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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Twenty-Seventh Ordinary Session

Port Louis, Mauritius

June 24 - 19 June 1976

CM/766(XXVII)

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE CONFERENCE ON SEMI-ARID FOOD GRAIN RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

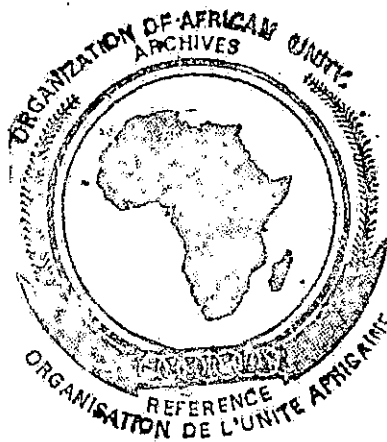


TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>PAGES</u> |
|--|--------------|
| 1. A G E N D A | 1 |
| 2. List of Participants | 2 |
| 3. Report of the meeting | 11 |
| 4. <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u> | |
| <u>Group I:</u> Research and Training Priorities | 13 |
| <u>Group II:</u> Organization for Management of the Project including Exchange of Information and Coordination of the Project | 18 |
| <u>Group III:</u> National Utilisation of Research: Role of the FTO's and ACPO's .. | 24 |

A G E N D A

1. Opening of Conference
2. Presentation of Papers
3. Discussion of Successor Project (SAFGRAD)
4. Working Group Discussions
5. Discussions of Working Group's concensus
6. Adoption of Summary Report of the Conference and Closing of the Conference.

WORK SCHEDULE

Thursday January 8: 09.00-09.30 Registration

10.00-10.50 Presentation of Paper: "The Importance of Food Grain Research and Production to African Countries" Mr. Siry, CEAO.

11.00-11.30 Opening Remarks and welcoming address-Min/Development, Upper Volta; Mr. Odelola, OAU/STRC, Cheikh Fall, CEAO.

11.30-11.40 B R E A K

11.40-13.00 "The Status of Sorghum and Millet Research in Senegal and Francophone Africa" Mr. Sauger, Director Institute of Agricultural Research, Senegal.

"The Role of Research/Extension for the Farmer" Mr. Ekebill, Director, National Institute for Food Grains, the Cameroons.

13.00-15.00 L U N C H

15.00-15.20 Presentation of SAFGRAD Project Proposal. J.E. Hill - C. Sanders, AID/Washington.

15.20-15.35 Role of IRAT in SAFGRAD Project, Mr. Valleays, Deputy Director, IRAT.

15.35-15.50 Role of IITA in SAFGRAD Project, Mr. Buddenhagen, Deputy Director IITA.

15.50-16.10 Role of ICRISAT in SAFGRAD Project Mr. McGinnis, ICRISAT.

16.10-16.30 STRC/OAU Notes on SAFGRAD

16.30-16.40 B R E A K

16.40-18.00 Meeting of Working Groups to discuss Specific Topics.

19.00-20.00 Reception - Hotel Independence.

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS/LIST OF PARTICIPANTSPresident:

Mr. A. O. ODELOLA
Executive Secretary
OAU/STRC
PMB 2359
LAGOS (Nigeria)

Rapporteur:

Mr. F. LEGER
Ingenieur de Liaison du Project
Conjoint 26
OAU/CSTR-PC.26
B.P. 3340
DAKAR (Senegal)

CAMEROON/CAMEROUN

Dr. Jacques-Paul ECKEBIL,
Directeur de l'Institut des Cultures
Vivrières et Textiles (ICVT)
B.P. 2123
YAOUNDE (Cameroun)

CAPE VERDE/CAP VERT

Mr. Miguel Antonio LIMA
Directe General de Production
Végétale
B.P. 50
PRAIA (Cape Verde)

ETHIOPIA/ETHIOPIE

Mr. Hossana SOLOMON
Officer-in-charge of Makale
Research Station
Institute of Agricultural Research
P.O. Box 2003
ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia)

GAMBIA/GAMBIE

Mr. I. A. K. ANDERSON
Officer-in-charge of Agronomy
Department of Agriculture
Yundum Experimental Station
YUNDUM (The Gambia)

