, that the management of the biological diversity of animal and plant species is increasingly a matter of concern.



## **1.2. A brief presentation of SAFGRAD Programme**

In response to the recurrent droughts, the virtual lack of appropriate and economically feasible technologies to improve agricultural production in semi-arid agro-ecosystems and the food security crisis in 1970s, the Heads of African States and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) established SAFGRAD in 1977 (based on Resolution 505 XXIX adopted by the Council of Ministers).

This initiative culminated into an agreement between OAU and donors particularly the United USAID to build research and technology transfer capacities of 27 benefiting countries in Sub Saharan Africa. Through SAFGRAD, the USAID has been a key donor that financed agricultural research and capacity building at regional level (over 15 years).

The other donors that supported a number of research, training and technology transfer projects through SAFGRAD include ADB, IDRC, IFAD, Ford Foundation, The French Government Foreign Technical Assistance and OAU.

Furthermore, the SAFGRAD framework networked and strengthened technical partnerships with International Agricultural Research Centers, such as IITA (for generation high yielding disease and drought resistant maize and cowpea cultivars, soil and water conservation techniques); ICRISAT, for the improvement of sorghum and millets; the NARS and extension systems of Member Countries have fully participated to develop and transfer technologies and improved methods of farming systems specific to their respective ecologies. As a result, SAFGRAD facilitated the transfer of technologies including genetic material across various political and language barriers.

Since its inception, SAFGRAD put an emphasis on the integrated management of agriculture and environment to stimulate economic growth and concurrently restore the resource base and sustain the productivity of agro-ecosystems.

Series of international policy conferences have set a target of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015. SAFGRAD's shared goal is to play catalytic role in the improvement of agricultural productivity to enable African countries attain food security and eradicate poverty through the introduction of innovative sustainable agriculture.

### **Objectives and Mandate**

The global objectives of the OAU/STRC-SAFGRAD have therefore, been to:

- Improve the production and productivity of traditional farming systems with particular emphasis on food grain (i.e. maize, sorghum, millets, cowpea etc.)
- Foster a dynamic inter African research cooperation at regional and sub regional levels.
- Facilitate the dissemination and exchange of technical information and elite germplasm through regional trials, workshops, symposia,
- Promote the transfer and adoption of technologies
- Improve the research and extension capabilities of member countries
- Build the resource base for productive agriculture through an integrated farming system.



It should be stressed out that initial SAFGRAD mandate crops (i.e. sorghum, maize, millets, cowpea) constitute 70 % of staple food crops in semi- arid agro-ecological zones.

### **Member Countries**

The 27 SAFGRAD Member Countries listed in Fig. 1 are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. Most of the semi-arid ecology in SSA where farmers daily wrestle the harsh environment for their livelihood is covered.

### **Achievements of SAFGRAD**

Selected of the salient contributions to particularly enhance food productivity in sustainable manner are outlined. These contributions were made with the active collaboration of benefiting NARS, and IARCs such as IITA and ICRISAT.

- Development and dissemination of several early and extra early crop cultivars and their adoption by farmers in semi arid regions where droughts and high temperatures prevail.
- Support and management of sub-regional food grain and farming systems networks involving hundreds of researchers of 27 countries to tackle common problems of agricultural production. Scientific networks not only created the desired critical research mass, but also enabled the relatively weak NARS and extension systems share technologies and improve their agricultural production.
- Capacity building. One of the outstanding contributions of SAFGRAD has been professional development of agriculturists to enhance technology generation and transfer in several countries of SSA. Thirty (30) scientists received long term training (M.Sc. and Ph.D) while more than 350 scientists and technicians received short term training courses.
- Improvement of research infrastructures in Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Mali, Kenya, etc.
- Building knowledge base on semi-arid agriculture through the exchange of technical information, and publishing five books and several scientific articles.

It should be stressed that based on these achievements, SAFGRAD was selected as the focal point for the coordination of the UN/CCD Regional Action Plan network on sustainable agricultural farming system.

### **1.3. Linkage between SAFGRAD and AU scientific offices**

AU has created and maintained several scientific offices among which are: the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC); the Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR); the Inter African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC); the Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development Programme (SAFGRAD); and the Fouta Djallon project. A continuous decline in funding has more than ever placed the sustainability of these programmes on the line.





 SAFGRAD member states

**Figure 1: SAFGRAD member states**



While areas of complementarity are clearly outlined through their respective mandates (Table 1), there is a need to streamline their activities and strengthen their collaboration in order to avoid duplication, enhance the application of science and technologies for agricultural and economic development, and to respond to changing needs of their beneficiaries. This could be achieved with the new institutional orientation required to attain AU objectives.

