

CGIAR Funders Forum, July 15, 2010

Opening remarks

- Colleagues, it's a pleasure to welcome you to the first CGIAR Funders Forum. I'd like to thank the Food and Agriculture Organization for hosting this event here in Rome.
- Since the start of this year we have made great strides in the implementation of the CGIAR reforms. We've established the Fund Council, appointed the Consortium Board, approved the new CGIAR Fund, held the first Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, and officially established the new Consortium of CGIAR Centers. Our gathering today represents another important step in operationalizing the new CGIAR. Later today we will likely make further progress with the new Strategy and Results Framework for our research agenda.
- I would like to thank everyone here today for their long-standing commitment to the CGIAR, and for their dedication, drive and determination in ensuring that this unique partnership for agricultural research for development continues to effectively fulfill its mandate of reducing poverty and hunger, improving human health and nutrition, and enhancing ecosystem resilience.

Role of Funders Forum

- As this is the inaugural Funders Forum, I'd like to take a moment to review the scope of participation in this Forum and the Forum's functions.
- The Funders Forum is open to all countries and organizations that are CGIAR Fund Donors; Members of the Fund Council; host countries of CGIAR Center and Consortium headquarters; bilateral donors that contribute a minimum of US\$500,000 per year to support implementation of the Strategy and results framework; and internal and external stakeholders invited to attend Forum sessions by the Chair of the Forum.
- The overarching role of the Forum is to provide a platform where these participants can:
 - discuss and exchange their views about the CGIAR;
 - consider and endorse the Strategy and Results Framework proposed by the Consortium;

- provide feedback to the Consortium and the Fund Council on the progress in implementing the Strategy and Results Framework;
- review and endorse proposals on cost structure and financing plans for the system review shortfalls or imbalances in resources available for Mega Programs, so that individual donors may consider adjusting their allocations.
- The Forum is convened every two years, synchronized with the biennial meeting of the Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, or GCARD. As you all are aware, the first GCARD took place in Montpellier, France, this past March.
- The Chair of the Fund Council will chair this inaugural meeting of the Forum. Selection criteria for subsequent Funders Forum Chairs will be discussed in the closed session this afternoon. The role of the Chair is to provide leadership for the Forum's deliberations; interact with the Fund Council, Consortium, and Forum participants; and provide guidance to the Fund Office in follow up to Forum matters.
- For your reference, a background document on the role of the Funders Forum is available in your folder.

Agenda and expectations for the Day

- I would now like to turn our attention to today's agenda. We will begin the Forum with an open discussion session to hear an update from the Consortium Board on its current activities and the presentation of the Strategy and Results Framework. Subsequently we will consider the 2011 budget and expected funding for 2011, followed by the system cost sharing modalities. Please note that no decisions will be taken during the open discussion session.
- In the afternoon the CGIAR donors and Fund Council members will meet in a decision session that will focus on the SRF, the System Cost Structure and the Selection Criteria for Subsequent Funders Forum Chairs.
- Before inviting Carlos Pérez del Castillo to provide an update on the Consortium Board Activities, let me take a few minutes to tell you the status of new CGIAR fund

CGIAR Fund

The CGIAR Fund, which is hosted at the World Bank, was approved by the World Bank's Board in January of this year. Since then, we have been engaged in a very participatory discussion process involving donors, the Consortium, and Trustee. These discussions have centered on the governance and shared accountability of the Fund, the structure of the Fund and the corresponding financial flow of funds as related to governance, structure, and the application of best practice financial management methodologies. .

The three legal documents, which have been worked on so far include the Joint Agreement, the Governance Framework and the Contribution Agreement. I want to commend all donors for the amount of effort that you have invested in these discussions, which has allowed for convergence on key issues surrounding the operationalization of the Fund.

At the Fund Council meeting yesterday, there was in depth discussion of the Governance Framework and I am pleased that we continue to converge on the key issues. We agreed to have some bilateral discussions to move things forward and there is considerable optimism that we will be able to receive and disburse from the Fund by Fall this year.

Let me now ask Carlos to make his remarks.