GHANA

Dr. W. K. Agble
Director
Crops Research Institute (CSIR)
P. O. Box 3785
KUMASI (Ghana)

GUINEA BISSAU/
GUINEE BISSAO

Mr. Augusto Pinhol ROMAO
Ingenieur Agronome
Commissariat A l'Agriculture.
B.P. 71
BISSAO (Guinee Bissau)

UPPER VOLTA/
HAUTE-VOLTA

Mr. Joseph KABORE
Directeur des Services Agricoles
B.P. 7028
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

Mr. Salifou TRAORE
Chef Service Recherch Agronomique
Direction Services Agricoles (DSA)
B.P. 7028
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

Mme Rose-Marie SANWIDI
Ingenieur Agronome
Chef Service Semences
Direction des Services Agricoles
B.P. 7028
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

Mr. Felix M. SINARE
Ingenieur Agronome
B.P. 7050
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

MALI

Mr. Mamadou Fatogoma TRAORE
Ingenieur Agronome
Chef de la Division de la Recherche
Agronomique de l'I.E.R.
B.P. 281
BAMAKO (Mali)

NIGER

Dr. Zakari GARBA
Directeur General
Institut National de Recherches
agronomiques du Niger
B.P. 429
NIAMEY (Niger)

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF BENIN/REPUBLIQUE
POPULAIRE DU BENIN

Dr. Aziadome KOGBLEVI
Directeur de l'Enseignement
Agricole et de la Recherche
Agronomique
B.P. 126
PORTO-NOVO (R.P. du Benin)

REPUBLIQUE CENTRAFRICAINE/
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Mr. Adamou MAHANA
Directeur de l'Institut
National de Recherches Textiles
et Vivrières
B.P. 17
BAMBARI (R.C.A.)

CHAD, TCHAD

Mr. Mustapha YEHOUESSI
Chef de la Division des Etudes
Agronomiques
B.P. 441
NDJAMENA (Tchad)

Mr. Bambe DANSALA
Program Assistant-AID/NDJAMENA
B.P. 413
NDJAMENA (Tchad)

TOGO

Mlle Elom Djaliba BRUCE
Directeur-homologue IRA-TOGO
B.P. 1163
LOME (Togo)

SENEGAL

Mr. Louis SAUGER
Directeur General Institut
Senegalais de Recherches
Agricoles (ISRA)
B.P. 3120
DAKAR (Senegal)

C.E.A.O.

Mr. Cheikh Ibrahima FALL
Secrétaire General
Communaute Economique de
l'Afrique de l'Ouest
B.P. 643
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

Mr. Leopold Wantisse SIRY
Directeur du Bureau Communautaire
de Développement Agricole (CEAO)
B.P. 643
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

U.S.A.I.D.

Mr. E. Dennis CONROY
Director
African Regional Affairs
Bureau for Africa, A.I.D.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523 (U.S.A.)

Mr. James E. HILL
Program Officer A.I.D./Washington
AFRI/RA, Dept. of State, A.I.D.
WASHINGTON D.C. 20523 (U.S.A.)

Mr. Charles A. SANDERS
Agriculture Officer
AFR/RA
Agency for International Development
WASHINGTON D.C. (U.S.A.)

Dr. Russell O. OLSON
Food & Agriculture Officer USAID/
NIGERIA PMB 12182
LAGOS (Nigeria)

Mr. John A. HOSKING
Directeur de la Mission de l'USAID
en Haute-Volta
Ambassade des Etats-Unis d'Amerique
B.P. 35
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

O.D.M.

Mr. Roger SMITH
Agricultural Research Advisor
Ministry of Overseas Development
Eland House
Stag Place
LONDON SW1E 5OH UK

FORD FOUNDATION/
FONDATION FORD

Dr. Elen H. GILBERT
Agricultural Program Adviser
The Ford Foundation
P. O. Box 3268
LAGOS (Nigeria)

Mr. Howard ELLIOTT
Representant Adjoint
Fondation Ford
B.P. 2769
ABIDJAN (Cote d'Ivoire)

F. A. C.

Mr. Jean PATRIAT
Chef de la Mission de Cooperation
Francaise en Haute-Volta
B.P. 510
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

FONDS EUROPEEN DE
DEVELOPPEMENT (FED)

Mr. Theiry WAFELAERT
Conseiller a la Delegation de la
Commission des Communautés Europeennes
en Haute Volta
Charge de Mission a la conference
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

I.R.A.T.

