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FIFTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING OF SAFGRAD

5 - 8 FEBRUARY, 1990

1. The fifth meeting of the Oversight Committee of SAFGRAD took place on 5-8 February, 1990 in conference room of the SAFGRAD Coordination Office (SCO) in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. In attendance were the following:

Oversight Committee Members

L.K. Fakambi, Chairman  
H. Mercer-Quarshie, Vice-Chairman  
I. Babiker  
Sansan Da, French Rapporteur  
A.M. Emechebe, English Rapporteur  
P.D. Fall, OAU/STRC (Ex-Officio)  
J.M. Menyonga, International Coordinator  
(Ex-Officio) and Secretary

Observers

Taye Bezuneh, SAFGRAD Director of Research  
G. Kingma, USAID/SAFGRAD Senior Project Advisor  
N. Muleba, RENACO Coordinator  
M.D. Thomas, WCASRN Coordinator

Absent

G.H. Semuguruka  
J.A. Ayuk-Takem (with apology)

2. After adoption of the agenda, the SAFGRAD International Coordinator welcomed members and explained that the meeting would have been held a week earlier, but had to be postponed because of conflict with the Pope's visit to Burkina Faso. As a result, Dr. Ayuk-Takem and the Maize Network Coordinator could not attend as they were participating in the CORAF maize networkshop in Douala, Cameroon.

3. The Assistant Executive Secretary of OAU/STRC wished members fruitful deliberations and assured them of OAU's continued support to SAFGRAD.
4. In his opening remarks, the Chairman of the Oversight Committee wished members all the best for 1990. He noted the important issues to be discussed, namely strategic plan of SAFGRAD, network evaluation, institutionalization of SAFGRAD, etc.
5. Adoption of Minutes of the Last Meeting  
Minutes of the fourth OC meeting held in Ouagadougou in February 1989 were adopted subsequent to affecting minor amendments. Specifically, names of two Network Coordinators (Dr. J.M. Fajemisin and Dr. N. Muleba), who participated in the 17 February 1989 meeting, should be included in the list of observers.
6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting  
Members discussed at length, the question of attendance of Network Coordinators at OC meetings. Finally it was resolved that, as part of the SCO, Network Coordinators may attend OC meetings as observers, particularly when the agenda includes matters relating to their networks.
7. The question of who should receive copies of minutes of OC meetings was also discussed. It was agreed that National Agricultural Research Directors should receive the minutes. As regards other bodies, it was decided that only part of the minutes relevant to such bodies should be extracted and sent, with a suitable covering letter by the International Coordinator.
8. Regarding harmonization of SAFGRAD and CORAF Maize Networks, members agreed that the difficulties being faced involved delicate political ramifications. Accordingly, it was decided that a memorandum on this matter be sent by the OC through the Executive Secretary of OAU/STRC to the OAU General Secretariat for appropriate action.

9. Reports of the Coordination Office

Several reports were presented by the International Coordinator and the Director of Research on different activities and projects of SAFGRAD. They were thoroughly discussed and the following relevant comments were made:

10. New Research Networks

The OC was informed of several new network groups which had approached SAFGRAD for management assistance in network coordination under the OAU umbrella. After some deliberation, the OC delegated a three-man sub-committee to study the matter for later consideration.

*accueillis favorablement*  
 11. Out of the networks presented, two (the Striga control and PAN-EARTH) were <sup>acceptable to</sup> approved by the sub-committee. This was based on the guideline that any consideration of new networks for SAFGRAD management must be based on their potential contribution to strengthen and support existing SAFGRAD crop commodity networks. The two networks were reviewed in detail and approved as good activities to pursue.

12. Another network, the West Africa Millet Research Network, currently partly sponsored and encouraged by ICRISAT, was considered a mandated network by the SCO, since millet is one of the SAFGRAD crops. This would be considered later as the NARS scientists involved had requested SAFGRAD for its eventual management.

13. The Animal Traction Network with ILCA had not been very active due, apparently, to manpower changes and lack of funding. The OC encouraged the SCO to maintain contacts with ILCA concerning this network.

14. The West Africa Agroforestry Network was still under discussion between SAFGRAD and ICRAF. The network initially involved four West African countries: Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Senegal. One ICRAF scientist would

be based at the ICRISAT Sahel Centre in Niger and the Coordinator in Ouagadougou. It was expected that 15% of this network support would be budgeted for SAFGRAD administrative and financial management while technical guidance would be provided by ICRAF. The OC advised the SCO to pursue the negotiations with ICRAF and keep STRC (Lagos) informed.

