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REPORT

SIXTH SAFGRAD OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
12 - 14 FEBRUARY, 1991
OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO

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SAFGRAD

Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development

Coordination Office

01 B.P. 1783, Ouagadougou 01
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REPORT OF THE SIXTH SAFGRAD OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
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SIXTH OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING OF SAFGRAD
Ouagadougou, 11-14 February, 1991

1.0 The sixth meeting of the Oversight Committee of SAFGRAD was held on 11-14 February, 1991 in the conference room of SAFGRAD Coordination Office in Ouagadougou. The following were in attendance:

1.2 Members of the Oversight Committee

Prof. Leopold K. Fakambi, Chairman
Mr. Hector Mercer-Quarshie, Vice-Chairman
Prof. Ibrahim Babiker
Dr. Da Sansan (French Rapporteur)
Dr. Jacob A. Ayuk-Takem
Prof. Alphonso M. Emechebe (English Rapporteur)
Dr. Papa Daouda Fall, OAU/STRC (Ex-Officio)
Dr. Joseph M. Menyonga, International Coordinator
(Ex-Officio) and Secretary

1.3 Observers

Dr. Richard V. Ndoni, replacing late Dr. G.H. Semuguruka
Dr. Taye Bezuneh, Director of Research
Dr. Gerbrand Kingma, USAID/SAFGRAD Senior Project Advisor
Dr. Jacques Faye, Coordinator, Farming Systems Research Network
Dr. Joseph M. Fajemisin, Coordinator, Maize Network
Dr. Nyanguila Muleba, Coordinator, Cowpea Network
Dr. Edouard G. Bonkougou, Coordinator, Agroforestry Network.

Other persons who attended only part of the meeting included the following:

Ms. Sally R. Sharp, Acting USAID Mission Representative
Dr. Dennis McCarthy, USAID Agricultural Development Officer
Mr. Y.A. Oyekanmi, Inspector, OAU/STRC, Lagos (Nigeria)
Mr. E.A. Odonkor, SAFGRAD Administration and Finance Officer
Mr. Evenunye Adanlete, SAFGRAD Accountant

2.0 Opening

The International Coordinator welcomed all participants to the meeting and introduced those observers who were attending the meeting for the first time, namely Dr. Ndoni, Mr. Oyekanmi, Dr. Bonkougou, Ms. Sharp and Dr. McCarthy. On a sad note, he announced the deaths of Mr. Mathias Doamekpor (former SAFGRAD Personnel/General Services Officer) and Dr. G.H. Semuguruka (former OC member) who passed away in November and December 1990, respectively. A one-minute silence was observed in their memory.

- 2.1 Opening remarks were made by the Assistant Executive Secretary of the Scientific, Technical and Research Commission of the Organization of African Unity (OAU/STRC) and by the Chairman of the Oversight Committee. The former informed members of the SAFGRAD donors' meeting which failed to take place in 1990 but which was scheduled for mid- 1991. It would be preceded by an internal meeting of OAU, STRC and SAFGRAD on the future of SAFGRAD as a permanent organ of OAU. The OC Chairman welcomed participants and reminded the French and English language rapporteurs of their responsibility during the meeting. He indicated that Dr. Ndoni who came to replace late Dr. Semuguruka would attend the meeting as an observer.

3.0 Adoption of Agenda

The provisional agenda was adopted with one amendment. This was to allow all Network Coordinators present at the meeting to make appropriate comments on the activities of their respective networks, immediately following the "Network progress report" by the Director of Research.

4.0 Adoption of Minutes of Fifth Meeting

The only amendment to the English version of the minutes was on the first sentence of item 11 (page 3); the words "approved by" were deleted and replaced by "acceptable to", so that the sentence reads as follows: "Out of the networks presented, two (Striga control and PAN-EARTH) were acceptable to the sub-committee".

With the above amendment, the minutes were unanimously adopted.

5.0 Matters arising from Minutes of last Meeting

On the question of the distribution of OC minutes which was raised by Network Coordinators, it was reaffirmed that copies of minutes of OC meetings should be sent to them since they are part of the SCO. Previous failure to do this was inadvertent.