Mr. Guy J. Jean-Marie VALLAËYS
Directeur General Adjoint IRAT
110, rue de l'Universite
PARIS 7 (France)

Mr. Jean F. POULAIN
Directeur de l'IRAT/HV - Agronome
B.P. 596
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

Mr. Claude ROBLEDO
Ingenieur de Recherches en Selection
B.P. 32
BOBO-DIOULASSO (Haute-Volta)

I.I.T.A.

Dr. Ivan BUDDENHAGEN
Assistant Director - IITA and
Leader Cereals Program
IITA
P.M.B. 5320
IBADAN (Nigeria)

Dr. Hans C. WIEN
Physiologist (Grain Legumes)
IITA
PMB 5320
IBADAN (Nigeria)

Mr. Jens HOGEL
Resident Representative
UNDP
B.P. 575
OUAGADOUGOU (Upper Volta)

ICRISAT

Mr. Claude CHARREAU
Directeur du Programme Cooperatif,
de l'ICRISAT en Afrique de l'Ouest
ICRISAT, 28, rue Thers
B.P. 3340
DAKAR (Senegal)

Dr. Robert Cameroun McGINNIS
Associate Director - ICRISAT
1-11-256 BEGUMPET
HYDERABAD, A.P. 500016
INDIA

Dr. Chadra Mohan PATTANATAK
Plant Breeder, ICRISAT
PDNU
B.P. 575
OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta)

OAU/STRC

Mr. A. O. ODELOLA
Executive Secretary
OAU/STRC
PMB 2359
LAGOS (Nigeria)

Dr. Paul G. ADDOH
Scientific Secretary
OAU/STRC/IAPSC
B.P. 4170
YAOUNDE (Cameroun)

Mr. Noel JOHNSON
Directeur Adjoint
OAU/STRC/BIS et Coordennateur
International du Projet Conjoint 26
B.P. 1352
BANGUI (Republique Centrafricaine)

Dr. Karl R. STOCKINGER
Team Leader JP.26
IAR-ABU
ZARIA (Nigeria)

Mr. Francois D. J. LEGER
Ingenieur de Liaison du Projet
Conjoint 26
B.P. 3340
DAKAR (Senegal)

OAU/STRC

Mr. Alec C. E. BOUCHITTE
Ingenieur de Liaison du FC.26
B.P. 155
MAROUA (Cameroun)

Mr. Andrew Martin POMFRET
Field Rials Officer
OAU/STRC - JP.26
Crops Research Institute
P. O. Box 3785
KUMASI (Ghana)

REPORT OF SEMI-ARID FOOD GRAIN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
IN AFRICA

This meeting took off to a fine start with addresses by the Secretary-General of CEAO, Mr. Cheikh Ibrahima FALL, the Executive Secretary of the OAU/STRC Mr. A. O. ODELOLA and H.E. the Minister of Planning, Mr. DAKOURE. The meeting was supported by the USAID and 14 African countries were represented of the 22 invited. The following Organizations were also represented, ODA of the UK Government, FAC of the French Government, FED, Ford Foundation, IRAT, IITA and ICRISAT.

Immediately after the opening session, the business session presided over by the Executive Secretary of the OAU/STRC, Mr. A. O. ODELOLA organized its work into two sessions - the morning session from 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and afternoon session from 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. furthermore, three Working Groups were set up by the Conference:-

- Committee 1: Research Training Facilities - Crops, Training, Irrigation farming, Target, i.e. Subsistence farmers or Bigtime farmers.
- Committee 2: Organization for management of the Project including exchange of information and coordination of the project.
- Committee 3: National utilization of research: Role of the PTO's and ACPO's.

Committee 1: was presided over by Dr. W. K. AGBLE of Ghana

Committee 2: was presided over by Miss E. D. BRUCE of Togo and

Committee 3: was presided over by Dr. J. P. ECKEBIL of Cameroun.

