

# Incorporating stakeholder perspectives in international agricultural research: the case of the CGIAR Research Program for Roots, Tubers and Bananas for Food Security and Income

Jonathan Woolley, Vincent B. Johnson, Bernardo Ospina,  
Berga Lemaga, Tania Jordan, Gary Harrison, Graham Thiele



# Incorporating stakeholder perspectives in international agricultural research: the case of the CGIAR Research Program for Roots, Tubers and Bananas for Food Security and Income

**Jonathan Woolley**  
International Consultant

**Vincent B. Johnson**  
Bioversity

**Bernardo Ospina**  
International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)

**Berga Lemaga**  
International Potato Center (CIP)

**Tania Jordan**  
ICT-KM Program - CGIAR

**Gary Harrison**  
International Potato Center (CIP)

**Graham Thiele**  
International Potato Center (CIP)



ISSN 0256-8748  
**Social Sciences**  
Working Paper  
No. 2011- 3

The Social Sciences Working Paper Series is intended to advance social science knowledge about production and utilization of potato, sweetpotato, and root and tuber crops in developing countries to encourage debate and exchange of ideas. The views expressed in the papers are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the International Potato Center (CIP) or of the United States Agency for International Development of the United States Government.

Comments are invited.

**Incorporating stakeholder perspectives in international agricultural research:**

The case of the CGIAR Research Program for Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income.

© International Potato Center (CIP), 2011

ISSN 0256-8748

CIP publications contribute important development information to the public arena. Readers are encouraged to quote or reproduce material from them in their own publications. As copyright holder CIP requests acknowledgment, and a copy of the publication where the citation or material appears. Please send a copy to the Communication and Public Awareness Department at the address below.

International Potato Center  
Apartado 1558, Lima 12, Peru  
cip@cgiar.org - www.cipotato.org

Produced by the CIP Communication and Public Awareness Department (CPAD)

**Correct citation:**

Woolley, J., Johnson, V.B., Ospina, B., Lemaga, B., Jordan, T., Harrison, G., Thiele, G. Incorporating stakeholder perspectives in international agricultural research: the case of the CGIAR Research Program for Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income. International Potato Center (CIP), Lima, Peru. Social Sciences Working Paper 2011-3. 92 p.

**Layout**

Zandra Vasquez

Printed in Peru by Comercial Gráfica Sucre  
Press run: 150  
July 2011

# Table of Contents

Abstract .....	v
Acknowledgments.....	vi
1. Introduction.....	1
2. The consultation process.....	2
3. Research themes and future agenda.....	9
4. Cross-cutting topics.....	13
5. Partnership approach.....	14
6. Gender and youth strategy .....	16
7. Communication and information sharing .....	20
8. Capacity strengthening in research for development.....	21
9. Key quotations.....	24
10. Changes incorporated into the CRP-RTB .....	25
11. Lessons learned .....	26
12. Conclusion.....	29
13. References .....	31
Annex 1 .....	32
Annex 2.....	40
Annex 3.....	46

## List of Tables

Table 1. Characteristics of consultation methods .....	4
Table 2. Places and dates for different types of stakeholder consultation. ....	7
Table 3. Participants by geographical area and type of consultation. ....	8

Table 4. Participants by institution and type of consultation.....	9
Table 5. Importance assigned to seven themes of proposal by respondents in regional and global survey.....	10
Table 6. Importance assigned to seven themes of proposal by all respondents.....	11
Table 7. Importance assigned to cross-cutting topics by respondents in regional and global survey.....	13
Table 8. Importance assigned to cross-cutting topics by all respondents.....	114
Table 9. Importance assigned to actions for improving partnerships in regional and global survey .....	15
Table 10. Importance assigned to principles for improving partnerships.....	16
Table 11. Agreement with gender approaches by all respondents.....	17
Table 12. Importance of different actions as part of the gender strategy for the CRP.....	19
Table 13. Importance of different types of information content.....	20
Table 14. Perceived need of different institutions for formal capacity strengthening. ....	21
Table 15. Perceived areas of expertise for formal capacity strengthening. ....	23
Table 16. Importance assigned to different capacity-strengthening methods.....	23

# Abstract

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR, or CG) has gradually gathered experience, especially through the use of participatory research methods, in assuring that its results are useful for resource-poor farmers. To improve the coherence of work across the member Centers and to enhance impact, fifteen interlinked proposed CGIAR research programs (CRPs) are being developed. A new CG-wide collaborative ethos emphasizes identifying, consulting, and collaborating with appropriate stakeholders, to bring their perspectives into design of the CRP proposals and ensure that they are integrally involved in implementation. In this paper we present a case study of stakeholder consultation for designing the CRP *Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income*. The paper describes how stakeholders were identified, outlines consultation and data collection methodologies, presents a synthesis of the consultation, and demonstrates how stakeholder perspectives influenced proposal design. The concluding sections provide details of lessons learned and articulate how future consultations might be improved, including optimal use of information gathered.

# Acknowledgments

We thank all those who contributed to the stakeholder consultation. These include the other members of the stakeholder taskforce: Jorge Andrade, Robert Asiedu, Dindo Campilan, and Lorna Sister. They also include the rest of the Management Committee (MC) and writing teams for the RTB proposal, especially Hernan Ceballos, Jim Lorenzen, Philippe Monneveux, Stephan Weise, Gordon Prain, and Valerie Gwinner; as well as those from the taskforce, MC, and beyond who organized and facilitated the workshops. We also thank Claudine Picq and Jorge Andrade for rapid translations of surveys and supporting documents into French and Spanish, respectively, and of course all the stakeholders who honored us with their detailed, thoughtful, and innovative contributions in workshops, survey answers, and interviews.

# Incorporating stakeholder perspectives in international agricultural research: the case of the CGIAR Research Program for Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since its founding in 1971, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR, or CG), comprising 15 member Centers, has a track record of achievements in agricultural research for development that includes significant increases in productivity of the developing world's staple crops (Renkow and Byerlee 2010). Its member Centers have also from time to time attempted to ensure greater participation of farmers, especially those who are resource poor, in its work; and they have established a diverse and rich range of partnerships with stakeholders (Ashby 2009, Horton et al. 2010). There have been several noteworthy initiatives to build broader collaborative mechanisms with stakeholders which bring several Centers together (Woolley et al. 2009). Despite these successes, the CG has been criticized for a lack of coherence across all the member Centers and for insufficient attention to securing impact (Ashley et al. 2009).

In 2010, delegates of the Global Conference on Agricultural Research and Development (GCARD), in Montpellier, France, helped shape a *Road Map to Transform the Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) System for Greater Global Impacts* (Lele et al. 2010). The conference was also instrumental in finalizing a new Strategic Research Framework (SRF), a results-oriented research-for-development system for the CG. The building blocks of the SRF constitute a set of fifteen, interlinked proposed CGIAR research programs (CRPs). The proposed CRPs have been selected for their potential to achieve the system-level outcomes of the SRF while maximizing coordination between the CG Centers. The CRPs will form clusters of results-oriented innovation activities whose impact is greater than the sum of their parts because of the gains from synergies and system-wide cooperation (Consortium Board 2011). The SRF emphasizes the need to engage a broad range of stakeholders to achieve development impact.

As part of the new CG collaborative ethos, an important component of drafting each of the CRP proposals was identifying and consulting appropriate stakeholders, to bring their perspectives into proposal design and ensure that they are integrally involved in implementation. In this paper

we present a case study of stakeholder consultation for designing the CRP *Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income*. This program design was led by the International Potato Center (CIP), Bioversity International, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). The paper describes how stakeholders were identified, outlines consultation and data collection methodologies, presents a synthesis of the consultation, and demonstrates how stakeholder perspectives influenced proposal design. The concluding discussion articulates how future consultations might be improved, including optimal use of information gathered.

## 2. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The development of the CRP proposal was led by a Management Committee (MC), made up of one representative from each of the four CG Centers involved in the proposal. More than 25 researchers from the CRP-RTB alliance Centers participated in a three-day workshop, held at CIP's headquarters in June 2010, to define and organize a coherent strategy for developing the proposal. Writing teams, formed across topics to encourage cross-Center collaboration, and writing responsibilities were assigned. A proposal development schedule was developed and agreed, as was a protocol for writing, editing, and managing the draft sections through the use of GoogleDocs. The workshop produced seven themes as core components of the proposal:

- Theme 1: Conserving and accessing genetic resources
- Theme 2: Accelerating the development, delivery, and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance, and high nutritional value
- Theme 3: Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities
- Theme 4: Promoting sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers
- Theme 5: Developing tools for more productive, ecologically robust crops
- Theme 6: Enhancing postharvest technologies and adding value in markets
- Theme 7: Enhancing impact through partnerships.

The seven intercenter teams worked simultaneously on each of the themes—each of which also shared a number of cross-cutting elements—which were subsequently integrated into a coherent document. The stakeholder consultation was a central element of the proposal development process.

There was a very short timeframe between the initiation of proposal writing (late June 2010) and the deadline for submission of the proposal (8 September 2010). The results of the consultation

had to be available by mid-August to be incorporated into the proposal. This gave less than two months from planning the consultation to final write-up, and it meant that the consultation had to take place in parallel with the writing process, which was not ideal. An additional complication was that several other CRPs were organizing stakeholder consultations at the same time, potentially with overlapping audiences.