15. Another area which was presented to the OC relates to agronomy work on the crops covered by SAFGRAD networks. With financial support from the African Development Bank, a planning workshop involving several SAFGRAD member countries was planned for 19-21 February, 1990 in Ouagadougou. Agronomy projects from invited countries would be reviewed and funded by SAFGRAD for the 1990/91 crop season through this ADB assistance.

16. Evaluation of SAFGRAD Networks

Elaborating on guidelines provided during one of its previous meetings, the OC agreed on a small team to evaluate its networks. For West and Central Africa, the team would comprise one senior scientist (NARS), one OC member and a representative from IITA. For East Africa: one OC member (Dr. Babiker), a senior NARS scientist and one member from ICRISAT. For both teams Mr. Mercer-Quarshie was designated to lead and coordinate the activities of both teams. Dr. Da Sansan could serve as an alternate member for the West and Central African group if the NARS scientist was not available. The size of each team could be modified, depending on the availability of funds.

17. ACPO Programme

Although the only remaining SAFGRAD ACPO programme in Togo was technically successful, the <sup>OAU/STRC</sup> SCO was requested to work <sup>CONTACT</sup> closely with <sup>GOVERNMENT OF TOGO</sup> OAU/STRC to resolve the administrative problems involving management of the programme by the host country.

18. SPAAR

Deep concern was expressed concerning the current inability of the World Bank's Special Programme on African Agricultural Research (SPAAR) to implement its objectives of funding African NARS. Also, the report of the 8th meeting had not been sent to SAFGRAD. To remedy the situation, the OC suggested a stop-over in Washington, D.C. by the International Coordinator (on his way back from a CIMMYT meeting in Mexico in March) to discuss matters personally with the Executive Secretary of SPAAR and for a brief visit with USAID/Washington authorities.

19. SCO Work Plan

The OC suggested that the SCO work plan should be submitted to the OC each time for discussion and endorsement. The approved work plan would then be forwarded to OAU/STRC for noting. In case of any objections by OAU/STRC, these would be dealt with appropriately. Should the OC not be scheduled to meet before the expiry of any work plan, the SCO should endeavour to send it to the OC Chairman in good time for administrative approval.

20. OAU Support to SAFGRAD

The OC was informed by the Assistant Executive Secretary of STRC (Dr. Fall) that the Advisory Committee of the OAU, during its last meeting, had proposed a recommendation to the Council of Ministers to raise the OAU annual financial subvention to SAFGRAD from the current 30,000.00 (US) dollars to 100,000.00 (US) dollars. This was greeted by ovation by members.

21. Chairman's Report to NARS Directors' Council

The OC noted that a written report should have been presented by the Chairman to the Council of National Agricultural Research Directors (NARDS) which met in February 1989 in Ouagadougou. The Committee agreed on the format of the report which should be prepared and sent to member of the Council of NARDS several months before their 1991 meeting (by August, 1990).

## 22. Strategic Plan of SAFGRAD Networks

The SAFGRAD network plan which had further been enlarged, was presented by the Director of Research. After discussing the plan at great length, the following consensus was reached:

- a) Terminology such as lead centre, associate centre, etc. should be clearly defined, while anglophone qualifications attained from degree-related training should be well explained in French.
- b) NARS Directors should be notified as soon as the plan was ready for submission to donors. They should also be sent the projected training requirements for their respective countries for comments or modifications.
- c) The achievements of SAFGRAD should be more fully expanded to provide fuller information especially to NARS officials and for the education of potential donors.
- d) Contributions of NARS to SAFGRAD networks should also be properly articulated to project provision, free of charge, of scientists in both lead centres and technology-adopting NARS, land for research trials, logistic support for research, etc.

23. The transfer of network coordination from the IARCs to NARS was fully discussed. While accepting the necessity of a transition period within SAFGRAD III, the OC agreed that every attempt should be made to effect such transition during the initial two years. This would enable the IARCs, NARS and SAFGRAD to adjust to the new situation, while providing time for SAFGRAD to assign the coordinators to their new responsibilities and ensuring a smooth transition from SAFGRAD II to the new phase.

*Note  
In French \*  
more  
strict  
terminology*

24. From the six possible scenarios proposed for the transition period, only two were accepted by the OC. The first preference was the transfer of the African network coordinators, currently employed by the IARCs, to the SAFGRAD Coordination Office. The network funds should also be transferred to a SAFGRAD account. The Coordinators would then become staff of OAU/STRC-SAFGRAD.

