

Comments on CRP2 Proposal: Policies, Institutions, and Markets to Strengthen Food Security and Incomes for the Rural Poor

| FC Member | Comments |
|-----------|--|
| Australia | <p>General Comments:</p> <p>Theme 1: Effective policies and strategic investments This theme covers a suitable range of macro and micro policy research settings (economic and social) to ensure both future and current policy frameworks will be considered. In the inevitably dynamic global and national settings it is important to include both future scenarios as well as current or immediate policy challenges in the research agenda. It is anticipated that the policy research program will be linked to the scientific and technical CRPs on a continuous basis, particularly but not exclusively under sub-theme 1.3 – Production and Technology Policies. Such linkages will be instrumental to achieving adoption of the scientific research outputs to enable productivity enhancement through scientific and policy synergies. Acknowledgement of inter-sectoral influences in achieving agricultural growth and improved food security is well documented in CRP2 and the communication of such considerations to policy practitioners will be essential if suitable reform is to be achieved.</p> <p>Theme 2: Inclusive governance and institutions We are supportive of the need to include evidence based policy frameworks and the issues covered seem appropriate. There will be a need for the results of this research to be disseminated to both decision makers and also to wider aid donors. The development of suitable institutional structures (including research institutions) is frequently limited by resource considerations as well as political commitment. These are also relevant to the capacity strengthening provisions of the CRP to cover both individual and institutional capacities. Collaborative R&D with NARs will need to be an integral component of research capacity building efforts.</p> <p>Theme 3: Linking small producers to markets This theme addresses the main elements of the rapidly changing food value chains in many developing countries. It is important to address both modern value chain impacts as well as the more traditional markets which are also in transition in many countries. The emphasis will likely need to be on domestic markets in the first instance with attention to enhancing market channel efficiency as well as changing consumer requirements in terms of nutrition, choice, quality and safety issues as examples. Post-harvest losses both in volume and quality are additional issues for attention under this sub-theme in conjunction with other CRPs. The key users will be scientists, donors, policy-makers and private decision makers. The research framework could usefully cover economic costs, distributional efficiencies, environmental impacts and consumer welfare. Within such policy settings scientists can construct more rigorous models and conduct empirical research to test validity. Given the pace of change already occurring this sub-theme will need early</p> |

activation under the new CRP.

Specific Comments:

- As with other CRPs the cross linkages and complementarities with the wider CRP portfolio will need to be revisited when the 15 intended CRPs are completed. Since CRPs are emerging in a piecemeal fashion, this future refinement cannot be avoided, but will be necessary to avoid any inadvertent duplications and overlaps which the CGIAR reform was designed to minimize or eliminate. It is also necessary to deliver effectively on the System Level Outcomes mentioned in the current SRF. ACIAR welcomes the intent of IFPRI as the lead center to call a planning meeting involving the leaders of the policy components in each CRP upon acceptance of the various CRPs, in order to fully develop the delineation of boundaries and integration of policy and social science research across the CRPs. This will help to more fully delineate the boundaries across CRPs and detailed responsibilities of policy, institutions and market research. This will be instrumental to achieving a cohesive approach across such a wide research agenda.
- While the emphasis in this CRP is correctly on assisting the rural poor, it will be necessary to be aware that with the growth of urban populations in developing countries the plight and interests of urban poor and consumers will become increasingly a growing feature of poverty and food security. These simultaneous challenges will need to be assessed within the limits of the research budget allocations over time.
- At this stage the demonstrable links to NARES in practice is still a bit understated but is mentioned. This observation together with linkage to the regional research bodies (APAARI, GFAR etc) will be a necessary engagement issue. This is also relevant to the provisions of the SRF and will be needed to ensure inclusiveness is seen to be happening in practice.
- It is unlikely that all the multifarious subject issues raised in this CRP can be progressed simultaneously and some indicators of short, medium and longer term implementation strategies could help if only indicative at present. Budget limitations in absence of growth in overall donor contributions may force such prioritization.
- It is good that the gender and capacity building objectives are now to be picked up in each CRP (rather than as platforms) and this CRP seems to meet that requirement well. The impact pathways and monitoring/evaluation procedures are well described in CRP 2. This is an area where ACIAR already links well with IFPRI for joint consideration. Impact assessments of policy research have ongoing and particular hurdles, including counterfactual and attribution practicalities, and we would encourage IFPRI to develop methodologies for wider use. Similarly measuring the impacts on national poverty levels of both policy/institutional and scientific research are a topical but increasingly significant matters for aid funding. This is recognized as a matter needing methodological improvement and wider engagement with donor agencies (ACIAR could contribute to and benefit from future IFPRI progress in this poverty impact measurement methodology).
- The budget requests in CRP 2 seem reasonable on face value, but unless the aggregate CGIAR budget increases in the short/medium term the budget claims

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>of the various CRPs will likely go well beyond available financial resources. If that is correct, how will the inter-CRP portfolio financial priorities be resolved? Obviously this will be a core role for the Consortium to address and some early thoughts could be instructive and timely.</p> |
|--|---|