On the question of harmonization of CORAF and SAFGRAD maize networks, the Assistant Executive Secretary, OAU/STRC informed the Committee that the Executive Secretary had written to the Secretary General of OAU requesting him to draw the attention of the French Minister of Cooperation to the fact that duplication of effort and wastage of funds was caused by the existence of two maize networks in the same subregion. He indicated that action had been taken by the Secretary General and a reply was being awaited from Paris. Dr. Ayuk-Takem informed the OC that the Conference for Representatives of African Agricultural Research (CORAF) was opening its doors to non-francophone countries and that the harmonization of both maize networks was in progress.

6.0 Report of the International Coordinator

An overview of SAFGRAD activities since the fifth meeting was presented by the International Coordinator, covering the following principal areas:

- research networks
- major SAFGRAD events of 1990
- issues of special interest to SAFGRAD and
- SAFGRAD relations with other organizations

The report was well received. Discussions were centred around the current progress, management and relationship of new networks with SAFGRAD and USAID, the principal donor. The

networks include those on agroforestry, millet, and eventually, Striga. On this issue, the committee maintained its previous recommendation that such networks should strengthen and be complementary, both financially and technically, to existing SAFGRAD networks.

In order to reduce the work load on the SAFGRAD Coordination Office (SCO) the recruitment of a liaison officer for East Africa should be pursued as soon as funds are available. This would increase SAFGRAD's presence in that sub-region. Also, OC members should be called upon to participate, whenever appropriate, in certain SAFGRAD regional activities.

7.0 SAFGRAD Financial Report

This report, which was presented by the Administration and Finance Officer, was an updated account for the SAFGRAD phase II period, i.e. September 1986 - 31 December 1990. Financial statements on the following grants were provided:

<u>Serial N°</u>	<u>Name of Grant</u>	<u>Amount in US\$</u>
i)	<u>USAID Grants</u>	
	- DAU/STRC-SAFGRAD and ACPD programme	2,715,000
	- Maize and Cowpea network (IITA)	4,080,000
	- Sorghum and Millet networks (ICRISAT)	3,130,000
	- Project management, evaluation, audit and contingencies (USAID)	1,325,000
ii)	IFAD Technical Assistance Grant	3,822,630
iii)	DAU - cash contribution	200,000
	support in kind	1,841,700
iv)	IDRC (Canada)	1,115,560
v)	French Ministry of Cooperation	620,260
vi)	Ford Foundation	248,000
vii)	African Development Bank	150,000
viii)	ICRAF/SALWA Network	124,630
ix)	Other sources	<u>74,810</u>
		19,447,590

The Admin/Finance Officer indicated that although more than US \$11 millions was granted by USAID to the second phase of SAFGRAD, only about 24 % was actually managed by the SCO. The rest was managed by ICRISAT and IITA for the respective networks and by USAID/Ouagadougou.

Noting that the financial report was prepared in accordance with the guidelines recommended by the OC during its previous meeting, the Admin/Finance Officer was commended for the report. The OC also noted with satisfaction the involvement of other donors in funding SAFGRAD network activities. Although this report, which covered the SAFGRAD II period, provided adequate information on the financial health of SAFGRAD, the Admin/Finance Officer was requested to include, in future, percentages of respective grants spent annually on personnel and operational costs.

Regarding the support in kind by DAU, the OC expressed the need for further quantification, noting that more support (than had been presented in the report) was being rendered by member NARS to SAFGRAD network activities. After noting that an audited report should be presented to the OC, the financial report was adopted.

8.0 Progress Report on SAFGRAD Networks

The network progress report was presented by the Director of Research, who traced the progress of the networks, beginning from the directives on management entities instituted by the conference of National Agricultural Research Directors in February 1987, in Ouagadougou. Activities of all the four commodity networks, namely RENACO, WECAMAN, WCASRN and EARSAM, were reviewed as were those of RESPAO. It became evident that most of the policy, management and administrative recommendations were implemented.