25. The second scenario was the selection of a NARS scientist to serve as a network coordinator but who would be posted to a network lead centre in a country other than his own. During the transition period, the newly recruited coordinator would work with and understudy the current coordinator. Technical backstopping would continue to be assured by relevant IARCs and lead centres, while legal, administrative and financial services would be furnished by SAFGRAD.

26. Regarding the Committee's guidance on the management structure of the Coordination Office, the OC agreed that more senior staff were needed to accomplish its mission. The following three positions (in order of priority) were considered as indispensable:

- a) Project planning, monitoring and evaluation officer
- b) Communications officer
- c) Liaison officer for East and Southern Africa.

27. If more funds were available, the OC agreed that the SCO be further strengthened with the following additional positions:

- a) Research/manpower development officer
- b) Editor
- c) Translator (French to English)

28. SAFGRAD Financial Report

This was presented by the Financial Controller. After a general discussion of the report, the OC noted with some

concern that from the funds provided by USAID to ICRISAT and IITA for networking, only a small amount was made available to participating NARS as network support. The Committee wondered how that level of funding could be expected to contribute to real strengthening of NARS, an objective that is enunciated in the USAID Project Document on SAFGRAD. Despite recent efforts to transfer funds from other budget line items to support NARS, the OC agreed that the amounts were still too small and urged that they be increased.

29. Other Matters

On the question of information and data base development in SCO, the OC noted that RESPAO had recently recruited an experienced documentalist and had been planning to publish a scientific journal on agriculture.

30. In discussing how best the SCO could benefit from such positive developments, the OC agreed that the SCO should continue its dialogue with the Coordinator of RESPAO for greater mutual cooperation, without necessarily jeopardizing the primary functions of RESPAO. The SCO should also persuade RESPAO to realize that it is in the best interest of all parties concerned to publish only one scientific journal. Such a journal, covering all areas of agricultural research by all the five networks, would receive wider subscription and recognition.

31. The OC was informed that USAID was interested in knowing the training requirements and opportunities in the different SAFGRAD network participating NARS. It was agreed that Network Coordinators and SCO staff should solicit such information during their visits to the respective NARS; thus they can keep tract of the activities of most SAFGRAD trainees as well as the relevance of such activities to their former training.

32. The publication of a document on SAFGRAD achievements was also discussed. The OC agreed that, apart from serving as a public relations instrument, the document would provide vital information to government authorities, the OAU, donors, network participants and other institutions. The Committee requested that funds be made available for such a publication which should be ready by the end of December 1990.

33. Date and Place of the Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for late 1990 in Ouagadougou, the date of which would be announced in due course.

RECOMMENDATIONS  
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The Oversight Committee (OC) of SAFGRAD, at its 5th meeting held in Ouagadougou from 5 - 8 February, 1990 made the following recommendations.

1. After discussing the need for the participation of some SAFGRAD professional staff as observers at its meeting, the OC recommended that Network Coordinators would be required to attend OC meetings whenever considered necessary.
2. Having deliberated on the question of circulation of minutes of its meetings, the OC recommended that copies of the said minutes, be sent to all National Agricultural Research Directors (NARDs) of SAFGRAD member countries and that only portions of the minutes considered should be extracted and sent to them, with suitable covering letters, by the International Coordinator (IC). The decision as to which bodies should receive appropriate parts of the minutes would be made by OC at the end of each meeting.
3. The OC again considered the question of harmonization of SAFGRAD and CORAF Maize Networks and agreed that the difficulties being experienced are largely political; in view of this, the OC resolved to send a memorandum on the subject, through the Executive Secretary of OAU/STRC, to the OAU Secretary General.
4. Having realized the continued uncertainty about receipt of supplementary funds for the SAFGRAD Networks through SPAAR, the OC recommended that the IC personally contacts SPAAR officials in Washington, D.C. to obtain an update on SPAAR financial support for SAFGRAD Networks.
5. After approving the SCO's work plan for the next six months, the OC reaffirmed the need for the SCO to continue to submit its work plan to the OC for discussion and endorsement; the approved work plan would then be submitted

by SCO to OAU/STRC, for noting. Should the OC not be scheduled to meet before the expiration of respective work plans, the SCO will submit the next work plan to the OC Chairman in good time for approval before it is sent to OAU/STRC.