Table 1. Sub-regional Scientific Offices of OAU that complements SAFGRAD Programmes

	Sub regional Scientific Office of OAU	Mandate	Areas of potential SAFGRAD collaboration.
i	Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC)	Promotion and coordination of Science and Technology in Africa	Scientific coordination and oversight; Technology transfer in the management of natural resources such as the protection coastal ecosystems
ii	The inter African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR)	Eradication of animal diseases and the improvement of livestock production and Nutrition	Promote the integration of crops and livestock Production
iii	Inter African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC)	Regulatory plant diseases and pests through plant quarantine and inter-governmental and agencies cooperation	Control of plant diseases and pests and movement of germplasm

#### 1.4. Regional and sub-regional partnerships for research and development

An impressive number of research organizations are operating in the region under various mandates and capacities. These organizations operate at national, sub-regional and regional levels and include National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS), International Agricultural Research Systems (IARCs), Sub-Regional Organizations (SROs), Regional Organizations (ROs) etc.. In recent years, several consultations were held under the impulsion of the World Bank, CGIAR and some donors. These consultations have resulted in the emergence of a regional forum for agricultural research in Africa (FARA) and the designation of the three SROs – Association for Strengthening of Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), West and Central African Council for Scientific Research and Development (CORAF), Southern Africa Centre for Cooperation in Agricultural Research (SACCAR) - for the coordination, the building of consistency and synergy among actors at the regional and sub-regional level. FARA is proposed to be one of NEPAD implementers.

While these sub-regional research organizations are limited to specific geographic zones, SAFGRAD is one of the few AU programmes which over two decades has had experiences in both research and coordination in the semi-arid zone cutting across four sub-regions. Indeed, the semi arid ecologies which represent the SAFGRAD mandate cover almost 70% of Sub-Saharan Africa countries.



SAFGRAD has always maintained a sustained partnership with IARCs such as IITA and ICRISAT, SROs and NARS from member countries which led to tangible results like the development of early and extra early crop varieties.

OAU through its scientific offices should have been in a position to facilitate and respond to changing priorities of agricultural research and development in Africa. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case. In this transitional phase from OAU to AU, it is necessary for AU to put in place institutions capable of promoting and coordinating research at the continental level.

## **II. JUSTIFICATION FOR A NEW AND REVITALIZED SAFGRAD**

### **2.1. New opportunities linked to the AU new vision**

The attainment of AU goals and objectives requires not only new orientations and strategies, but also rationalization of previous programmes, mandates and institutionalization of viable scientific offices inherited from OAU and if necessary, the establishment of new ones.

Subsequent to SIRTE DECLARATION, the adoption of the Constitutive Act of African Union established the Commission and organs such as the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) mandated to formulate and implement programmes / portfolios aimed at achieving the goals and objectives of the Union. In addition to 8 programmes / portfolios, the framework of the Commission includes cross cutting programmes such as CSSDA, NEPAD, and the Directorate Gender main streaming in all aspects of socio-economic development.

With regard to specialized AU offices and programmes, more impact could be achieved in the new context of the African Union and NEPAD if:

- Enabling institutional policy and financial support to enhance the scientific and technical capacities of the sub-regional offices are established;
- Operational policy principles to smoothen horizontal and vertical linkages and communication to effectively coordinate the implementation of various programmes between the AU Commission and the field level offices are implemented;
- A dynamic and active support is provided by the AU in the provision of institutional ownerships and sponsorships of its affiliated scientific regional projects to attract donor support for various research and development programmes;
- A vigorous advocacy campaign on behalf of specialized Scientific Offices to generate resources within Africa and external donors is initiated by relevant units of the Commission;
- The AU Commission takes necessary actions to institutionalize few of those research and development affiliated offices which imparted impressive economic impact in agriculture (for example, SAFGRAD)
- The decision making process and reporting systems, between the programmes/ departments of the AU Commission and sub-regional specialized scientific offices is clarified and strengthened.



The new AU orientations and strategies will undoubtedly contribute to the achievement of an environment where most of the above conditions are in place. There are therefore new objective opportunities for boosting the AU/SAFGRAD programme, building on its experience, linkages and partnerships, to transform it into a new dynamic and efficient research and development entity with special focus on food security and poverty eradication in semi-arid zones of Africa.