The design and implementation of the stakeholder consultation was delegated by the MC to an intercenter taskforce with representatives of the four Centers in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Latina America and the Caribbean covered by the CRP. The MC agreed on terms of reference for the taskforce and the purpose of the consultation. CG Centers have periodically carried out priority-setting exercises to determine the importance of particular technological constraints (Raitzer and Norton 2009). The MC decided that in this case it was neither appropriate nor possible, given involvement of four Centers and tight deadlines, to carry out a priority-setting exercise. It was agreed instead that the objectives of the consultation were to inform stakeholders about CG reform (if they didn't already know) and about the CRP-RTB itself and to obtain their "buy-in." More important, to capture their perspectives on the design and implementation of the CRP, stakeholders were encouraged to contribute (1) evidence that they support the proposal in general and wish to be a part of it; (2) fresh ideas on how the proposal might be made more convincing, especially in the area of achieving impact; (3) suggestions on how partnerships, gender/youth strategy, communications/information, and capacity strengthening can best function in practice; and (4) specific indications on how their institution, and others, should be involved.

One member of the taskforce took overall responsibility for planning in each of the continents. The taskforce worked with a facilitator, who provided guidance in setting up the consultation, analyzing and writing up the results, and ensuring that the results were incorporated into the proposal itself.

One of the first tasks facing the taskforce was to decide upon the methods to be used to achieve these objectives and which stakeholders should be involved. Table 1 shows the principal methods that were considered.

**Table 1. Characteristics of consultation methods.**

<b>Consultation Method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Cost (USD)</b>	<b>Probable response rate</b>	<b>Facilitation needed</b>	<b>Stakeholder satisfaction</b>	<b>Quality of information</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
1. Dedicated sub-regional workshop	1–1.5 days 12–20 people	At least 1,100 per stakeholder	80% among those present; 50% among those invited. Difficulty of getting suitable participants at short notice.	Expert facilitation; needs to know region, available at short notice. A good, flexible facilitator will iterate and enhance participants' responses.	High if well run and participants feel they were specially invited. Lower if the facilitation doesn't work well.	Potentially high. Depends on excellent facilitation and rapporteurs to draw out diversity of opinion. In worst case can produce general, non-useful conclusions.	Expensive, but many people may view this as a "proper" consultation. A lot of work for organizers.
2. Dedicated national workshop	1–1.5 days 10 people	At least 200 per stakeholder	80% among those present; 50% among those invited. Easier to get more suitable participants at short notice.	Expert facilitation; needs to know country, available at short notice. A good, flexible facilitator will iterate depending on participants' responses.	High if well run and participants feel they were specially invited. Lower if the facilitation doesn't work well.	Same as 1	Same as 1
3. Add-on to another sub-regional workshop	0.5–1 day 12–20 people	Maybe 600 per stakeholder. Depends on overlap of participants with main workshop.	Same as 1	Same as 1. Possibility of using the same facilitator but requires careful agreement.	Same as 1. Ensure that participants understand the dual-purpose workshop.	Same as 1	Less expensive
4. Telephone or in-person interviews with key informants.	Regional center staff interview key informants for 1–2 hours one-on-one <i>and</i>	Mostly staff time, except where travel is needed for in-person rather than telephone interviews.	100% among those interviewed; maybe 80% among those of whom interview is requested.	No facilitation, but staff need clear orientation/ interview guidelines plus ability to be flexible and capture	Very high for those consulted, provided the interviewers are capable and flexible. Low for	Very high—may yield genuine new insights. Requires good selection of key informants.	Can be effective but needs good interviewers and good, rapid note-taking/reporting. In our case

Consultation Method	Description	Cost (USD)	Probable response rate	Facilitation needed	Stakeholder satisfaction	Quality of information	Disadvantages
	<i>take careful notes. 2–4 interviews. per person per day if well organized.</i>			interesting lines of unexpected information.	those not consulted.		probably as a complement to other methods.
5. Survey Monkey	User-friendly free Web tool makes it possible to design, administer, and tabulate internet survey.	Very low. Support from ICT-KM to set up the survey.	About 20–40% among those consulted. Best to ask for non-anonymous replies.	To obtain sophisticated information, needs particular care in documentation sent and questions asked. Taskforce would need to design carefully and quickly.	Moderate to low. If the questions are good and respondents receive a report later, may be higher. Some stakeholders like the “modern” tool; those with poor connectivity may suffer.	Moderate—only as good as the questions asked.	If respondents identify themselves, best ideas can be followed up (in our case during CRP implementation). Maybe use in addition to other methods.
6. E-conference	Moderated internet discussion with open invitation. Typically people log on daily for, say, one week.	Needs highly experienced moderator, probably a specialized consultant. Maybe \$3,000–5,000.	About 30% genuine participation. Tends to be dominated by a few enthusiasts who have time and/or are very articulate.	Moderator summarizes and asks new question each day. Needs skilled consultant, knowledgeable about the subject matter (or advised daily by those who are).	High for those who get involved, but may be frustrating for those who feel others are dominating. Appreciated by some as a “modern” tool. If well designed can handle poor bandwidth.	Very good from those who participate strongly, but may be biased towards their opinions.	Poor connectivity and frequent breaks in connections may discourage participants.

The identification of stakeholders meant close collaboration across the Centers to agree on criteria and avoid duplication of invitations:

- Drawing on knowledge accumulated from previous interactions and shared activities we aimed to contact as many as possible of those stakeholders with whom we had been engaged during the last five years.
- After drafting an initial, rather long list, final selection was made considering geographical distribution and nature of institution (e.g., public, private, farmer group, research, and academic). The initial group selected was screened against those made by each of the other three Centers, so as to maintain some equity and avoid duplication.
- From this list of existing and potential partners, we also tried to equitably embrace the complete range of nine types of stakeholders.

Given the relatively short period available for this consultation, the taskforce made a rapid assessment of what was likely to work best and used four different methods to maximize coverage with the available budget:

- Seven regional stakeholder workshops attended by 100 participants from 27 different countries.
- An on-line “regional” survey for national and regional partners (prepared in English, Spanish, and French) that was answered by 181 people, of whom 79 had attended a workshop.
- A shorter on-line survey for “global partners” from advanced research institutions, policy makers, donors, industry, farmer associations, NGOs, and other international players that was answered by 47 respondents.
- A total of six one-on-one interviews focused in Indonesia, China, and Papua New Guinea.

Fuller information about locations of consultations is provided in Table 2. In each case the workshop location was selected on the basis of being a central location, where it would be easy to convene stakeholders who represented the interests and the audience of the four Centers, and to keep costs low. Pragmatic use was made of existing meetings, such as those of potato breeders in Shimla, to add on a consultation exercise. Detailed guidelines for all types of meetings were prepared by the facilitator (see example in Annex 1). The same set of information was shared with all participants, including a two-page brochure of the rationale for the CRP and a two-page executive summary of the proposal itself (see Annex 3).

The information presented in the following sections of this document is thus synthesized from 255 stakeholders representing approximately 200 different institutions.<sup>1</sup> The response to the consultation was outstanding considering the short time scale. Stakeholders' enthusiasm to contribute to the proposal and the CRP itself was shown by attendance at workshops, the survey response rate, and the quality of information offered. Open questions received replies from as many as 150 out of 228 survey respondents, many of them extremely detailed, novel, and thoughtful; all of these enriched the proposal. Such information stretches to more than 100 pages that were supplied to the proposal writers. Of necessity what is presented here is only a synthesis that highlights the most important ideas and recommendations about the proposal.

**Table 2. Places and dates for different types of stakeholder consultation.**

Region	Sub-region	Place	Date	Method
Africa	West	Accra, Ghana	12 Aug.	1-day workshop
	Southern	Lilongwe, Malawi	12–3 Aug.	1.5-day workshop
	Central/ Eastern	Entebbe, Uganda	10–11 Aug.	1.5-day workshop
	All		6–14 Aug.	Telephone/in-person consultations, wiki/ blog—considered but not implemented
Asia	Asia Pacific	Los Baños, Philippines	12 Aug.	1-day workshop
	South Asia	Trivandrum (banana research station) India	16 Aug.	1-day workshop
		Shimla, India	13 Aug.	Add-on meeting to existing potato workshop
	China	China	6–14 Aug.	Individual in-person consultations
	All		6–14 Aug.	Telephone/in-person consultations, wiki/ blog—considered but not implemented
Latin America & Caribbean	Andean region	Cali, Colombia	11 Aug.	1–1.5-day workshop
	All		6–14 Aug.	Telephone/in-person consultations, wiki/ blog—considered but not implemented
All regions	n/a all countries		by 16 Aug.	Electronic survey using Survey Monkey, local to national stakeholders
			by 18 Aug.	Electronic survey using Survey Monkey, global stakeholders

<sup>1</sup> An exact count of institutions, since there was more than one respondent from some institutions, and countries represented among all consultation methods, will be possible once a consolidated list of all stakeholders has been prepared.

The number of participants in these consultations is summarized in Tables 3 and 4 by region of action and type of institution, respectively. Twenty percent of survey respondents (46 out of 228) were women; ages of all respondents ranged from less than 30 years old to more than 70, with a median of 40–49.

**Table 3. Participants by geographical area and type of consultation.**

Main geographical area of action	Regional workshop* (countries represented)	Regional survey (attended workshop) <sup>†</sup>	Regional survey (did not attend workshop)	Global partner survey	Interview	Total
West Africa	13 (4)	13	26	1	0	40
East and Central Africa	11 (3)	7	12	0	0	23
Southern Africa	14 (5)	0	2	0	0	16
Total (Africa)	38 (11)	20	40	1	0	79
Total (Latin America & Caribbean)	19 (10)	19	26	2	0	47
South, West, Central Asia	29 (3)	26	3	0	0	32
Southeast & East Asia & Pacific	14 (3)	14	19	1	6	40
Total (Asia)	43 (6)	40	22	1	6	72
Total (SH with global action)	0	0	14	43	0	57
Total stakeholders consulted	100 (27)	79	102	47	6	255

**Notes to previous table:** \* Counts of workshop attendance do not include staff of the four CGIAR Centers that initiated the CRP-RTB. One country, Uganda, was present at workshops in two different regions. <sup>†</sup> Not double-counted in total stakeholders consulted.