In order to sustain relevant regional trials which would enable NARS to identify new suitable germplasm for their specific ecologies, it was stressed that large regional observation nurseries should form part of the network activities at lead NARS centres. Furthermore, after discussing on-going collaborative research activities at lead NARS centres, the OC agreed on the following:

- i) The necessity to strengthen SAFGRAD participation in the programme reviews of maize and cowpea at IITA, sorghum and millet at ICRISAT and for the participation of both IARCs in SAFGRAD OC meetings.
- ii) The need to improve the involvement of IITA and ICRISAT in the implementation of collaborative research projects within network activities.

After further discussion, it was agreed that a fellowship exchange programme of (3-12 months duration) involving NARS researchers was necessary to fill manpower gaps in the weak NARS.

With regard to regional trials, collaborative research and related activities, network coordinators at the meeting provided additional comments and clarified some of the issues raised. The coordinator of the Agroforestry Research Network for the Semi-Arid Lowlands of West Africa (SALWA), recently based at the SCO, briefed the Committee on the activities of the network. The coordinators were highly commended on their diligence and hard work.

The need to assess the impact of the networks on the farmer's effort to increase food production was generally felt. After debating at length on impact assessment and considering the Project Agreement between USAID and the various network partners, the OC stressed that SAFGRAD II evaluation should be based on the agreed objectives in the Project Document.

Although this could be considered in a subsequent phase, SAFGRAD should not be held accountable for something which was not part of the original Project Agreement. Nevertheless, some information would be furnished in this regard if the need arose.

9.0 Internal Appraisal of SAFGRAD Networks

The report, considered one of the important documents of SAFGRAD, was presented by the Vice-Chairman of the OC. The internal assessment of SAFGRAD networks was undertaken by two teams of evaluators drawn from the OC, the International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) and the NARS, with the OC Vice-Chairman as leader of both teams.

After a lengthy discussion, some of the team's recommendations were partly modified by the OC. In West and Eastern Africa, some common constraints were identified, namely training at the post-graduate level, in-service training, multi-disciplinary approach to research and information exchange between SCO and the NARS, particularly for Eastern Africa. Finally, the OC commended the evaluation team for a difficult task well done.

The OC recommended that the proposed modifications be incorporated into the report and copies made available to the team members and all network partners: NARS Directors, donors, OAU/STRC, IARCs and to Ministers in charge of agricultural research in SAFGRAD member countries.

10.0 Towards Implementation of the SAFGRAD Strategic Plan

A working document that could lead to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for SAFGRAD networks was presented by the Director of Research. The discussion focussed primarily on shortcomings of networking and how these could be rectified. The need for balanced network programmes, through strengthening of multidisciplinary research and improvement of inter-network communication (a brief monthly publication of

network activities), was proposed. In addition, two major institutional issues were tabled for consideration, namely transfer of network coordination and leadership to NARS and transformation of SAFGRAD into a permanent OAU agency.

Regarding the first institutional issue, a lengthy debate took place on the duration of the transition phase, following presentation of detailed activities over a period of three years to effect such a transfer. In spite of this proposal, the OC insisted that a two-year transition phase was preferred even though it recognized the need for flexibility, based on the complexity of specific situations in West and Eastern Africa.

On the transformation of SAFGRAD into a permanent OAU entity, the OC appointed an ad hoc committee of three members to develop the terms of reference and scope of work for a team which will prepare a document on the establishment of such an agency of the OAU. The proposal of the ad hoc committee was discussed and endorsed by the OC (Annex I).

11.0 Progress on Food Grain Production Technology

This programme which involved the verification of crop production techniques by NARS in eight SAFGRAD member countries was achieved in 1990 through financial support from the African Development Bank. The OC endorsed this initiative which attracted an additional donor to SAFGRAD's assistance. It further called on the network coordinators to assure good interaction and harmony in various on-farm activities with the different NARS involved.

12.0 Evaluation of SAFGRAD II

During 1990 several missions reviewed various aspects of SAFGRAD; reports of these missions were expected to contribute to the final SAFGRAD phase II evaluation, sponsored by USAID. In the SAFGRAD project agreement, the major objective is to strengthen NARS commodity research programmes, while improving linkages within and among NARS scientists. A team of three

evaluators, expected to arrive in March/April 1991, will study SAFGRAD and visit at least six NARS programmes, the two IARCs (ICRISAT and IITA) and OAU/STRC.