## **2.2. New opportunities linked to AU / SAFGRAD comparative and collaborative advantages**

- SAFGRAD has been conducting research and technology transfer activities in the priority areas of food security and poverty eradication for the last twenty years. Results obtained have been mentioned above. In the near future, SAFGRAD will develop its partnership with sister institutions of the Southern and Northern Africa. In addition, other domains and issues such as the use of biotechnology for food security need also to be examined.
- Due to the general occurrence of semi-arid areas and risks of drought all across Africa, SAFGRAD is a true pan-African programme of AU.
- SAFGRAD has already established working relationships and linkages with a majority of national agricultural research systems of Africa, sub-regional research organizations, international research centers and NGOs. Through these linkages and its participation to sub-regional and regional fora and networks, SAFGRAD is well positioned to facilitate and conduct advocacy and dissemination activities leading to a widespread knowledge and adoption at the field level of AU policies in the specific areas of rural development, agriculture, food security and preservation of the environment.
- SAFGRAD has over 20 years of collaboration with major donors of African agriculture. It is familiar with several donors' procedures for programme development (concept notes, proposals, project documents), funds management and reporting. From 1977 to 2002, SAFGRAD has mobilized and managed about 50 million US dollars from donors and private sector in favor of agricultural research and technology transfer for Africa (see Annex 1). SAFGRAD capacity in the area of resource mobilization will be boosted once the office becomes a permanent entity within AU, with strong political support.
- By its size and mode of operation, SAFGRAD has proven to be a lean, cost effective and efficient institution.



### **III. THE WAY FORWARD**

#### **3.1. Transforming SAFGRAD into an AU Specialized Entity (Agency / Bureau, ...)**

As discussed above, the mandate for which SAFGRAD was established in the 1970s is still up-to-date. The issue of food security and poverty eradication in Africa's semi-arid zones is at the heart of the new AU priorities.

Lending a clear political support to SAFGRAD will result in increased advocacy and resource mobilization capacities.

The context of rationalization and restructuration of previous OAU scientific agencies and programmes offers the opportunity to transform SAFGRAD into an agency or bureau of the African Union for research and development in semi-arid zones in Africa. It is proposed that its mandate would extend beyond the current geographical boundaries to include the southern and northern Africa regions which are faced with similar development problems. This would help capitalise on achievements in that area for the benefit of the entire zones.

#### **3.2. Goals of the New SAFGRAD<sup>1</sup>**

The New SAFGRAD will contribute to the advancement of agricultural research, technology transfer as well as the management of natural resources by facilitating and coordinating the use of the scientific talents of NARS, IARCs and SROs to enhance food security, eradicate poverty, and promote sustainable agriculture particularly in the semi-arid zones and peri-urban area of Africa.

#### **3.3. Linkages and partnership outside the AU arena**

As discussed above, in addition to national agricultural research systems, there is a great number of actors in the field of agricultural research and development in Africa. Under the impulsion of the World Bank and the CGIAR, FARA and SRO such as ASARECA, CORAF, and SACCAR have evolved in recent years with the explicit objectives of strengthening the research capacity of NARS. Due to their history, the ownership and political legitimacy of several of these organizations are sometimes weak. However, fully aware of the expected roles assigned by donors to FARA and SROs to stimulate agricultural growth within Africa, New SAFGRAD framework will be designed to take into account and ensure complementarity with these institutions as well as the International Agricultural Research Centers. It is proposed that New SAFGRAD mandate and goals remain focused, targeting principally semi-arid and peri-urban agriculture, women in agriculture and small farmer livelihood; these mandates and goals cut across the whole Continent and relate closely to the AU goals of food security and poverty eradication; they are not in competition with the activities of proposed regional and sub-regional organizations. At the contrary, they complement each other. The design of the proposed institutional framework puts also emphasis on partnerships with a number of other stakeholders including farmers, developing agencies, donors etc. to provide solutions to problems of food security and of poverty eradication.

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<sup>1</sup> For the rest of the paper, the new entity will be referred to as the New SAFGRAD



The SAFGRAD Coordination Office has already taken initiatives leading to coordination of its activities with FARA and the SROs. To avoid duplication and promote synergies, memorandum of understanding will be signed with FARA and the SROs. The main value added by the New SAFGRAD will be in keeping the emphasis on drought mitigation and poverty eradication, the dissemination of successful technologies across the sub-regions, promotion and advocacy at the Continent level of AU policies concerning rural development, food security, preservation of the environment, science and technology. The political legitimacy and true African ownership of New SAFGRAD will bring a valuable input to this partnership. Through New SAFGRAD, the African Union will have additional inputs to these regional and sub-regional organizations.

### **3.4. The New SAFGRAD links to the AU programmes / portfolios**

The proposed framework of New SAFGRAD will fully take into account the programme goals and objectives of the Commission pertaining to food security and poverty eradication in particular, the enhancement of the science based socio-economic development in general.