The three Committees started work after the Plenary Session has listened to the various papers presented by the USAID, the OAU/STRC, Mr. Ekebil, Mr. Leopold Siry of CEAO and Mr. L. Sauger of Senegal. The Plenary also received statements from Messrs James Hill and Charles Sanders, Agricultural Advisers, USAID, and

Dr. Karl Stockinger, the Director of JP.26 Research Team based in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. In addition, the meeting heard statements from IRAT, ODA, UNDP, EDF of the EEC, USAID, Ford Foundation, ICRISAT and IITA.

It is pertinent to note that each of the groups were composed of competent scientists who discussed the problems in a most dispassionate manner bearing in mind the gigantic needs of the Semi-Arid zone of Africa and a sense of urgency that something must be done within the regional framework of the OAU/STRC and its collaborator-sub-regional African agencies like the CEAO and others to improve upon the production of food grains with the aid of all the donors and active research participation of ICRISAT and IITA.

The concensus from the Working Groups are attached.

GROUP I

(a) Theme : Research Priorities - Crops, Training, Irrigation farming, Target i.e. Subsistence farmers or Bigtime farmers.

(b) Participants :

Chairman : 1. W. K. AGBLE
Director, Crops Research Institute
Ghana

Rapporteur : 2. Hossana Solomon
Dry land Agronomist, Ethiopia

Members : 3. C. Robiedo (Plant Breeder, Upper Volta)

4. K. R. Stockinger (Team Leader, J.P.26)

5. M. F. Traore (Chef de la Division de la Recherche Agronomique, Mali)

6. Charles A. Sanders (USAID, Washington DC USA)

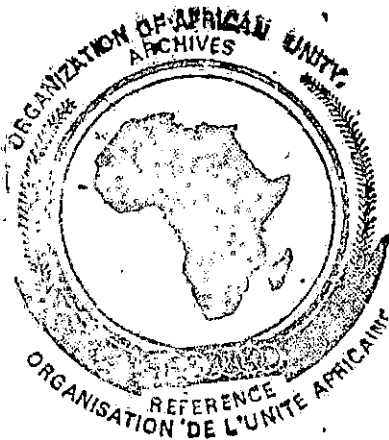
7. Ivan Budderbagen (IITA, Ibadan, Nigeria)

8. Rose-Marie Sanwidi (Chef, Service de Semences, Haute Volta)

9. Bambe Dansala (Program Assistant, USAID, Chad)

10. Paul Addoh (OAU/STRC)

11. Abdoulaye Traore
Liptako-Gourma, B.P. 619
Ouagadougou



RESEARCH AND TRAINING PRIORITIESBACKGROUND

Present research capability in the area is considered inadequate for proper development of the agricultural changes needed. The countries in the area differ in their needs for increased research but in general all African countries containing semi-arid areas require increased agricultural research capability.

Research Organizations and projects with regional scope have been in operation for several years; IRAT in various locations, IITA and JP 26 in Nigeria with co-ordinated trials in different countries, some of which have involved OAU/STFC. ICRISAT has initiated research for the area on sorghum and millet in Upper Volta and has staffed a coordinator position in Senegal under a plan to mount a major programme Sudan Sahel Africa: IITA has a strong programme on cropping systems, maize and grain legumes and training which would require expansion in order to cover the Sudan Sahel area: IITA has been asked to become engaged more widely in tropical African agricultural problems, beyond the forest zone. Such involvement has already begun but it requires further support.

The JP.26 programme, soon to terminate, has been coordinated with the national programme in Northern Nigeria. It has covered breeding for disease resistance and improved yield and better protein quality for maize, plant protection research has been conducted to identify pest and disease problems and to search for resistance. Agronomic and soils research has been conducted to develop recommendations for fertilization, and for cultural, cropping system, and conservation practices. Training under JP.26 OAU/STFC has involved 38 men for B.Sc and advanced degrees from 13 different African countries, many of whom are still in training. IRAT's programme has been part of the national programme of each of the Francophone countries and has involved breeding programmes of sorghum, millet and maize similar to those described for JP.26. Groundnuts have also been covered. The major effort has been at Bambey, Senegal, but programmes are also underway in Niger, Upper Volta, Mali, Cameroon and other countries.