**Table 4. Participants by institution and type of consultation.**

Type of institution to which respondent belongs	Regional workshop	Regional survey (did not attend workshop)	Global survey partner	Interview	Total
NARS (developing country)	65	32	3	6	106
University (developing country)	4	23	1	0	28
Advanced research institution	0	0	24*	0	24
Donor	4	7	8	0	19
Policy/development institution	3	11	3	0	17
Farmer organization	5	9	1	0	15
Commercial input supply, product processing, or marketing	6	5	3	0	14
NGO	5	6	2	0	13
Regional research organization	6	3	0	0	9
Other international public organization	1	6	1	0	8
Other CGIAR Center	1	0	1	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>255</b>

In workshops, all of which had a similar design, brief initial presentations familiarized the participants with the CGIAR reform and with the outline plans for the CRP-RTB. They then discussed whether all themes were relevant, whether others were needed, and the principal outputs they expected from each theme. They discussed how to achieve impact and, in particular, whether and how the four cross-cutting topics (enabling partnerships, gender and youth, communications and information sharing, and capacity strengthening) would be useful in that.

Results from all the consultation methods are presented here using the outline of the “regional” on-line survey. The global survey was simpler, in recognition of the time limitations of those answering.

### 3. RESEARCH THEMES AND FUTURE AGENDA

Participants considered all seven themes to be included in the proposal as important (Table 5). They pointed out that climate change, although recognized in its own separate CRP, was an important part of all themes, especially 1, 2, and 4. RTB crops are adapted to a wide range of agro-ecologies and this is important in the face of climate change. The West African workshop proposed two additional themes to give more emphasis on added value (Theme 6) for small enterprises, including business development, credit and finance, insurance, trend analysis,

market information, and specialized capacity building. The East African workshop suggested a specific additional theme on capacity building and communication and another on data management and sharing across all themes.

The themes—and all other concepts in the surveys—were each scored on a 0–5 scale (where 0 meant “not important” and 5 meant “very important”) by respondents in the regional survey (n = 175–180) and the global partners survey (n = 39–42). All themes ranked as important, but the order of priority was informative. It is possible that in the smaller group of global partners, strong opinions by some respondents, particularly specialists from advanced research institutions (ARIs), may be reflected in the means.

**Table 5. Importance assigned to seven themes of proposal by respondents in regional and global survey.**

Theme	Regional survey	Global survey
Theme 2: Accelerating the development, delivery, and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance, and high nutritional value	4.60	4.55
Theme 6: Enhancing postharvest technologies and adding value in markets	4.58	4.22
Theme 4: Promoting sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers	4.51	4.38
Theme 1: Conserving and accessing genetic resources	4.42	3.81
Theme 3: Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities	4.29	4.24
Theme 7: Enhancing impact through partnerships	4.33	4.00
Theme 5: Developing tools for more productive, ecologically robust crops	4.12	4.05

The distribution of scores for all survey respondents—that is, combining data from the regional and global surveys—shows the large differences in number of respondents that lie behind these relatively small differences in mean score (Table 6). Despite that, the themes are clearly all supported by the vast majority of stakeholders since in every theme 78–91% awarded 4 or 5 on a scale, where 2.5 is the mean. Even for this type of survey where low scores are unusual, this is a very positive result.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> According to the Kruskal-Wallis test, mean scores fall into three groups: Themes 2, 6, and 4; Themes 1, 3, and 7; Theme 5. Mean scores of members of the same group are not significantly different from each other at the 5% level, but are significantly different from those of all members of other groups. In all data in this report, total counts of responses (n) do not include those who gave no opinion.

**Table 6. Importance assigned to seven themes of proposal by all respondents.**

Theme	No. of respondents awarding						Mean score
	0	1	2	3	4	5	
Theme 2: Accelerating the development, delivery, and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance, and high nutritional value (n = 220)	0	0	2	18	48	152	4.59
Theme 6: Enhancing postharvest technologies and adding value in markets (n = 219)	0	0	3	18	62	136	4.51
Theme 4: Promoting sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers (n = 219)	0	1	6	18	54	140	4.49
Theme 1: Conserving and accessing genetic resources (n = 217)	0	2	11	28	55	121	4.30
Theme 3: Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities (n = 220)	0	0	8	26	83	103	4.28
Theme 7: Enhancing impact through partnerships (n = 215)	0	0	6	32	74	103	4.27
Theme 5: Developing tools for more productive, ecologically robust crops (n = 219)	0	2	9	36	88	84	4.11

Several comments reflected that the connection between research and livelihoods was not clear in the theme agenda. Many respondents suggested a stronger production- or livelihood-systems approach, including participatory action research. This is a dilemma for proposal drafting because of the division of labor among CRPs. Other comments showed that respondents had not clearly perceived from the theme titles the inclusion of natural resources management, storage, and processing.

There were also diverse, detailed suggestions on each theme that focused on sharpening the research agenda and methodologies (see box below), and on a question about innovative, futuristic research. These have been taken into account during redrafting.

**Box 1. Examples of suggestions for strengthening specific themes**

**Theme 1:** Gene banks in active interaction with R&D and not as “museums”; reward/fund small farmers for in-situ conservation of genetic diversity.

**Theme 2:** Some support for consideration of GMOs in bio-fortification, pest and disease resistance, and other desirable traits; develop information on tagged genes; other methods of molecular science; incorporate banana genes from wild species through cisgenics.

**Theme 3:** Should be broadened to include other abiotic factors, not just pests and diseases; develop forecasting and decision support systems—maybe Web-based where connectivity permits this; partners are very worried about emerging pests and diseases.

**Theme 4:** Develop protocols for rapid high-volume production of quality planting materials (linking formal and informal systems); primary focus of strengthening farmer-based seed systems; make visible the connection between seed production and climate challenges.

**Theme 5:** Use of agro-industry residue of RTB crops for soil improvement; consider organic production of RTB crops; inter-cropping with legumes for soil fertility improvement; small-scale mechanization for some regions, including Africa; extract best practices and lessons on sustainable/resilient farming systems from previous projects.

**Theme 6:** Explore wide range of potential products not just from cassava; explore zero-waste postharvest and processing systems; transformation of RTB crops to drivers of economic development; emphasize high-quality carbohydrate content of root crops.

Several stakeholders suggested ways to increase RTB impact:

- Accepting “the need for a more holistic program beyond technology development, where other non-traditional (sometimes neglected) partners have a role in its definition” (Staff member, international public organization).
- Ensuring that “the program is a single entity, not an unconnected group of scientists working on vastly different crops” (Government research scientist, North America).
- With a “mechanism to allow donor money to fund CGIAR-NARS-Private Sector partnerships (i.e., some funds must flow through CGIAR to the other partners to create coordinated umbrella programs). Currently ... we are ... concerned that CGIAR will use its 'international public good' rhetoric to shy away from engaging fully with partners for development and deployment of new varieties.” (Representative of a donor organization).
- “Focus on the things which work and can be delivered and adopted now. Each crop will need a champion to drive the development of these crops in many parts of the world. ...

If you do not know where you are going you will not get there.” (Leader, Australian University Research).

Another question asked how to develop a joint agenda and raise the profile of RTB crops. Answers mentioned needs assessment, strengthening researcher capacities to diagnose and analyze problems, identifying gaps and setting objectives, regular consultation workshops, advocacy at high-level policy fora, linking to global platforms, and better highlighting of successful case studies. Representatives of agro-industry asked whether the only targets were poor producers and consumers, or whether new consumer markets and new producers in strategic alliances were also part of the CRP agenda.

#### 4. CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

Respondents were asked to score cross-cutting topics. Capacity strengthening and communication/information attracted higher priority than partnering and comprehensive gender strategies; regional and global respondents agreed on the relative importance of the four topics. Analysis of women’s responses showed that they too tend to place less emphasis on “comprehensive gender strategies” than the other cross-cutting topics. Comments suggest that the lower scores are partly because of concern about creating an isolated gender topic, whereas most stakeholders would like to see mainstreaming of gender concerns. Table 7 presents the results for regional and global respondents, Table 8 for all respondents.

**Table 7. Importance assigned to cross-cutting topics by respondents in regional and global survey.**

	<b>Regional: All (n = 170–179)</b>	<b>Global: All (n = 38–42)</b>	<b>Regional: Women (n = 34–37)</b>	<b>Global: Women (n = 8–9)</b>
Strengthening people’s capacities in research for development	4.64	4.32	4.70	4.50
Promoting communication & information sharing	4.46	4.15	4.56	4.63
Exploring new ways of partnering	4.13	3.89	4.27	4.22
Comprehensive gender strategies	3.86	3.50	4.08	4.38

**Table 8. Importance assigned to cross-cutting topics by all respondents.**

	No. of respondents awarding						Mean score	n
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Strengthening people's capacities in research for development	0	0	3	12	56	140	4.58	211
Promoting communication & information sharing	0	0	4	22	75	117	4.40	218
Exploring new ways of partnering	0	4	5	40	86	81	4.09	216
Comprehensive gender strategies	0	4	12	68	79	58	3.79	221

Respondents emphasized the importance of capacity building and the need for a clear research-policy connection, including pressure to upgrade government investment in RTB crops as important food sources and opportunities for small-scale value addition. One respondent stated that biophysical issues need to be translated into political ones for policy makers to take them seriously.