The framework also presumes rationalization of mandates and programmes among the inherited scientific offices of the AU.

The institutional set-up of New SAFGRAD will take into account the implementation of those AU programmes / portfolios thrusts. These include: Rural Economy and Agriculture; Human Resource, Science and Technology; Mainstreaming Gender perspectives in all aspects of socio economic development and to facilitate attainment of the objectives of Special Emergency Fund for drought and Famine in Africa. A few initial areas of collaboration and partnership have been identified and summarized in the Table 2 below.



**Table 2.** Potential areas of complementarity, collaboration, partnership for synergies between some AU / Programmes and New SAFGRAD.

No	AU Programmes / Portfolios	Potential areas of collaboration and partnership for synergies with New SAFGRAD
I	The Rural Economy and Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Improve agricultural productivity and enhance food security</li> <li>◆ Facilitate field level studies (national and sub-regional) to put in place coherent food security policy</li> <li>◆ Facilitate the implementation of main programme elements of the portfolio</li> </ul>
II	Human Resources, Science and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Collaborative programmes for advancement of agricultural sciences through the generation, transfer, and harnessing of technologies and resources to improve and attain high level of productivity.</li> <li>◆ Facilitate field level studies at national and sub-regional levels</li> </ul>
III	Gender mainstreaming to enhance opportunities of women in agricultural led development	<p>SAFGRAD did target a number of agricultural and food processing projects in several countries to improve the income and employment of women in collaboration with Gender Directorate New SAFGRAD will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Promote women empowerment with respect to access to technology, income, education, leadership, etc</li> <li>◆ Facilitate field level study</li> </ul>
IV	Special Emergency Assistance Fund for drought and Famine in Africa	<p>As important source of technology for improving agricultural production in drought affected areas of semi-arid ecologies;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Identify, package and transfer technologies to enhance agricultural production in dry areas;</li> <li>◆ Promote regional improved seed production and distribution scheme for AU emergency assistance when necessary.</li> <li>◆ Promote drought preparedness in risk prone countries.</li> </ul>



#### **IV. PROPOSED PROGRAMME THRUST FOR NEW SAFGRAD**

New SAFGRAD will emphasize on programmes that will add value at the Continental level or across sub-regions. Some of the following areas of activity, which may be translated into programmes, could be assigned to New SAFGRAD:

##### **4.1. Consolidating programmes and creating synergies at the continental level for research activities working towards the development of semi-arid zones**

Several national agricultural research systems (NARS), international agricultural research centers (IARCs), NGOs and development projects conduct research and development activities that can benefit the development of agriculture in semi-arid zones. A minimum coordination of these efforts, infusion of some coherence, exchange of experiences across sub-regions will result in increased efficiency and better chances of impact. The following domains of research will be pursued:

- intensification and diversification of production systems;
- drought preparedness and mitigation;
- water and soil conservation;
- agricultural policies;
- input and output market development;
- development of technologies adapted to the socio-economic conditions of users;
- inventory and enhancement of endogenous technologies;
- integrated natural resource management;
- biotechnology, biosecurity and biodiversity;
- ecological monitoring.

##### **4.2. Transfer and commercialisation of technologies; scaling up/out and dissemination of proven technologies**

SAFGRAD has acquired considerable experience in that area, notably with regard to the socio-economic, institutional and policy factors relating to the transfer and commercialization of technologies. New SAFGRAD will build on that experience to promote scaling up and wide dissemination of technologies, particularly those targeting food production and processing, strengthening market chains between food producers and industries, generation of income (particularly for women) and preservation of the environment.

Activities enhancing the development of sub-regional and regional agriculture inputs/services/outputs markets will be promoted. It should be stressed that activities concerning women in agriculture, food processing and income generation may extend beyond semi-arid zones, particularly in poor peri-urban areas.

In partnership with the AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine, New SAFGRAD can facilitate farmer's access to drought resistance and high yielding cultivars suitable for semi-arid agro-ecosystem through:



- i. Seed multiplication and distribution in drought affected countries or regions;
- ii. Promoting drought preparedness and mitigation activities (the distribution of high yielding drought resistance cultivars, putting in place measures to conserve soil and water, and dissemination of agro-climatic information)
- iii. Facilitate exchange of information and experiences for the dissemination of success stories in the area of food bank technical know-how across sub-regions.