National programmes in various other countries have conducted needed research which often has wider applicability. In Ghana, for instance, research has been conducted in the North at Nyankpala, covering cereals and grain legumes.

TRAINING NEEDS

Training of national staff is considered absolutely essential for the long-term goal of self-sustaining National Research Programmes. Training is required at all levels, including production/extension and academic, at B.Sc. and post-graduate (M.Sc., Ph.D) levels.

In consideration of the many countries involved, including countries beyond the original JP.26 Project, we consider that the numbers to be trained should be substantially increased.

Research Needs and Recommendations

Research carried out in the Semi-arid area has provided many results such as improved crop varieties and practices for their production. The maximum application of these results have not been possible because of the lack of local acceptance and application. The emphasis in research should therefore be placed on technologies that are suited to farm conditions and acceptability.

We consider the Key areas of research needs to be:

- 1) Breeding for disease and insect resistance;
- 2) Breeding for improved yield and nutritional quality and season adaptability;
- 3) Breeding for performance against environmental stresses especially drought;
- 4) Cropping systems research including inter-cropping, rotations; minimum cost packages;
- 5) Social and agro-economic research to provide background for acceptable research approaches and findings;

- 6) Research on small scale farm implements and use of animal traction;
- 7) Maintenance of fertility for long term sustained yield including research on bush burning;
- 8) Research in soil and water management and irrigation agronomy for small scale farming, including erosion control and soil and water conservation;
- 9) Ecological studies directed toward quantifying crop/environment interaction and greater utilization of different natural resources;
- 10) Germplasm collection;
- 11) Plant protection research to include insects, rodents and birds, and storage pests.

For application of research results action programmes are required. These would include:

- a) seed multiplication and distribution;
- b) On-farm testing programmes involving research, extension and farmer participation with direct feed back to the research programme.

Cereal Crops considered to require major emphasis are: maize sorghum, millet, cowpeas and groundnut. In addition, other crops of importance which should be considered are the other suitable legumes - both grain types, and types useable for forage and green manuring. Also rice, wheat, and foxtail millet (*Echinochloa polystachya*) are crops deserving attention.

We did not consider in detail the staffing requirements for conduction the research indicated since this would require much more background information and evaluation. However, adequate coverage of cropping system research would require greater staffing than the two 3 man teams indicated in the AID document.

GROUP II

(a) Theme: Organization for Management of the Project including Exchange of Information and Coordination of the Project

(b) ParticipantsChairman

Mole Elem Djaliba BRUCE,
Directeur-Homologue,
IRAT - TOGO.

Rapporteur

Mr. Andrew M. POMFRET,
OAU/STRC Field Trial Officer JP.26

Members

Mr. A.O. ODELOLA,
Executive Secretary, OAU/STRC LAGOS.

Mr. F. LEGER,
Field Trial Officer, DAKAR, (Senegal).

Mr. M. A. LIMA,
Director General,
I.C.V.T.,
B.P. 2123, YAOUNDE (Cameroun).

Dr. Zakary GARBA,
Director General,
Institut National de Recherche
Angonemiques du Niger,
B. P.429, NIAMEY (Niger).

Mr. Louis SAUGER,
Director-General,
(I.S.R.A.)
B.P. 3120, SENEGAL.

Mr. L. W. SIRY,
Director, (C.E.A.O.),
B.P. 643, OUAGADOUGOU (Haute-Volta).

Mr. E. D. CONROY,
Director,
African Regional Affairs,
Bureau for Africa, A.I.D.,
Washington, D.C. 20523 (U.A.S.)

Dr. Russell O. OLSON,
F. A. O.,
P. M. B. 12182,
LAGOS (Nigeria.)

Members

Mr. Roger SMITH,
Agricultural Research Adviser,
(O.D.E.), LONDON.

Mr. Howard ELLIOTT,
Ford Foundation,
B. P. 2769,
ABIDJAN

Mr. T. WAFFELAERT,
Chargé de Mission à la conférence
OUAGADOUGOU.

Mr. G. J. J. VALLAEYS,
Director-General (IRAT),
PARIS

Mr. C. CHARREAU,
Director (ICRISAT),
B. P. 3340, DAKAR

Mr. Salifou TRAORE,
B. P. 7028,
OUAGADOUGOU.