6. In recognition of its responsibility to effect internal evaluation of SAFGRAD Networks, the OC constituted a 4-man team (comprising Mr. Mercer-Quarshie, Dr. Da Sansan, one NARS senior scientist, and one scientist from IITA) for West and Central African networks and another 4-man team (comprising Mr. Mercer-Quarshie, Professor Ibrahim Babiker, one NARS senior scientist and one scientist from ICRISAT) for the Eastern Africa Sorghum and Millets Network, to evaluate the said networks; the SCO and Network Coordinators would facilitate the appraisal of networks.
7. After a thorough discussion of the draft STRATEGIC PLAN OF SAFGRAD NETWORKS, the OC recommended that:
  - i) Immediately the document is finalized for submission to donors, each NARD should be informed in writing by the IC, attaching the executive summary of the plan, but NARDS would receive full copies of the plan during their February 1991 meeting.
  - ii) It is important that the full contributions of NARS to SAFGRAD Networks are properly articulated; the said contributions include the provision (free of charge) of NARS scientists working in both Lead Centres and Technology Adapting NARS, land for experimentation, logistic support for scientists, etc.
  - iii) The two preferred scenarios in respect of Network Coordinatorship during the transition period, in their order of preference, are as follows:

(a) "A transfer of the African Network Coordinators from the IARCs to the SCO and the network funds to a SAFGRAD account; such staff would then become staff of SCO".

(b) "Selection of a NARS scientist to serve as a Network Coordinator but who will be posted to a Network Lead Centre located in a country other than that of the Coordinator. During the transition period, the newly recruited Coordinator would work with and understudy the relevant Network Coordinator;

technical backstopping would be provided by relevant IARCs and Network Lead Centres, while the SCO would provide legal, administrative and financial services.

iv) The transition referred to in (iii) above should be completed during the initial two years of SAFGRAD III.

8. After deliberating on IC's proposal on "Internal SAFGRAD Organogram" as depicted in Fig. 4 of his paper, the OC approved it as IDEAL provided sufficient funds are available; in the event of scarcity of funds, the OC recommended reduction of the number of new, internationally recruited positions to three, in the following order of priority.

i) Project Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer,

ii) Communications Officer,

iii) Liaison Officer for East and Southern Africa.

9. The OC discussed, modified, and adopted a proposal on "The Internal Regulations of the OC of SAFGRAD" and recommended that a clean copy of it be produced by the SCO, for future reference.

10. Realizing the need to strengthen SAFGRAD Networks' participating NARS through provision of financial support, and aware that the current levels of financial support are grossly inadequate, the OC recommended that urgent steps be taken to transfer funds from other budgetary heads into the head for direct disbursement of funds to participating NARS.
11. The OC noted, with pleasure, the harmonious relationship between SCO and RESPAO (WAFSRN) and recommended that the two units should continue to explore opportunities for optimum utilization of their respective human and material resources; the OC further recommended that RESPAO and SAFGRAD work towards publication of a single international agricultural journal, since the said journal will attract much wider subscription and recognition.
12. Whereas SAFGRAD has made tremendous contributions toward increased production of food grains in several member countries, these achievements have not been fully documented and publicized. Consequently, the OC recommended that funds be found to document and publish "The Achievements of SAFGRAD", the manuscript for which should be ready by the end of December, 1990.
13. Having deliberated on proposals for new Networks to be managed by SAFGRAD, the OC recommended that any decision by SAFGRAD to manage or support any network must be based on the said network's potential contribution towards strengthening of already existing, commodity-based SAFGRAD networks. The OC further recommended that the present Africa "Striga Network", supported by FAO, should be considered as a "Collaborative Striga Support Network" with the same lead centres as those of the current commodity-based Networks. In this respect, the OC requested OAU/STRC to arrange for the transfer of the management of the network from Inter-Africa Phytosanitary Commission (IAPSC) to SAFGRAD, since both organizations are under the OAU/STRC umbrella.

VOTE OF THANKS

The Oversight Committee of SAFGRAD, at its fifth meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, expressed its profound gratitude to the present SAFGRAD donors (USAID, FAO, IDRC, and the Ford Foundation) for their continued support.

The Committee is very grateful to the Government and people of Burkina Faso for their warm hospitality.

## APPENDIX I

### INTERNAL REGULATIONS OF THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE OF SAFGRAD

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#### PREAMBULE

The Oversight Committee is one of the management entities of the Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development (SAFGRAD) Project of OAU/STRC. It is directly responsible to the Council of National Agricultural Research Directors of its member countries.

#### ARTICLE I: Terms of Reference of the Oversight Committee

The Oversight Committee (OC) shall have the following functions:

1. To guide SAFGRAD in management and policy issues.
2. To review work plans of, and advise, SAFGRAD on better ways of providing efficient technical and other assistance to the NARS of member countries.
3. To facilitate the development of crop research networks and other networks managed by national researchers of participating countries.
4. To undertake an annual evaluation of technical reports of research networks and other activities of SAFGRAD.