## 5. PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

"The quality of the relationships between partners has to be improved, define rights and responsibilities, improve communication. Partners need to meet, not only rely on internet." (RTB regional workshop, Cali, August 2010).

All nine actions included in the proposal for developing effective partnerships were considered important by respondents according to the regional survey and the global survey (Table 9).<sup>3</sup> Two of the other topics, closely related to partnership building, were ranked highest, followed by translating research results into policy advice, development of public-private partnerships (which were rated slightly higher than public-civil society partnerships), and identification of poverty hotspots.

<sup>3</sup> Strictly a test of statistical significance would be needed in order to make statements about stakeholders in general rating characteristics in the survey "similarly," "lower," or "higher." This was not possible for all data in the time available for this study. The results from those tests that were conducted on themes, topics, and statements about gender allow an estimate that differences in mean score greater than 0.5 are likely to be significant at the 5% level for the sample sizes of approximately 160 in the regional survey and that mean score differences greater than 0.9 are likely to be significant for the global survey.

**Table 9. Importance assigned to actions for improving partnerships in regional and global survey.**

	<b>Regional survey (n = 166-178)</b>	<b>Global survey (n = 36-41)</b>
Communication and information sharing	4.52	4.20
Capacity strengthening in research for development	4.50	4.39
Learning to translate research results into policy advice	4.46	3.94
Develop public-private partnerships	4.46*	3.88
Identification of poverty hotspots where RTB target crops can help with poverty alleviation and income generation	4.45	4.12
Strengthening networks for prioritizing research needs	4.35	4.03
Develop partnerships between public sector and civil society	4.34	3.74
Outcome and impact assessment	4.32	4.10
Building learning alliances using Participatory Impact Pathway Analysis	4.14	3.72

\*By error, this question was only asked in French and Spanish translations (n = 54).

Other suggestions and comments about building strong partnerships for the CRP included:

- Linking North and South expertise to develop strong partnerships (European university professor).
- Eliminating duplication and competition between Centers (a donor representative).
- Treating partners as equals, and not as secondary players, especially in delivery of results to poor farmers, where the CGIAR system does not have comparative advantage (International NGO leader, Africa).
- Using regional research centers based on NARS for developing locally adapted technology; less "on-station" work, more networking, more participatory research.
- Following the CLAYUCA consortium model to create networks of users, producers, industry players with research centers, closely linked to value chains and public policy (Latin American policy maker).
- Developing mechanisms to get commitment from local government (Latin American researcher).
- Inter-regional and inter-continental exchange of technology (European university researcher).

One respondent cautioned: “Once the Program is approved, it needs a single organigram of all people involved across all involved CG Centers to effectively execute the work (i.e., a new virtual center, so as to facilitate communication. It does not work if we keep on copying all documents to everybody.”

Respondents in the regional survey also assessed the importance of several principles for building effective partnerships among people and institutions (Table 10), with the following results (n = 164–175).

**Table 10. Importance assigned to principles for improving partnerships.**

<b>More important</b>	
Involve the right people and organizations	4.68
Transparent decision making and communication	4.64
Agree clear, shared, flexible objectives that reflect stakeholders’ diverse interests and needs	4.54
Share recognition and responsibility for outcomes	4.37
Agree supervision responsibilities across institutional boundaries	4.31
Agree guidelines about how responsibilities are assigned	4.29
Make impact pathways explicit	4.20
<b>Slightly less important</b>	
Agree team standards for response time, sharing credit, and time investment in discussion	4.03
Agree conflict resolution processes	3.98
Allow time for development of trust and a common language	3.97
Give leadership responsibilities to non-CGIAR partners	3.84
Clarify expectations about time investment in decision making	3.88

## 6. GENDER AND YOUTH STRATEGY

To gauge the situation of women and young people, regional survey participants were asked their degree of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements (Table 11). Respondents saw stronger opportunities for women than for young people in RTB crops. They considered that networking was more likely to help women’s livelihoods in postharvest technology and market opportunities than in seeds and cropping systems. They did not necessarily agree that women were likely to lose if value chains were developed commercially.

**Table 11. Agreement with gender approaches by all respondents.**

	<b>Strongly disagree (0)</b>	<b>Disagree somewhat (1)</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree (2)</b>	<b>Agree somewhat (3)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (4)</b>	<b>Mean score and interpretation</b>
1. Rural women in my region have livelihood opportunities in RTB	7	4	8	59	86	3.30 (agree more than somewhat)
2. Young people in my region have livelihood opportunities in RTB	7	12	19	69	54	2.94 (agree somewhat)
3. Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on seeds will improve livelihoods in my region	3	7	16	55	86	3.28 (agree more than somewhat)
4. Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on cropping systems will improve livelihoods in my region	2	4	12	67	84	3.34 (agree more than somewhat)
5. Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on postharvest technologies will improve livelihoods in my region	4	2	6	52	104	3.49 (agree quite strongly)
6. Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on market opportunities will improve livelihoods in my region	2	1	10	49	108	3.53 (agree quite strongly)
7. Women's roles in livelihoods, household and community are at risk of displacement in my region when RTB value chains are developed	44	35	28	32	18	1.65 (disagree a little)
8. In my region, when RTB crops are grown commercially, men dominate decision making and control of income	16	25	28	49	39	2.45 (agree a little)

Methodologically, the wide range of answers, depending on the statement, indicated that respondents' high scores on other questions in the survey did not represent lack of discrimination among the alternatives, but genuine support.<sup>4</sup>

To strengthen gender and targeting in the proposal, several open questions were asked about the situation of the poor, and of women and young people, and about using RTB crops to improve that (Table 12). One donor emphasized focus: "[We need to] create clear criteria for prioritization based on ex-ante assessment of potential benefits to the poor, then apply those criteria to prioritize ruthlessly, concentrating funding and efforts on a smaller number of important projects, resourced to succeed." The leader of an international NGO in Africa said: "I believe the most urgent action is to develop the seed and agricultural extension systems

<sup>4</sup> A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that the mean answers for the following groups of statements were not significantly different from each other at the 5% level within each group, but that all other pairs of mean scores were different: statements 6 and 5; statements 5 and 1; statements 1, 4, and 3.

(through public, civil society and/or private sector approaches) that will effectively deliver technologies to women farmers.”

With many root crops, especially in Africa (where yams are the exception as a “men’s crop”), women play a major role in production and commercialization. In general, young people do not see opportunities in agriculture; one respondent suggested arranging for both women and young people to receive certification of their abilities and knowledge so as to add status to that. Several respondents in Africa commented that women are more ready to try out new methods, but may be limited in their access to land. In many regions in all continents, women are already the main rural workforce because men and young people have migrated to find work.

A common idea in comments is that developing RTB crops in value chains can strengthen livelihood opportunities for the whole family—women, men, older people, and possibly young people—reducing migration to cities. This is also seen by some as a way to ensure that well-intentioned but misguided help to some groups, to the exclusion of others, does not result in jealousy and increased domestic violence. Improved postharvest handling and storage of fresh produce is a way to increase family food security. It should be seen as separate from, although often complementary to, processing; the two need to be viewed and evaluated separately in research for development.

Developing opportunities for families requires (to quote one respondent) “work on all levels at the same time—policy, research, capacity building, education, training, extension, etc. Listen to advice from local stakeholder groups and involve local stakeholder groups from the beginning. Develop generic methods and tools that can work across crop systems.”

Reflecting the wide range of opinion of the last two questions in the table above, the comments on small-scale enterprises for value addition show an interesting debate between the majority who consider them an important opportunity for women and a minority who are concerned that if these crops become more commercial it will displace women farmers. A North American university professor commented: “I think there is just a need to raise the awareness of development issues in general. From one perspective we are better off not having RTB too high on the radar of the developed world. If they do more to commoditize these crops those who are not powerful in the commodity markets will suffer.”

Women and rural youth can be motivated if an agricultural micro-enterprise, preferably owned by them and for which they can receive micro-credit, is economically viable and intellectually satisfying. Such micro-enterprise would include not just agro-processing but also production of quality planting material, production of biocontrol agents and growth-promoting bacteria, vermicomposting, and developing new food products and recipes.

Examples where women and young people already take leadership would be worth mentioning in the proposal: in Costa Rica, support to women and young entrepreneurs begins at schools, colleges, and universities. Women are recognized as potential leaders; there are National Rural Youth programs that, among their initiatives, produce RTB crops. In the Andean Region, women and young people are leaders in the production of lesser-known Andean root crops (*rubas*, *nabos*, *ibias*, and native potato varieties).

Other ways suggested to develop the roles include hiring women in management roles for civil society and offering management responsibilities to young scientists from the South.

**Table 12. Importance of different actions as part of the gender strategy for the CRP.**

	Regional: All (n = 146-162)	Global: All (n = 28-33)	Regional: Women (n = 31-36)
<b>More favored actions as part of gender strategy</b>			
Incorporation of female farmer needs into research priorities	4.28	4.28	4.53
Research grants for addressing the gender dimension of RTB production and post-production	4.15	3.48	4.41
Reduction of drudgery in RTB crop production and processing	4.12	3.67	4.09
Capacity strengthening in gender-responsive research for partner organizations	4.10	3.51	4.31
Understanding gender differences in growing, consumption, preference, and use of RTB crops	4.00	4.06	4.43
<b>Less favored actions as part of gender strategy</b>			
Development of a staffing strategy to enable partners to conduct gender-responsive research and development activities	3.97	3.36	4.32
Gender audit (i.e., during design and major project milestones, review which interventions are effective in achieving gender equity and which are failing)	3.83	3.46	4.09
Research awards for women researchers in RTB	3.93	3.46	4.31
Support establishment of gender focal points in partner organizations	3.80	2.96	4.18
Separate monitoring of early adoption by women and men	3.73	3.55	4.23
Gender review panel composed of specialists	3.71	2.76	4.00
Separate focus group discussions in project areas with women, men, and young people	3.58	3.21	3.88

Women respondents' priorities, when re-analyzed separately, agreed quite closely with those of the whole on most issues, but they gave more emphasis to separate monitoring of early adoption; staffing strategies to encourage gender-responsive research; research awards for women; and establishment of gender focal points. They gave lower priority, however, to reducing drudgery than men did.