The outcome of the evaluation will determine the duration of the transition period before a follow-on phase III or a similar project is established. USAID/Burkina has agreed to arrange an extension of 3-4 months in 1991, in order to cover the full 1991 cropping season in West and Central Africa.

Concerning the SAFGRAD II evaluation, the OC expressed deep concern over its delay, particularly as the evaluation has been scheduled too close to the termination date of the current phase. This could threaten the smooth continuation of network activities.

The OC would have liked to see the inclusion of a NARS scientist as a member of the evaluation team. The Committee requested USAID to participate in the SAFGRAD inter-network conference scheduled for 7-14 March, 1991 in Niamey. A similar invitation was extended to members of the evaluation team, if they arrived in time.

13.0 Other Network Matters

13.1 Inter-Network Conference

The OC was updated on arrangements for this conference scheduled for 7-14 March 1991 in Niamey (Niger) in which more than 100 scientists were expected to participate. The OC endorsed the preparations and expressed the desire for information to members far in advance of future major SAFGRAD events. It was further proposed that the OC be officially represented at the conference by its Vice-Chairman, funds permitting.

13.2 The Committee was briefed on a report of the Technical Advisory Committee to the Consultative Group on International

Agricultural Research (CGIAR), outlining medium and long-term activities of the International Centres. It was noted that SAFGRAD's experience in the semi-arid, sub-Saharan agro-ecological zone fits well with the medium-term plan of the CG system. However, the committee expressed some concern because the orientation of the TAC report is based on geopolitical rather than on ecological zones as is the case with SAFGRAD. The OC therefore requested the SCO to interact with the CGIAR on the issue.

13.3 SPAAR Initiative

The Special Programme for African Agricultural Research (SPAAR) had initiated regional frameworks for action in strengthening agricultural research in sub-Saharan Africa. The frameworks started with the Sahel and Southern Africa and will be followed by three other sub-regions, namely Coastal West Africa, Central and Eastern Africa. A proposal for two coordinating structures, one for West and Central Africa and the other for Eastern Africa (in addition to the one already established for Southern Africa) was endorsed by the Committee, provided that these were not new structures.

- 13.4 Regarding membership renewal in network steering committees, it was noted that this had been outlined in earlier OC meetings. In order to ensure effective programmes as well as build and strengthen leadership among NARS scientists, the committees should comprise multidisciplinary scientists experienced in African farming conditions.

13.5 Third NARS Directors' Conference

This would have taken place early in 1991 but had to be postponed to safeguard continuity of network activities. With the possibility of an extended phase II, the conference was scheduled for dates still to be fixed in September/October 1991.

13.6 SAFGRAD Donors' Meeting

The commitment of OAU to SAFGRAD's future was to be evident in the convening of a donors' meeting in late 1990. But at the request of the present major donor (USAID), this was postponed. The SCO was charged by the Committee to coordinate the meeting which would take place in Ouagadougou in the course of 1991.

14.0 Date and Place of Next Meeting

The next OC meeting will take place in Ouagadougou in September/October 1991, three days before the NARS Directors' conference. The exact dates will be communicated later to OC members.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

At its sixth meeting in Ouagadougou from 12-14 February, 1991, the Oversight Committee of SAFGRAD made the following recommendations:

- I. After discussing the issue of transferring network management responsibility to the NARS, the OC reaffirmed its previous decision that this be effected during the first two years of the next phase of SAFGRAD. However, due flexibility should be exercised in the application of this decision which must take into consideration the different levels of network development and the specific circumstances noted by the network evaluation teams for West and Eastern Africa.
- II. While recognizing the importance and complexity of assessing the impact of research on increasing agricultural production, and having taken some initiative of its own on this issue, the Committee recommended that any impact assessment of SAFGRAD should be based primarily on the output guidelines indicated in the Project Document for SAFGRAD phase II.
- III. Aware that the current phase of SAFGRAD is due to terminate by September 1991, the OC expressed deep concern about late arrangements for the evaluation of SAFGRAD II which would no doubt affect the design of the subsequent phase. The Committee, therefore, appealed to USAID to expedite action in this regard. It further recommended that, at least, one NARS scientist be included as a member of the evaluation team.
- IV. Recognizing research as an essential instrument in bringing about the desired technological changes to enhance agricultural production; realizing the uncoordinated research and development efforts between organizations and among NARS in the sub-region and in view of the fact that the strengthening of NARS is a long-term activity, the OC

recommended that a study be undertaken by an ad hoc committee (based on the terms of reference provided) to propose an appropriate, permanent institutional arrangement for SAFGRAD under the umbrella of the OAU.