#### **4.3. Facilitating the use of biotechnologies for agricultural development and environmental protection**

Recent advances in biotechnology have shown serious advantages for addressing some of the crop and livestock improvement issues concerning Africa such as disease resistance, drought tolerance etc. Furthermore, the use of conventional biotechnologies like tissue culture could lead to improved capacity to face the serious challenge of seed availability particularly for vegetative propagated crops. Striking a balance between the risks and advantage of biotechnology could lead to clear and serious regulations addressing both biosafety and biodiversity concerns in the use of biotechnology to eradicate poverty and food security.

#### **4.4. Promotion of scientific expertise and capacity building**

Similar to research harmonization in semi arid zones and technology transfer, SAFGRAD has expertise in capacity building and in promoting scientific expertise. In collaboration with relevant partners, New SAFGRAD will set up a database on scientific expertise in the agricultural area, and develop specific initiatives for promoting such skills through training both within and outside the region.

#### **4.5. Establishment of a technology transfer fund**

In partnership with NEPAD and under the aegis of the African Union, the new structure would take advantage of the current support from the G8 to put in place a fund dedicated to technology transfer. Such fund would also help to put in place information and communication systems between agricultural development actors.

It should be noted that the idea to put a fund in place for agricultural research in Africa was launched by SPAAR and the World Bank back in 1998. Unfortunately, the initiative, which was to be accompanied with the disbursement of country fund, was never materialised. However, SAFGRAD received over the same period, support from ADB, one of the organisations that was to sponsor the establishment of the fund, so as to develop technology transfer activities. The aim of the new structure is to revive this initiative on behalf of AU and adapt it to the new context. The fund will be established in collaboration with NEPAD and sub-regional organizations.

### **V. PROPOSED NEW SAFGRAD GOVERNANCE: THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

This proposal assumes that AU will establish policy and institutional framework not only to rationalize and revitalize programmes of sub-regional scientific offices inherited from OAU, but also to streamline the technical and administrative linkages and mechanisms for coordinating the activities of these offices. It is anticipated that these sub-regional scientific offices will enjoy administrative and financial autonomy and in return bear primary



responsability for resource mobilization with active support from AU. Furthermore, New SAFGRAD and other scientific offices will maintain linkages with STRC particularly for strategic peer review, promotional and clearing house activities.

The proposed framework first, enhances the institutionalization of SAFGRAD as a Specialized Agency/Bureau for Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development of the AU; second, stresses disciplinary links with thematic portfolios and units at headquarters as appropriate; third, reinforce partnerships with AU initiatives such as NEPAD as well as NARS and sub-regional research organizations (such as ASARECA, CORAF, SACCAR, etc); the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the CGIAR system i.e. the International Agricultural Research Centers; and third, suggests the realization of joint programmes pertaining to food security and the development of sustainable agriculture between AU and International Organizations such as FAO, UNDP, ECA, as well as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD).

Because of the nature of its new proposed mandate, it is proposed that New SAFGRAD be governed by an Oversight Committee of not more than 16 members.

### **5.1. Composition of the Oversight Committee**

#### **a) Permanent members: AU programme / portfolio Directors / Key partners:**

The Human Resources Development, Science and Technology Portfolio / Programme (1)

The Agriculture and Rural Development Portfolio- member (1)

The Directorate for Gender Mainstreaming in all aspects of socio-economic development member (1)

The Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (1)

The Executive Secretariat of STRC (1)

The Executive Secretariat of NEPAD (1)

Representative of ADB (1)

Executive Secretariat of FARA (1)

Representative of UNDP/DDC (1).

#### **b) Members from Partner institutions**

These members will be designated for a mandate of three years renewable once.

NARS Directors- One representative per region (5)

Representative of private sector in agro-industry (1)

Farmers' associations/organizations/groups representative (1)

#### **c) Observers**

Main donors (2)

CGIAR centres operating in Africa (two DGs to be designated on a rotative annual basis by the Centres Directors' Committee) (2)

#### **d) Secretariat**

The secretariat of the Oversight Committee will be assumed by New SAFGRAD.



**e) Chairmanship**

The Chair person could be selected through 3 options:

- 1) the Director of AU department under which New SAFGRAD falls administratively;
- 2) election among the permanent members;
- 3) election among all the members of the Oversight Committee.

**5.2. Attributions**

The main attributions of the Oversight Committee will be to:

- provide policy guidance;
- review and approve programmes and budgets;
- overview the management of the agency;
- advocacy in raising of funds;
- enhance the institutionalization of New SAFGRAD within AU.

The Oversight Committee will meet once a year.

The Oversight Committee will establish two sub-committees in charge respectively of programmes and management. Whenever necessary, the Oversight Committee can appoint ad hoc committees composed of distinguished resource persons for undertaking assigned specific tasks.