One male NGO leader commented: "I have scored several of these lower, not so much because they are bad ideas, but because they can become camouflage for covering gender issues, whereas the objective should be mainstreaming gender issues."

## 7. COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

Detailed open-and-closed questions on communication and information sharing covered content, audiences, and methods (Table 13). With three exceptions in the global partner group, respondents rated all types of information content as very important to the CRP.

**Table 13. Importance of different types of information content.**

	<b>Regional (n = 158–163)</b>	<b>Global (n = 35–37)</b>
Research findings	4.67	4.39
Best practices, promising strategies	4.65	4.32
Industry situation in RTB, including trade, value chains, industry players	4.58	3.94
Enhancing capacity development	4.53	4.16
Informing policy makers, development practitioners, and farmers	4.46	3.94
Specific program information	4.45	4.05
Scientific content on specific crops	4.43	4.16
Information about partners	4.22	3.56

Several respondents noted that it is difficult to generalize about content; what is needed varies hugely by audience and the specific objectives of the communication. Other comments emphasized the need to communicate research findings to end-users and to communicate clearly the objectives, opportunities for participation, and expected benefits to end-users of this new CRP.

Suggestions of opportunities for filling gaps included (from a university professor in Nigeria) retrieving “lost” information that is scattered in journals that are not accessible to many workers; and (from a university professor in Bolivia) setting up a virtual library that would, among other opportunities, give incentives for publications relevant to families, women, and children—stories, legends, and recipes connected to RTB crops.

The preferred modes of information exchange (asked only in the regional survey, n = 151–164) were email (mean score 4.60 out of a maximum of 5), a website (4.47), face-to-face meetings and training (4.43), and site visits (4.27). Slightly less preferred were regular newsletters and updates (4.17); pamphlets, brochures, and written materials (4.13); and low literacy materials (4.06). Blogs and other social media (3.51) and telephone or conference calls (3.38) were much less preferred, especially because of problems of connectivity and cost of services in many countries. Farmer organizations and the private sector rarely see CGIAR websites; if they are to be used, more publicity and linking is needed. Radio was suggested as a medium by many, with a need to take care to simplify technical language and support efforts in local languages. Here, as in capacity strengthening (see below), a question arises about how a focused CGIAR program should link to others who work with broader audiences.

There was a very wide range of practical suggestions in response to a question about existing communication networks/platforms, audiences, resources, venues, or opportunities with which this CRP should be connected.

## 8. CAPACITY STRENGTHENING IN RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

Respondents in the two surveys agreed very closely about the types of institution that most need formal capacity strengthening for their staff in the CRP-RTB (Table 14).

**Table 14. Perceived need of different institutions for formal capacity strengthening.**

	<b>Regional (n = 152–161)</b>	<b>Global (n = 33–35)</b>
National research institutions (including universities)	4.65	4.20
Farmer organizations and/or individual farmers	4.37	4.29
National extension institutions	4.32	4.11
Seed growers, product traders, and processors	4.29	3.94
National development institutions (including NGOs)	4.07	3.83
International institutions	3.74	3.40

The high ranking of need for capacity building of farmers and extensionists presents a dilemma about how far the responsibilities of this CRP should extend. Several comments highlighted the need for the whole range of partners to be strengthened, but realized the limitations of research investment. As one asked, "Is the issue capacity strengthening in implementing the research or in using the outcomes of research efforts?" Other comments on this issue are:

- Developing national capacities seems the most important. Extension services are an absolute "must," but they are probably too far down the chain to support them strongly through the CGIAR. They certainly need support, but not exactly by funding lines for research." (a donor representative).
- This largely depends where the program wants to situate itself. The weaker the national research institution, the more linkage to other institutions is required. At the same time, I am not sure that it is possible to emphasis so much the capacity training of farmers, for example, without sacrificing the program's own research capacity. This in turn might lead to capacity strengthening using outdated technology, for example." (North American government researcher).
- "National extension institutions can too easily be interpreted as just the public sector. It is important to start with an analysis of what institutions can effectively provide services to poor women farmers, and then make decisions about which institutions to support." (African NGO leader).
- "Our focus is on mass production, so the more people who get training the better" (Researcher, Philippines).

Suggestions about capacity building of researchers included attracting scientists from the South, who are presently in the North, to key positions in research centers located in developing countries; giving more opportunities for NARI scientists to work in advanced laboratories; and tutoring university professors in RTB issues so that they do a better job of training their students. The Earth University (Costa Rica) entrepreneurial development model was suggested as useful; it is not exclusive to RTB.

Asked more specifically the areas of expertise in which capacity strengthening is most needed for this CRP to be effective, regional respondents rated all the following as important; global partners rated some less highly, possibly reflecting the interests of ARIs who form half the group (Table 15).

**Table 15. Perceived areas of expertise for formal capacity strengthening.**

	<b>Regional (n = 154–162)</b>	<b>Global (n = 34–35)</b>
Postharvest technology and adding value in markets	4.66	4.26
Sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers	4.55	4.39
Accelerating the development, delivery, and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance, and high nutritional value	4.54	4.52
Linking RTB research with nutrition programs for delivery	4.48	3.71
Strengthening agriculture extension and seed systems for impact on women farmers	4.46	4.03
Ecologically sound crop management, including response to climate change	4.40	4.18
Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities	4.31	4.34
Conserving and accessing genetic resources	4.27	3.74
Enhancing impact through partnerships	4.25	3.79

Asked about capacity-strengthening methods for this CRP, respondents from the two surveys agreed quite closely on the order of priorities, with stronger differences visible among global partners (Table 16).

**Table 16. Importance assigned to different capacity-strengthening methods.**

	<b>Regional survey (n = 151–158)</b>	<b>Global survey (n = 27–35)</b>
<b><i>Preferred methods</i></b>		
Design and delivery of training programs or courses	4.45	4.00
Fellowships for students and professionals	4.44	4.14
A research and learning network (virtual dialogues, conferences, etc.)	4.31	3.61
Development or better utilization of learning tools and resources	4.26	4.11
<b><i>Less preferred methods</i></b>		
In-person network conferences	4.16	3.69
Shared M&E system applied to capacity strengthening	4.10	3.23
Capacities and Needs Assessment Platforms (tools for capacity strengthening professionals)	4.08	3.77
<b><i>Non-preferred methods (especially by global institutions)</i></b>		
Publications in capacity strengthening	4.03	2.97
Digital Learning Resources Knowledge Bank	3.88	2.90
Online training courses	3.58	2.60

## 9. KEY QUOTATIONS

Alongside many expressions of support for the program in general, a number of comments provided challenges which we share here.

There is a need to go back to the future and rediscover the importance of diversity in production systems to secure their resilience, and to work on management practices which meet livelihood and social aspirations. The innovation will come in social and economic sustainability in the system alongside sustainable production practices. (staff member of an international public organization).

Based on the documentation given for this program, it is difficult to see how those themes and the outputs coming from the different themes link to the different livelihood options of the farmers and farming communities it is targeting. Why improve productivity and why should farmers adopt those technologies? (a NARES coordinator, Asia-Pacific region).

I am of the view that to make impact on poor producers, the challenge now is making available several already-developed improved varieties to them through a more aggressive technology delivery and extension system as well as market outlet, including upgrading extension and micro-credit and risk mitigation schemes. (Leader of a West African NARES).

It is not possible to construct competitiveness without innovation and technology. Information management is indispensable and best accompanied by an innovative communication system. (President of a Latin American farmer association).

RTB are not usually well positioned within agricultural extension, as decision makers do not have a full appreciation of their true importance. Quality data on true level of production, perhaps through remote-sensing methodologies, is an essential starting point. (Leader of an International NGO, Africa).

National institutions are very neglected because budgets are low, which is why they often have no capability. (Female researcher in an Andean country).

Stimulating and strengthening farming systems seems to be a good approach, especially for Africa, where RTB are very important. If "known" good varieties/crops could be made available to

the farmer, if postharvest losses could be reduced and "best practices" used, poverty could be reduced substantially. (a donor representative).

In principal this is a good idea. However, the execution of such a program is challenging and takes real leadership to make it happen and close the enormous yield gap which currently exists in these crops. A focused approach is needed, not trying to do too many things in too many parts of the world without making any real difference. A long-term strategy is needed: 10–50 years instead of the usual 5 years or so. (University research leader, Australia).

## **10. CHANGES INCORPORATED INTO THE CRP-RTB**

The results of the stakeholder consultation both confirmed and challenged several of the assumptions and issues that emerged in the June 2011 proposal strategy workshops. (Ideally, having a representative range of stakeholders participating in the strategy workshop would have ensured that their ideas, concerns, and suggestions were intrinsic to the design and development of the CRP-RTB from the very beginning.) As noted above, the abbreviated timeframe of designing a meaningful set of surveys, conducting the stakeholder consultation, and analyzing the data—as well as other time constraints that are unavoidable in producing a complex and compelling document like the CRP proposal—left the writing teams only a few weeks to consider the results and how to respond.