V. The OC commended the efforts of the two teams (comprising OC, IARC and NARS representatives) that conducted internal evaluation of SAFGRAD networks and endorsed the report. While approving most of the team's recommendations, the OC placed special emphasis on strengthening the following:

- a) information exchange between SCO and the NARS, especially those of Eastern Africa;
- b) training, to reinforce the scientific and technical capabilities of the NARS;
- c) multidisciplinary approach in order to ensure greater integration of NARS research and
- d) EARSAM's image as an OAU/SAFGRAD network, through more involvement with the member NARS of Eastern Africa.

The OC further recommended that copies of the report be sent to all SAFGRAD network partners, namely NARS Directors and Ministers in charge of agricultural research in SAFGRAD member countries, donors, OAU/STRC and IARCs.

VI. The OC reiterated its recognition of the important roles played by ICRISAT and IITA in strengthening national programmes and agreed that they could still be improved, particularly in the definition and implementation of priority research programmes. The Committee therefore recommended to SCO to enhance effective exchange of NARS scientists and seek ways to improve the involvement of both IARCs in developing collaborative projects within the network framework.

T E R M S O F R E F E R E N C E

Ad Hoc Committee on Making SAFGRAD
Permanent Institution of OAU

Background Information and Justification

OAU member countries accord high priority to the economic development of the agricultural sector. It is also recognized that research is an essential instrument to bring about the desired technological changes to enhance agricultural production. The uncoordinated research activities among NARS and regional institutes have, to some degree, caused overlap and unnecessary duplication of efforts.

In general, the scope of work of the ad hoc committee would be as follows:

- 1) Having examined the current roles, function and future areas of research involvement, propose required changes in goals and objectives to accommodate expanded activities.
- 2) In view of its role to strengthen national systems, SAFGRAD has a major task not only to enhance scientific interactions, but also to develop a NARS information data base, propose additional mandates and linkages to enable it attain the above mentioned tasks.
- 3) Taking advantage of its OAU affiliation, determine how SAFGRAD could effectively provide formal technical feedback information to the OAU itself and its member countries on agricultural research production and development to influence and support

the formulation and implementation of regional and national policies in sub-Saharan Africa.

- 4) Study the institutional arrangements of OAU affiliated agencies, such as PANA and the administrative structure and mandate of OAU/STRC, then propose:
 - a) Appropriate institutional arrangements for SAFGRAD, taking into consideration the nature of its research promotion and coordination activities.
 - b) A statute that defines its legal status, objectives, functions, delegation of authority, institutionalization of existing or modified management entities (defined roles, functions, etc.), technical research functions, including sub-committees, and mandate to enable it achieve its goals and objectives.
- 5) Review SAFGRAD's research coordinating functions, training activities, on-farm technology-adapting support activities of other institutions such as INSAH, SACCAR, IARCs (including a UN Agency like FAO) and propose appropriate linkages of SAFGRAD with these institutions to ensure complementarity and to minimize duplication of unnecessary efforts in the utilization of resources.
- 6) Survey research plans and strategies of political and economic entities (CILSS, ECOWAS, IGADD, ADB, PTA, etc.) in light of recent policies to regionalize support for research. To effectively promote cooperation and coordination of agricultural research across national boundaries, propose the role and affiliations of a coordinating centre like SAFGRAD.
- 7) Examine some NARS research management and administrative structures, research priorities and available technical

and information requirements. Propose an effective technical, financial and related services which could be recommended to member countries of SAFGRAD.

The above terms of reference were adopted by the OC with the understanding that they would be further developed and streamlined.

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