REPORT OF GROUP II: - ORGANIZATION FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE PROJECT
INCLUDING EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND COORDINATION
OF THE PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

In considering what recommendations should be made to this assembly, extensive reference has been made to the two basic documents which concerned themselves with the overall organization and management of a new project including the exchange of information and coordination of such project. These documents were the Project Identification Documents prepared by USAID and the notes on Food Grain Research and Development submitted by the Executive Secretary of the OAU/STRC, Mr. A. O. ODELOLA.

There has been overall and general consensus of agreement over the major points put forward in both of these documents with a few matters which received the general support of the working group after some discussion had taken place.

1. DONOR ORGANIZATIONS

The donors appear to unanimously favour the basic structure of the newly proposed SAFGRAD project and will be sympathetic towards requests for financial and technical support, though was present, none of the donor representatives are able to commit their Government to definite promises of aid. In any case, their requirements of the new project cannot be determined sufficiently explicitly at this stage but will have to be the subject of further negotiations. Requests for aid will be considered in the case of additional support for national organizations where this is essential for a particular country to be able to cooperate effectively in the regional programme.

2. ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

Both ICRISAT and IITA as well as IRAT are recognised as having a very vital part to play in the new project although there has been some debate as to the relative importance of each organization. The impetus should come from both ICRISAT and IITA according to the way in which their particular research programmes are relevant to the Crops and ecological areas which comprise the semi-arid zone of Africa. At present there is little overlap between the activities of these two International Research Organizations so that the division of responsibility between them should not pose any particular problem. Both of them will be able to make use of the contributions to research which IRAT and National Research Organizations are able to offer.

3. ROLE OF THE NATIONAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

It is appreciated that it is only with the active support and participation of the National Research Organizations that SAFGRAD can be successful. Certainly as far as adaptive research is concerned, it is only through them that the project can make any contribution to agricultural development in each individual participating country. It is also agreed that one function of National Research Organizations should be to provide an ACPO with donor assistance where necessary and the ACPO would be the main link between the National, Regional, and International aspects of the programme.

Although basic research will remain the responsibility of the International Research Organizations leaving National Research Organizations to conduct adaptive research, it is nevertheless emphasised that there can be no clear distinction between the two so as to ensure a greater flexibility.

4. ROLE OF THE PROPOSED CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

It has been recommended that there should be a consultative committee served by a technical advisory committee. It should be mandatory that the consultative committee met annually and it should consist of National and International Directors of Research, Representatives of donor organizations and ACPOs. The technical advisory committee should meet more frequently in order to monitor research progress at all levels and in all fields within the project. The technical advisory committee should itself be made up of coordinators of specific sub-programmes within the project as a whole. The consultative committee should have a permanent secretary within STRC.

5. ROLE OF STRC

The STRC is envisaged as providing a number of coordinating functions:-

- i) the convening of meetings of the consultative committee and its technical advisory committee;
- ii) administrative coordination of the project as a whole especially with regard to general policy and related matters involving the Governments of participating states;
- iii) The translation, publication and dissemination of research information;
- iv) assistance as appropriate to facilitate the movement of germplasm between countries;
- v) encouragement of and assistance to participating countries to enable them to contribute to the project by establishing their own essential infrastructure for seed multiplication and storage;

- vi) to assist participating countries in the training of their own essential staff for research and development and to seek financial assistance from donor agencies for this purpose.
- vii) to ensure that participating countries each appoint an ACPO from their own resources or with the help of aid from donor organizations.

6 ESTABLISHMENT OF SAFGRAD

In order to perform all the above functions, this committee strongly recommends the establishment of the SAFGRAD project under the auspices of the OAU/STRC as Joint Project 31 in accordance with the framework already outlined. If this is agreed upon, one of the primary tasks of STRC in relation to the new project is to prepare a definitive project document after consultation with all participating nations and organizations. This would then be used to solicit aid from potential donors, many of whom have already expressed willingness to give sympathetic consideration to such requests.

This committee wishes to point out that the idea presented on page 20 of the English version (Page 24 of the French version) of the Project Proposal Document is incorrect in that IITA and ICRISAT cannot have power to give directives to National Research Organizations or to the Project itself, but the responsibility of the proposed consultative committee is to give guidance in respect of the participation of all the project organizations, National and International.