Overall, the articulation of the seven CRP-RTB themes garnered stakeholders' support in the workshops and surveys. We looked for places to strengthen the message, both in text and visually in the impact pathways figures for each theme, that research can lead to impacts on livelihoods (though this is more a focus in other CRPs). Stakeholders emphasized that RTB are generally absent from government rural development strategies. Consequently, we noted in Theme 4 that for clonal crops, a conceptual framework is not yet available to analyze ex-ante alternatives to bottleneck identification and alternatives for system strengthening. The consistent concerns voiced about climate change made their way into our technical discussions in relevant product lines in Themes 3, 4, and 5.

Where we received some of the clearest, statistically rich feedback that informed the final proposal was in the cross-cutting issues of gender, communications and knowledge sharing, and capacity strengthening. In some cases, our emphasis on the communication needs of stakeholders was accurate. In other cases, we expanded the communication strategy to include such things as connecting partners through interactive tools and platforms; presenting

information through diverse methods; and framing communications and knowledge sharing so as to help link producers to markets and channel feedback from end-users to the RTB partners. For Theme 7 specifically, feedback received from stakeholders made it clear that effective RTB communication and knowledge sharing need a well-balanced mix of different tools and strategies, including face-to-face interactions, online tools, print, and other media. Clearly, there is much congruence between the importance of communications and knowledge sharing as discussed in the proposal and what was expressed and weighted in the stakeholder feedback.

Perhaps where there was less congruence was in the ideas and assumptions regarding gender concerns and aspects of capacity strengthening. Enough so that we reconsidered some areas of emphasis and eliminated or de-emphasized certain recommendations. The stakeholder surveys did indeed suggest ways to enrich the options for actions in gender analysis, and we interwove some of that richness throughout our gender discussion. The proposal originally suggested a gender panel and a grant scheme for women in agriculture—both were removed after garnering lukewarm support from the stakeholders. Similarly, our initial ideas for capacity strengthening (e.g., Knowledge Bank, online courses, M&E, and needs assessment) turned out to be some of the least preferred methods and thus we did not promote them beyond their being possibilities.

In the end, time proved the harshest taskmaster, preventing the writing teams from thoroughly digesting, discussing, and deploying the full extent and nuances of the stakeholder feedback. So it was some measure of reassurance that much of what was identified and expressed in the surveys overwhelmingly reinforced—not refuted—the core set of ideas, approaches, and action areas that will shape this CRP's research-for-development program once it is approved and becomes operational.

## **11. LESSONS LEARNED**

### ***1. Timing***

Had time allowed, it would have been better to have held stakeholder consultation prior to the writing process rather than in parallel with it. The consultation was conducted under a lot of time pressure and it was only possible to mobilize so many people at such short notice by building on the existing partnerships and goodwill that the member Centers had developed. Nevertheless, despite the pressure, there was still a significant contribution from the consultation into the proposal and the objectives of the consultation were broadly achieved. The consultation served to achieve buy in and reaffirm the importance of the themes of the proposal.

## **2. Taskforce management**

A dedicated taskforce and a strategic facilitator who worked closely with the taskforce and helped with planning, preparation of different instruments, and write-up were keys to success. The taskforce and the facilitator held regular Skype meetings to plan the consultations. The taskforce team members rated the overall quality of the virtual meetings as 6.7/10. The taskforce team leader attempted to provide: a clear agenda, clear meeting minutes and action points, appropriate frequency of meetings, and to provide strong guidance by the chair so that meetings could keep to time, cover the agenda, and be fully participatory, allowing all members to contribute without any single person dominating the agenda. Taskforce team members suggested that the following worked well: building team commitment to the goal and information flow with contacts and logistical arrangements. Intercenter collaboration for the stakeholder consultation was rated at 7.7/10, and it seemed to generate a high level of interest. Constraints to effective meetings included poor connectivity for some taskforce members, the problem of finding a suitable time for all participants across the different time zones, and ensuring that members didn't feel obliged to comment on each point.

## **3. Workshops**

Appointing effective facilitators, drafting clear agendas, and providing clear communication about the CRP were crucial to ensuring stakeholders' active participation in the workshops. Use of surveys during workshops helped gather good ideas and comments. However, given the extremely short notice, there was not enough time to identify and book appropriate venues, send out invitations, and secure the participation of sufficient important, high-level stakeholders. Moving through the earlier stages of preparation faster in virtual meetings would have made the workshops (and surveys) less pressured.

## **4. Electronic Survey**

Taskforce members rated the organization of the stakeholder electronic survey at 8/10. There was a very good response rate. Remarkably rich comments from respondents showed that electronic surveys can be effectively used to support detailed proposal design or review. This probably resulted from the high level of stakeholder interest in the RTB proposal, and such an approach may not necessarily work so well in other cases. When different languages are needed, it would have been better to integrate into one single survey, avoiding the need to compile and clean data from different surveys. Some locations had to transcribe survey responses from written replies, which was very time consuming.

### **5. Data management**

In general, Survey Monkey (SM) proved agile in gathering and making available data for review. It was invaluable to be able to see progress and content of responses day by day. However, extracting key conclusions from workshop reports was cumbersome because of the different format and length of each. One taskforce member was pleasantly surprised to learn that SM could be at least as effective in gathering "new ideas" as the workshops and individual interviews. Indeed, workshop and individual interviews could have gathered data better. SM is a powerful tool if well used. The ICT-KM group provided crucial support in developing the SM and linking with the first RTB website (see <http://rtb-mp3.cgxchange.org>) established for the proposal.

### **6. Feedback to Stakeholders**

Even under the limited timeframe, better feedback on the results of the consultation could have been given to stakeholders. Although a letter of thanks was sent, they were not contacted afterwards to share results of the first round of comments by the proposals' evaluators. Neither were their opinions formally collected when addressing the questions raised by evaluators regarding stakeholders' participation in the proposal. However, they were provided with a link to the RTB website (see also <http://rtb-mp3.cgxchange.org>), where there was an opportunity to interact further.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

The stakeholder consultation was an important element in the preparation of the CRP. Several important lessons were gleaned of relevance to future collaborations. The exercise would not have been possible in such a short timeframe without the existing sets of partnerships and goodwill which the member Centers have developed. We anticipate that the CRP will build on and strengthen these partnerships. Indeed, reflecting on good partnership practice and learning to do it better is one important element of the CRP. We hope that the present paper will be of more general relevance to others in the CGIAR and outside who plan stakeholder consultations.

### 13. REFERENCES

**Ashby, J.** 2009. The impact of participatory plant breeding. In: *Plant Breeding and farmer participation*. (eds.) S. Ceccarelli, E. P. Guimaraes, and E. Weltzien. Rome: FAO: 649–671.

**Ashley, S., R. Percy, and J. Tsui.** 2009. Maximising the Contribution of Agricultural Research to Rural Development. EIARD, Discussion Paper No 1: 14.

**CGIAR.** 2011. CRP 3. Roots, Tubers, and Bananas for Food Security and Income.

**Consortium Board.** 2011, A strategy and results framework for the CGIAR <http://consortium.cgxchange.org/home/strategy-and-results-framework>.

**Horton, D., G. Prain, and G. Thiele.** 2010. Perspectives on Partnership: Highlights of a Literature Review. *ILAC Brief 25*.

**Lele, U., Terry, E., and Trigo, E.** 2010. The Road Map to Transform the Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) System for Greater Global Impacts: Shifting from Being Observers to Actors. <http://www.apaari.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2010/09/GCARD-Road-Map.doc>

**Raitzer, D.A., and G.W. Norton** (eds.). 2009. *Prioritizing Agricultural Research for Development. Experiences and Lessons*. Wallingford, UK: CABI, pp. 234.

**Renkow, M., and D. Byerlee.** 2010. "The impacts of CGIAR research: A review of recent evidence." *Food Policy*, Vol 35, Issue 5, p. 391-402.

**Woolley, J., J. Ribaut, H. Bouis, and A. Adekunle.** 2009. The CGIAR's Challenge Program experiences: A critical analysis. Contribution to the first meeting of the Consortium Planning Team with the Alliance Executive and Deputy Executive (17-20 February, 2009). (on line) URL: [http://www.waterandfood.org/fileadmin/CPWF\\_Documents/Documents/Management\\_Documents/Critical\\_Analysis\\_of\\_CPs.pdf](http://www.waterandfood.org/fileadmin/CPWF_Documents/Documents/Management_Documents/Critical_Analysis_of_CPs.pdf)

## **ANNEX 1. MP3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PLAN**

### **Guidelines for workshops 4 August 2010.**

#### **A. Introduction**

These notes are for the guidance of organizers and facilitators in preparation of consultation workshops with the stakeholders of the Mega-Program proposal “Roots, tubers and bananas (RTB) for food security and income”, also known as Mega-Program 3 (MP3).<sup>5</sup>

#### **B. Objectives and desired outputs**

The objectives stated by the stakeholder consultation taskforce are:

1. To inform them about CG reform – if they don’t already know
2. To inform them about the specific roots, tubers and bananas Mega-program 3 (MP3) and to obtain their “buy-in”
3. To capture their perspectives on the design and implementation of MP3

Most of the time in these brief workshops should be dedicated to objective (3) which will tend anyway also to achieve objective (2). The mega-program genuinely needs rich ideas from outside the CGIAR system. In particular it needs fresh ideas about achieving impact of research in practice for the benefit of the poor. A discussion of impact is likely to lead to examination of the main cross-cutting topics: building effective partnerships, gender strategy, communication and information sharing, and capacity strengthening. However, instead of introducing these cross-cutting topics as themes of discussion in themselves, it is suggested that they might arise naturally out of a discussion of how to achieve impact (see outline agenda suggestion below).

Capturing detailed priorities in each theme is not an objective of the workshops, so as to avoid creating “shopping lists” that include everything. Instead a separate desk study is being conducted to draw together the information in priority documents from a wide range of national, regional and international stakeholders.