**VI. New SAFGRAD Resources**

**6.1 Staff Needs**

The core professional staff of SAFGRAD should remain lean and small since it has developed collaborative networks and strategy to enable NARS and technical professional staff of related institutions in benefiting countries to own and implement its various programmes and projects activities. SAFGRAD Focal Units established in collaboration with several NARS is an example of integration between regional and national programmes.

Based on the above experience, the following core permanent professional staff through AU funding is proposed:

- i. An International Coordinator
- ii. An Agricultural Economist
- iii. An Agronomist
- iv. Administrative and Financial Officer
- v. Minimum support staff.

The following professional staff may be established through specific projects funded by donor:

- i. Gender Specialist
- ii. Environmentalist with emphasis on land degradation and desertification
- iii. Post harvest technologist or food processing/nutrition expert.



## **6.2 Funding of New SAFGRAD**

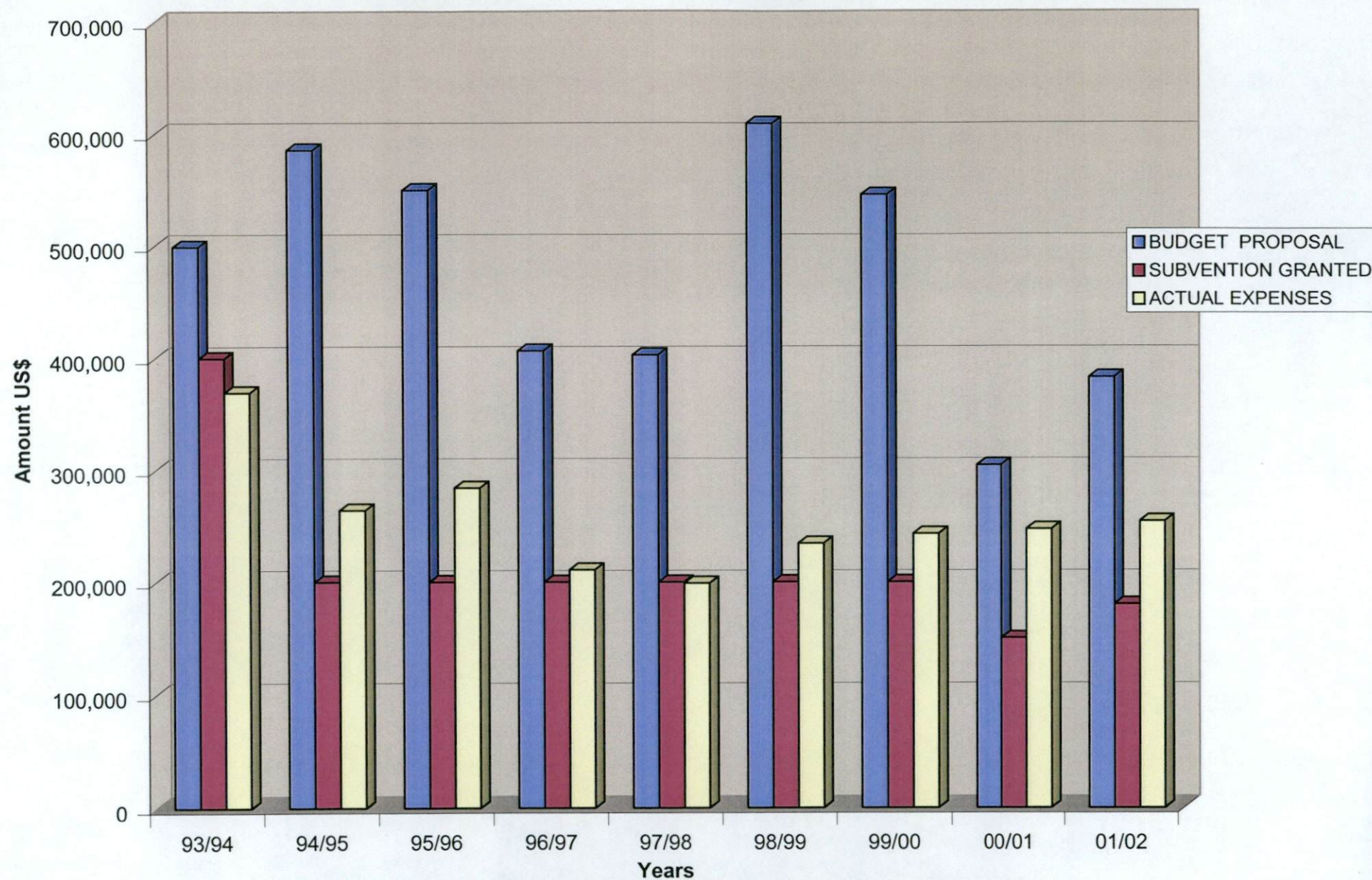
### **6.2.1 Historical perspective**

From 1977 to 2002, OAU/STRC-SAFGRAD has raised about fifty million dollars as summarized in Annex 1. Donor's contribution has been about 89 percent, which the major donor USAID contributed about 71 percent of the fund to support various programmes of SAFGRAD. Other donors included IFAD, ADB, IDRC, Ford Foundation, Ministry of Cooperation France, the Republic of Korea, etc.