GROUP III

(a) Theme: National Utilisation of Research: Role of the FTO's and ACPO's

(b) Participants

| | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Chairman</u> | Dr. Jacques Paul ECKEBIL | - Cameroun |
| <u>Rapporteur</u> | Mr. Alec C.E. BOUCHITTE | - OAU/STRC Cameroon |
| <u>Members</u> | Dr. Aziadome KOGBLEVI | - Bénin |
| | Mr. Miguel A. LIMA | - Cap Vert |
| | Mr. I. A. K. ANDERSON | - Gambia |
| | Mr. ROMAO | - Guinée Bissau |
| | Mr. Joseph KABORE | - Upper Volta |
| | Mr. Félix SINARE | - Upper Volta |
| | Dr. Amadou MAHAMA | - Central African Rep. |
| | Mr. M. YEHOUESSI | - Chad |
| | Mr. R. C. McGINNIS | - ICRISAT |
| | Dr. Hans C. WIEN | - IITA |
| | Mr. POULAIN | - IRAT |
| | Mr. Jean PATRIAT | - FAC |
| | Dr. E. H. GILBERT | - Ford Foundation |
| | Mr. MEYER | - USAID (Upper Volta) |
| | Mr. JOHNSON | - OAU/STRC |

RECOMMENDATIONSNATIONAL UTILISATION OF RESEARCH: ROLE OF THE FTO'S AND ACPO'S

The utilisation of research at a national level raises two problems:

- firstly the problem of liaison between national research and national research,
- and - secondly that of liaison between national research and extension.

As far as the first point is concerned, the Working Group considers that a proper dialogue should take place between regional and national agencies in order to ensure a proper distribution of tasks in the area of research and to enable proper utilisation to take place of the results of such research. This dialogue can only be undertaken via the ACPO's because personal contacts between research workers who are responsible in the field are essential.

The Working Group therefore recommends:

- that an annual meeting should take place between the regional research officers and national agencies in order to discuss the results obtained and the main directions of research for the subsequent year. The ACPO's should participate actively in such meetings.

With respect to the second point, i.e. liaison between research and extension, the Working Group considers that experience shows it is difficult to implement research results directly in a farming environment.

The Working Group therefore recommends:

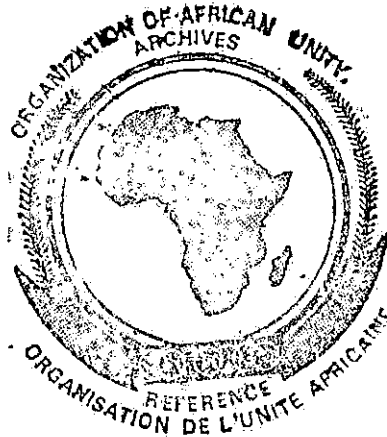
- that countries should pay special attention to pre-extension problems and donor countries or organizations should ensure appropriate financial support to this fundamental work.

As far as the ACPO's are concerned, the Working Group feels that these permanent officers should be highly qualified agriculturalists, whose task is to ensure continuity in the exchange of information, understood in the broadest way, between regional research agencies and the national level. To this end, the agriculturalists concerned should be closely in touch with requirements expressed by the extension services and the problems which are raised at the level of national research. In addition they must be sufficiently flexible to be able to follow up work undertaken by the regional institutes.

Taking all these factors into account, the Working Group recommends the following:

- 1) There should be an ACPO in each country participating in the project;
- 2) This ACPO should be integrated into the research facilities of the country in which he is working;
- 3) His appointment and the assessment of his action should be undertaken in cooperation with the director of national research and the regional agencies;
- 4) The tasks which should be undertaken by the ACPO will depend upon the status of agricultural research in the country where he is appointed. In those countries where such research is rudimentary, he may have to undertake certain trials himself;

- 5) To that end, adequate facilities should be made available in terms of transport, travel allowance, accommodation and agricultural trial facilities, etc;
- 6) Scientific and technical coordination of the ACPO's should be carried out at a regional level;
- 7) In such cases where national officers are lacking, special efforts should be made to train African agriculturalists who could be appointed as ACPO's.



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