---

<sup>5</sup> The Mega-programs (“MP”) were renamed CGIAR Research Programs (CRP) after the consultation.

Expanding objective 3, what we need from stakeholders is:

- a. Evidence that they support the proposal in general and wish to be a part of it.
- b. Fresh ideas on how the proposal might be made more convincing, especially in the area of achieving impact
- c. Suggestions on how partnerships, gender/youth strategy, communications/information and capacity strengthening can best function in practice
- d. Specific indications on how their institution, and others, should be involved

### **C. Background information for participants and facilitator**

The draft Executive Summary of the MP3 proposal (2 pages): Should ideally be distributed to the participants by email so that they can read it before the meeting.

The stakeholder survey prepared in survey monkey: (a) As a tool for gathering opinions and ideas from each participant at the end of the workshop AND (b) As a source of ideas and information for the organizer, facilitator and rapporteurs before the workshop.

### **D. Tentative workshop outline (for a one-day workshop)**

***A 1.5-day workshop could follow a similar pattern with more time for group discussion and plenary and for exploration of unexpected issues that arise.***

**Note that numbers of participants are limited and you may be able to make more rapid progress without sacrificing participation and inclusion by working mostly in plenary – that’s your decision.**

### **Opening information session (approx 75 minutes – don’t let it run too long!)**

Welcome and introductions (20 minutes). *Please emphasize to participants that their information will be taken very seriously and that we shall do our best to follow up all comments and suggestions during implementation. This is their chance to make a real difference to poor people in this area of research for development.*

Presentation for information, followed by Q&A: The CGIAR change process and the Consortium Research Programs (15 minutes plus 10 minutes)

Overview of the Roots, Tubers and bananas Mega-program followed by Q&A (15 minutes plus 15 minutes).

### **Exploration of the seven proposed themes (approx 90 minutes)**

*(Have a reminder of the theme titles visible on a flip chart; work in groups or in plenary depending on the size of your workshop; take extensive notes on flip charts)*

Within the seven themes what are the research output and products that you would like to see addressed? Which ones do you consider most important? Are there any themes missing that you would add?

### **What do we need to get impact in each theme? Opening exploration (approx 1 hour)**

*Probably best done in plenary. Based on your experience and for the themes to be addressed effectively, what are the key elements of success? It is likely that the cross-cutting topics like partnership building, communication and information sharing, attention to gender and youth strategy, and capacity strengthening will emerge from the discussion, as well possibly as other suggestions.*

*If this is a one-day meeting, you should be able to get this far by lunch time, so that people have much to discuss.*

*Before lunch, organize discussion groups for each of the success factors – with perhaps two or more running concurrently. It should be possible for each participant to take part in at two or more discussions. Consider the possibility (if culturally acceptable in your region) that the discussion groups could start during a relaxed working lunch. See below for more suggestions about the group discussions.*

***Preferably before the workshop or, failing that, during introductions, identify participants who have experience of each of the topic areas (partnerships, gender/youth, communications, capacity strengthening) who could chair the groups.***

### ***Exploring success factors in more detail (up to 3 hours)***

For each success factor (partnerships, communication, gender and youth, capacity strengthening, others suggested during the previous session), groups should lay out a strategy based on the research themes, discussing the implications for each of the seven themes, or for a representative sample. Be as concrete as possible: examples of the general instructions that could be given:

- (a) in the discussion of partnerships, list the key research and development partners in the region
- (b) in the discussion of capacity strengthening, identify concrete ideas for areas where CS is needed in the region.
- (c) suggest communications tools and mechanisms before, during and after the program implementation
- (d) give examples of successful ways to address gender issues and involve youth.

For additional specific questions in each of these areas, see section E below.

*Encourage groups to take detailed notes on flip charts and/or on paper. Finish with a brief summary in plenary.*

### **Wrap-up and individual completion of survey (approx 45 minutes)**

*Note that completion of the survey may take at least 30-45 minutes if people write in detailed suggestions inspired by the workshop – please leave plenty of time. Depending on local facilities people can fill the survey on-line or on paper – please have paper copies ready (and staff ready to transcribe paper surveys on-line soon after the workshop)*

## **E. Examples of other useful questions to stimulate discussion**

### **Themes and novel approaches for the roots, tubers and banana (RTB) mega-program**

What creative, futuristic or speculative (“blue sky”) new perspectives would you suggest that might best serve the roots, tubers and bananas research-for-development agenda? (“Futuristic” means research that might bear fruit 15-20 years in the future)

In what ways might we collectively develop the roots, tubers and bananas agenda and raise the profile for RTB research in the future?

How can we all make this mega-program truly innovative and responsive to poor people’s needs?

### **How can impact best be achieved?**

#### **Partnership approach**

How would you suggest partnerships are best developed among research and development institutions for this program?

In your experience, what ensures that researchers and others work well together? Or even: What potential challenges would you warn us about when working in institutional partnerships in your region?

Of all we've discussed, what do you see as the most important things to emphasize in building this mega-program among partners?

### **Gender and Youth Strategy**

How important are the challenges of working for women and young people as well as men in your region/country? What are the best ways of responding to their needs?

Do you have ideas/ examples to share of strategies for involving ways to help women, men and youth access value market chains?

Do you have ideas/ examples to share of ways to address gender disparities in access to resources, material, and control of incomes from RTB crops?

Do you have ideas/examples of ways to integrate gender in the delivery of Mega Program findings, knowledge, strategies, or other outputs?

Do you have ideas/examples of ways to integrate men, women, or youth end-users in the innovation process (e.g., participation in identification and testing of promising varieties, use of indigenous knowledge, participation in and access to extension systems) through farmers groups or other organizations?

What are the main challenges, obstacles, or concerns you see affecting youth that should be addressed by the RTB MP?

Can you share ideas/examples of strategies to integrate youth perspectives, needs, or preferences into the RTB MP?

### **Communication and information sharing**

Do you have suggestions about information needs and sharing?

Are there any particular communication constraints or challenges that you think will affect this mega-program's communications efforts and strategies?

Are there communication networks/platforms to which this mega-program should link?

Are there any other communication venues, opportunities (meetings, workshops, links) or resources with which this mega-program should be connected?

Are there any communications gaps you think the mega-program could help fill (e.g., ways to link existing communication resources, need for materials, ways to collect feedback)?

Are there any other useful communication and information resources available in the region?

Which audiences or stakeholders should we include? We are particularly interested in those that can give us further input/ideas regarding communications planning.

### **Capacity strengthening in research for development**

What are the most important needs and audiences for capacity building if this mega-program is to be a success?

### **F. Reporting**

*The workshop is only as good as the reported information that can be used for proposal development or implementation!*

Please ensure you have 1-2 experienced rapporteurs to take notes. Their role should also include ensuring that each group is taking adequate notes. Encourage the use of flip charts, including modeling their use yourself as facilitator.

The rapporteurs should please prepare their report according to the main headings and the topic subheadings, that is, in the following format or something very similar. Using similar formats aids

us in combining the results of six workshops! Presenting notes as clear bullet points rather than carefully written prose, is acceptable, in fact it is welcome.

Participant list - name, institution and country, position, area(s) of professional expertise, email address, mail address, telephone, Skype address (if available).

Themes

- Themes supported and why
- Themes not supported, if any, and why
- Additional themes proposed and why
- Research questions proposed (by theme)
- Any fresh ideas that arose

How to achieve impact

- Summary of ideas

Building partnerships

- General comments
- Ideas for each theme

Gender and youth strategy

- General comments
- Ideas for each theme

Communications and information strategy

- General comments
- Ideas for each theme

Capacity strengthening

- General comments
- Ideas for each theme

(and similarly for any other impact groups formed)

- General comments
- Ideas for each theme

All reports should be submitted to your regional stakeholder task force coordinator as soon after the workshop as possible and anyway by 15 August. He should send them to reach the central synthesis and writing team by 16 August.

**G. Need further guidance?**

Please contact the strategic advisor, John Smith at [j.smith@cgiar.org](mailto:j.smith@cgiar.org). This will also be welcome if you can contribute ideas that will help the organization of other workshops.

## ANNEX 2. QUESTIONS USED IN ELECTRONIC SURVEYS (Survey Monkey)

### Global Stakeholders' Survey

#### 1. About yourself

Personal Details: Please identify yourself so that we have the possibility of following up your comments and suggestions. Only the limited group of people that is finalizing the project proposal will know you as the originator of any comments you make and will keep your identity confidential. The opinions you give will not be linked publicly with your name or your institution without first seeking your permission.

Name

Email address

Institution

Job title

Country (where your work is based)

Telephone number

#### 2. Any suggestions to improve the CRP outline

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
1.0 INTRODUCTION
2.0 IMPACT PATHWAYS
3.0 PROGRAM FRAMEWORK
4.0 PROGRAM PORTFOLIO
4.1 Theme 1: Conserving and Accessing Genetic Resources
4.2 Theme 2: Accelerating the Development and Selection of Varieties with Higher, More Stable Yield and Added Value
4.3 Theme 3: Managing Priority Pests and Diseases
4.4 Theme 4: Making Available Low Cost, High Quality Planting Material for Farmers
4.5 Theme 5: Developing Tools for More Productive, Ecologically Robust Cropping
4.6 Theme 6: Promoting Postharvest Technologies, Value Chains, and Market Opportunities
4.7 Theme 7: Enhancing Impact through Partnerships 106
5.0 PROGRAM GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT
6.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION
7.0 RISK ANALYSIS
8.0 BUDGET

### 3. Any other suggestions

Please provide any other suggestions about this proposed crop research program.