SAFGRAD funding and institutional support were also provided in-kind by member countries. Particularly the Government of Burkina Faso, the host country and by the Governments of Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Benin, Togo, Cameroon and Kenya have made available to the project land and other facilities required for the successful implementation of its programme.

In recent years, SAFGRAD has faced financial difficulties that impeded the delivery of relevant technical services to its member countries (Fig. 2 and Annex 2). Unless soon resolved, these constraints could cause a serious threat to the sustainability of SAFGRAD programmes.





**Fig.2.: Contribution of OAU to the SAFGRAD programme during the last decade.**



## **6.2.2. Proposal for New Funding Arrangements**

### **6.2.2.1. Budget allocation by AU**

AU should allocate per year a minimum budget of 500,000 dollars for salaries of permanent staff and administrative costs of the office (Annex 3). This will incite donors to be more responsive to new project proposals.

### **6.2.2.2. Funding of programmes**

- Contribution from AU for seed money to develop and/or implement specific programmes approved by the Oversight Committee
- Contribution from AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SAFGRAD as hub of technology to improve agricultural productivity in semi arid and drought affected areas can facilitate meeting the objective of the Fund)
- Resource mobilization: Through relevant and strategic programmes and with active support of AU Commission and the Oversight Committee, New SAFGRAD will strive to mobilize funds from several sources such as USAID, ADB, NEPAD, IFAD and UNDP, The European Union, The Nordic Countries, Japan, The Republic of Korea, etc.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

First of all, the study made an analysis of the contributions of SAFGRAD based on its previous objectives, programmes of activities and accomplishments. The review and diagnosis undertaken surfaced the achievements, constraints and salient issues concerning SAFGRAD activities. The success of SAFGRAD in the generation, the transfer of agricultural technologies and capacity building in several countries of Sub Saharan African countries has been highlighted.

The framework of the study is based on the transformation of OAU into African Union (AU) and the emergence of new partnerships and paradigm for African Development (NEPAD). It is anticipated that AU priority programmes and policy will put equal emphasis on political (peace and security) and economic development integration at sub regional and continental levels.

SAFGRAD priority programmes, strategies and institutional set-up have been revised and refocused in order to optimize complementarities with AU portfolios / programmes, NEPAD and other research and development initiatives.

The proposed institutionalization of SAFGRAD into an AU specialized entity for food security and sustainable agriculture (New SAFGRAD) is based on its comparative advantages to promote agricultural productivity through research and development networks involving beneficiary countries, regional and international organizations. The institutional framework, linkages and governance of New SAFGRAD include key stakeholders such as farmers and women.

New arrangements for funding SAFGRAD have been proposed to minimize financial short falls.



These include allocation by AU of a yearly budget not less than \$500 000 as a core fund for salaries and administrative cost of New SAFGRAD. At this point, it is suggested that a specific resolution be adopted by AU Council of Ministers to enable the Policy Committee of the Fund to provide funding to SAFGRAD from the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine. A vigorous strategy for resource mobilization will be initiated to attract donor funding to support various projects.

By consolidating its research, development and technology diffusion networks involving most countries in SSA, the task of New SAFGRAD will be to effectively harmonize development efforts of key partners and stakeholders (farmers, governments, input/output support services, NGOS, the private sector, NARS, IARCs, donors, etc.) to accelerate agricultural growth for achieving food security, generating employment and income and improving the livelihood of millions farm households.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Considering that SAFGRAD was established by Heads of African States and Governments of the OAU in response to the recurrent droughts;

Considering that the mandate for which SAFGRAD was established is still up-to-date; taking into account the new context created by the change of OAU into AU and the new initiative, NEPAD;

Considering the comparative and collaborative advantages of SAFGRAD, its broad experience and its important achievements in the areas of research, food security, poverty eradication, technology transfer, capacity building and resource mobilization;

Considering that there is need for African Union to strengthen the mandates, programmes and institutional setting of its inherited viable scientific offices including that of SAFGRAD not only to optimize its outputs and achieve its objectives, but also to streamline tasks along the portfolios or programmes of the Commission, it is recommended:

### **1. Institutionalization of SAFGRAD**

The Institutionalization of SAFGRAD into a permanent AU Specialized Agency/Bureau for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture (New SAFGRAD) and the allocation of an annual budget for the optimum running of the entity. The linkage of New SAFGRAD with the AU Commission could be through the Science and Technology portfolio.