#### ARTICLE II: Membership

- (i) Members of the Oversight Committee shall be elected by the Council of National Agricultural Research Directors at its biennial meetings.
- (ii) Membership of the Oversight Committee shall consist of seven (7) individuals from SAFGRAD member states,

selected on the basis of their personal competence in either agricultural research and research management, or in teaching in the Faculty of Agriculture of an African University

- (iii) Of the seven members, two (2) will be from West Africa, one (1) each from Central, Eastern and Southern Africa and the remaining two (2) from African universities. Due consideration should be given to linguistic (English and French) representation, particularly in West Africa.
- (iv) The International Coordinator and the Representative of OAU/STRC are ex-officio members.
- (v) Network Coordinators, Steering Committee Chairmen and other staff of the Coordination Office would be required to attend OC meetings whenever considered necessary.
- (vi) Representatives of the Sponsoring Group and International Agricultural Research Centres may be invited to attend OC meetings, as observers.

#### ARTICLE III: Duration of Membership

- (i) Each member will serve for one term of two years but shall be eligible for re-election for another two-year term. The duration of membership should be staggered to ensure continuity.
- (ii) As much as possible, election of new members should take place during the conference of NARS Directors of SAFGRAD member countries. Provision should be made for 3 to 4 alternates to replace any members who might resign before the end of their terms.
- (iii) Any member who is absent from three consecutive OC meetings, without a valid reason, will be automatically replaced by an alternate member from the corresponding region or grouping (i.e., university).

ARTICLE IV: Duties of Members

A member of the Oversight Committee will be expected to:

- (i) Participate actively in all Oversight Committee meetings.
- (ii) Carry out any zonal responsibilities which might be assigned to him/her within a particular zone.
- (iii) Represent SAFGRAD in any network or other relevant NARS meetings or in the discharge of other SAFGRAD activities.

ARTICLE V: Chairmanship

After the election of members by the Council of NARS Directors, the Chairman of the Oversight Committee will be elected by its members for a period of two years.

He will be assisted by a Vice-Chairman who can preside over meetings in the absence of the Chairman.

ARTICLE VI: Secretariat of the Oversight Committee

The SAFGRAD International Coordinator assumes responsibility for the Secretariat of the Oversight Committee. Any other administrative measures could be taken as the need arises.

ARTICLE VII: Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least once a year, preferably during the first quarter of each year.

Extraordinary meetings can be convened any time by the Chairman in consultation with the International Coordinator, but with a minimum notice of one month.

ARTICLE VIII: Quorum for Decisions

The quorum should normally be four out of the seven OC

members. But in the event that only three members are present, the presence of the International Coordinator will be counted in determining the quorum, provided that one of the three members present is either the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman.

ARTICLE IX: Relationship of the Oversight Committee to  
Network Steering Committees.

The Steering Committees of the different Collaborative Research Networks managed by SAFGRAD shall report directly to the OC, through either their Chairmen or the Network Coordinators.

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## APPENDIX II

COMPOSITION OF THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE\*

NAME	POSITION	SPECIALIZATION	REGION	ADDRESS
1. J.A. Ayuk-Takem	Researcher**	Plant Breeding (Maize)	Central Africa	IRA, BP 2123 Yaounde, Cameroon
2. Ibrahim A. Babiker	Research Manager	Soil Science	Eastern Africa	GEZIRA Research Station P.O. Box 126 Wad Medani, Sudan
3. Da Sansan	Researcher	Plant Breeding (Sorghum)	West Africa (Francophone)	Station de Recherche Agronomique de Farako-Bâ BP 910 Bobo-Dioulasso, BF
4. M.A. Emechebe	Univ. Professor	Phytopathology	West Africa	IAR/ABU P.O. Box 1044 Zaria, Nigeria
5. L.K. Fakambi	Univ. Professor	Human Nutrition	West Africa	Faculté des Sciences Agro UNB, BP 9163 Cotonou, Benin
6. H. Mercer-Quarshie	Research Manager	Plant Breeding	West Africa (Anglophone)	Nyankpala Agricultural Experimental Station P.O. Box 52 Tamale, Ghana
7. G.H. Semuguruka	Research Manager	Biometrics	Southern Africa	Ministry of Agricultural & Livestock Development Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

\* As at December 1989

\*\* At the time of appointment as OC member.  
He is now a Research Manager

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1990-02

# FIFTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING OF SAFGRAD

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