### **2. Funding of New SAFGRAD programmes**

That the Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa contributes to the New SAFGRAD programmes funding and that a vigorous resource mobilization endeavour be initiated by the New SAFGRAD with strong support from the AU Commission for securing funds from main donors for regular programmes.

### **3. Linkages and partnerships**

That within the African Union framework, the New SAFGRAD fully takes into account the programmes goals and objectives of the Commission pertaining to food security and poverty eradication in particular, enhancement of the science base socio-economic development in general. A strong complementarity and synergy should be established with other AU Bureaus/Agencies as well as relevant programmes / portfolios and also with other sub-regional and regional organizations.



# ANNEX I

## SUMMARY OF FUNDING OF SAFGRAD 1977-2002

DONOR	PERIOD	AMOUNT US\$	%	REMARKS
1. Organization of African Unity (OAU)	1982-2002	2,530,334	5.12	
2. United States Agency for International development (USAID)	1977-2002	35,324,143	71.43	No grant from 1995 to 1997
3. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	1983-1989	3,822,631	7.73	
4. International Development Research Centre (IDRC)	1987-1994	1,115,562	2.26	
5. Micronutrient Initiative (MI)	2001-2002	102,000	0.21	
6. African Development Bank (ADB)	1989-2002	1,227,752	2.48	No grant from 1995 to 1998
7. International Centre for Agroforestry (ICRAF)	1991-1994	333,362	0.67	
8. Ford Foundation	1989-1991	248,000	0.50	
9. Republic of Korea	2000-2002	200,000	0.40	
10. Ministry of Cooperation of France	1978-1994	1,041,057	2.11	
11. Other Donors (IFS, ACCT, CTA, NESTLE...)	1989-2002	436,972	0.88	
12. Member States in-kind contribution	1986-1991	3,070,900	6.21	Amount determined by audit for the period 1986-1991 only for nine (9) countries
TOTAL		49,452,714	100.00	



## ANNEX II

### STATEMENT OF BUDGET SUBMITTED TO AU BY SAFGRAD COORDINATION OFFICE 1993 – 2003 <sup>2</sup>

YEAR	BUDGET PROPOSAL	SUBVENTION GRANTED	ACTUAL EXPENSES
1993/94	499,288	400,000	369,532
1994/95	586,080	200,000	264,238
1995/96	550,393	200,000	284,102
1996/97	406,560	200,000	211,005
1997/98	402,901	200,000	198,946
1998/99	610,083	200,000	234,447
1999/2000	546,359	200,000	242,963
2000/01	304,313	150,000	247,089
2001/02	382,748	180,000	253,940 <sup>3</sup>
2002	201,518	58,334	128,654 <sup>4</sup>
2003	230,307	140,000	<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Salaries and operational costs of SAFGRAD Coordination Office

<sup>3</sup> Initial subvention granted US \$ 100,000 – Additional amount released in May 03 US \$ 80,000

<sup>4</sup> Fiscal period of 7 months (June-Dec. 02)

<sup>5</sup> Transitional period of 8 months (Jan-August 03)

**NB** : Average expenses of the last past 9 years (1994-2002) have been US \$ 256,260.



### ANNEX III

#### INDICATIVE SALARIES OF PERMANENT STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS FOR NEW SAFGRAD JANUARY 2003 DECEMBER 2005<sup>6</sup>

DESCRIPTION	2 0 0 4	2 0 0 5	TOTAL 2 0 0 4 – 2 0 0 5 US\$
I. Salaries & Wages	221,141	226,419	447,560
II. Common Staff Costs	177,427	156,702	334,129
III. Missions	18,000	20,000	38,000
IV. Maintenance of Office & Premises	14,500	15,825	30,325
V. Communications	11,000	12,100	23,100
VI. Miscellaneous Supplies & Services	17,850	19,275	37,125
VII. Oversight & Technical Meetings	50,000	50,000	100,000
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>509,918</b>	<b>500,321</b>	<b>1,010,239</b>

<sup>6</sup> Does not include funding for programme activities



2003-04

# INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF SAFGRAD AS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ENTITY FOR FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE OF THE AFRICAN UNION

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