#### Local to national stakeholders' survey

Question	Question subcategories/ details
1. Respondent Personal Details: Please identify yourself to allow following up your comments and suggestions. Only the limited group of people that is finalizing the project proposal will know you as the originator of any comments you make and will keep your identity confidential. The opinions you give will not be linked publicly with your name or your institution without first seeking your permission.	Name
	Email address
	Institution
	Job title
	Country (where your work is based)
	Telephone number
2. Region?	West Africa
	East and Central Africa
	Southern Africa
	West Asia and North Africa
	South Asia
	Southeast Asia
	East Asia
	The Pacific
	Andean Region
	Central America
	Caribbean
	Southern Cone of South America
	Several regions or globally
Other (please specify)	
3. Participated in regional workshop?	Yes/No
4. Type of institution	Farmer or farmer association
	Input supply, product processing or marketing
	National level specialized research institution
	National level specialized research and extension institution
	National level specialized extension institution
	National university
	National development institution (including NGO)
	Regional institution (above national level)
	Bilateral or multilateral donor institution
	International development institution (including NGO)
	International research institution
	Other international public organization
	No institutional affiliation
National policy organization	
Other (please specify)	

Question	Question subcategories/ details
5. Skype address	
6. Gender:	Male/Female
7. Age range:	< 30; 30-39; 40-49;50-59; 60-69; >70
8. proposed themes importance: (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Conserving and accessing genetic resources
	Accelerating the development, delivery and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance and high nutritional value
	Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities
	Promoting sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers
	Developing tools for more productive, ecologically robust crops
	Enhancing post-harvest technologies and adding value in markets
	Enhancing impact through partnerships
9. Importance of proposed cross-cutting topics. (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Exploring new ways of partnering
	Comprehensive gender strategies
	Promoting communication and information sharing
	Strengthening people's capacities in research for development
10. Developing effective partnerships. (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Identification of hotspots where RTB target crops can help with poverty alleviation and income generation
	Strengthening networks for prioritizing research needs
	Building learning alliances using Participatory Impact Pathway Analysis
	Capacity strengthening in research-for-development
	Communication and information sharing
	Outcome and impact assessment
	Develop partnerships between public sector and civil society
	Develop partnerships between public and private sector
	Learning to translate research results into policy advice
11. Methods for building effective partnerships among people and institutions. (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Involve right people and organizations
	Agree guidelines about how responsibilities are assigned
	Agree objectives
	Agree conflict resolution processes
	Share recognition and responsibility for outcomes
	Allow time for development of trust and a common language
	Give leadership responsibilities to non-CGIAR partners

Question	Question subcategories/ details
	Clarify expectations about time investment in decision making
	Clarify expectations about time investment in decision making
	Make impact pathways explicit
	Agree team standards for response time, sharing credit and time investment in discussion
	Agree supervision responsibilities across institutional boundaries
	Transparent decision making and communication
12. Agreement with gender/ youth statements. (0 = completely disagree; 5 = strongly agree)- plus comments	Rural women in my region have livelihood opportunities in RTB
	Young people in my region have livelihood opportunities in RTB
	Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on seeds will improve livelihoods in my region
	Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on cropping systems will improve livelihoods in my region
	Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on post-harvest technologies will improve livelihoods in my region
	Strengthening networks for women to share knowledge on market opportunities will improve livelihoods in my region
	Women's roles in livelihoods, household and community are at risk of displacement when RTB value chains are developed
	In RTB commercial crops , men dominate decision-making and control of income
13. Importance of actions as part of gender strategy. (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Gender audit
	staffing strategy to enable partners to conduct gender-responsive R4D
	Capacity strengthening in gender-responsive research for partner organizations
	Separate focus group discussions in project areas with women, men and young people
	Gender review panel composed of specialists
	Research awards for women researchers in RTB
	Research grants for addressing gender dimension of RTB production and post-production
	Support establishment of gender focal points in partner organizations

Question	Question subcategories/ details
	Understanding gender differences in growing, consumption, preference and use of RTB crops Incorporation of female farmer needs into research priorities Reduction of drudgery in RTB crop production and processing Separate monitoring of early adoption by women and men
14. importance of types of information: (0 = not important; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Specific program information Research findings Scientific content on specific crops Best practices, promising strategies Informing policy makers, development practitioners and farmers Industry situation in RTB, including trade, value chains, industry players Enhancing capacity development Information about partners
15. Preferred modes of information exchange. (0 = least preferred; 5 = very important)- plus comments	Email Website Blogs, other social media Pamphlets, brochures, written materials Low literacy materials Face-to-face meetings/trainings face to face Site visits Phone/ conference call Regular newsletters/ updates
16. Which types of institution in your region are the most important to receive formal capacity strengthening for their staff in this RTB mega-program?	National research institutions National extension institutions National development institutions International institutions Farmer organizations and/or individual farmers Seed growers, product traders and processors
17. Which areas of expertise is capacity strengthening most needed for this RTB mega-program to be effective?	Conserving and accessing genetic resources Accelerating development, delivery and adoption of better varieties Managing priority P&D and beneficial microbial communities Sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers Ecologically sound crop management, including response to climate change Postharvest technology and adding value in markets Enhancing impact through partnerships Strengthening agriculture extension & seed systems for impact on women farmers

Question	Question subcategories/ details
	Linking RTB research with nutrition programs for delivery
18. Which of these capacity strengthening methods in RTB are most important for developing and strengthening effective partnerships in this mega-program? (0 = not important; 5 = very important)	Design and Delivery of Training programs or courses
	Development or better utilization of learning tools and resources
	Digital Learning Resources Knowledge Bank
	Online Training Courses
	Capacities and Needs Assessment Platforms (tools for capacity strengthening professionals)
	Shared M&E system applied to capacity strengthening
	Publications in capacity strengthening
	Fellowships for students and professionals
	A research and learning network
	In-person network conferences

**ANNEX 3.****RTB MEGA-PROGRAM DRAFT SUMMARY FOR CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS: ROOTS, TUBERS, AND BANANAS FOR FOOD SECURITY AND INCOME (6 AUGUST 2010)**

More than 500 million poor farmers in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) grow root and tuber crops and bananas (RTB), including plantains. These farmers—over half of them women—and their families depend on RTB to meet the basic human need for food security and livelihoods. The RTB crops, banana, plantain, cassava, potato, sweet potato, yams and other root and tuber crops, sometimes termed vegetatively-propagated staple crops, are linked by common management aspects, most notably in seed and post-harvest issues. Often grown on marginal land, they are also important in combating hunger caused by poverty, droughts, floods, and other climatic disasters; pests and diseases; or civil strife. RTB are fundamental sources of energy and vital nutrition, with some varieties contributing significant iron, zinc, and vitamin A to diets.

Although RTB can produce very high yields, farmers in developing countries may be realizing less than half this amount because of limited genetic potential of landraces, low-quality “seed,” biotic and abiotic constraints, and poor management practices. Better exploitation of the huge potential of RTB as reliable sources of nutritious foods, feeds, and income may come from breeding for higher nutritional quality and adaptation to stressful environments, improved quality of planting material and management practices, and judicious use of external inputs. The dynamic conservation and use of crop genetic diversity should help ensure resilient cropping systems and capacity to respond to evolving pest pressures. Expanding the benefits of these crops as drivers of agro-economic development for rural households requires more attention to improved post-harvest practices, added value and better market access. Basic daily responsibilities of women and youths often revolve around the production, use, and marketing of RTB. Therefore, gender equity and gender-sensitive strategies for realizing benefits from these crops must play an equally central role.

To address all these issues, face the challenge of improving productivity and nutritional value of RTB, and, finally, of contributing to an increase in food security and income of the world’s poor who depend on them, the RTB Mega-Program (MP) will:

- Build a wide-ranging and integrated effort of research for development (R4D)
- Broaden new ways of doing business
- Develop an efficient delivery pathway.

Four centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) have initiated a partnership to carry out the full scope of the RTB CRP: Bioversity, the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), the International Potato Center (CIP), and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). Each centre has extensive expertise in at least one RTB crop. Together, we will take advantage of our synergies and those of partners, to develop science-based solutions that can be scaled out to achieve the RTB CRP's objectives.

The RTB MP partnership has identified seven potential themes as the pillars of this effort:

- Theme 1: Conserving and accessing genetic resources
- Theme 2: Accelerating the development, delivery and adoption of varieties with stable yields, stress resistance, and high nutritional value
- Theme 3: Managing priority pests and diseases and beneficial microbial communities
- Theme 4: Promoting sustainable systems for clean planting material for farmers
- Theme 5: Developing tools for more productive, ecologically robust crops
- Theme 6: Enhancing post-harvest technologies and adding value in markets
- Theme 7: Enhancing impact through partnerships.

The seven themes—each of which would feature several products for each RTB crop and across crops—reflect the strategy and vision of the partnership; they are intended to shape the nature of the work and chart the direction and reach of the initiatives.

The RTB MP is building a motivated and efficient partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, based on their active participation in the conception, development and implementation of research and development activities and the construction of strong and dynamic networks. Stakeholders, including donors, partners, and beneficiaries, are providing input into the MP proposal design, to stimulate the emergence of new ideas and concepts, gather critical mass for R4D, and ensure better continuum along the delivery chain and greater development impact.

Delivery of research products will be based on an interactive model of across-theme topics that link partnership, gender strategy, communication and knowledge sharing, and capacity strengthening (CS). CS will reinforce expertise of national research institutions and other research partners in developing countries. Gender issues are integrated into virtually every aspect of RTB MP: research, targeting, needs assessment, and research interventions. Communication and knowledge sharing will use a range of methods to engage with different actors, aiming to become a focal point for research and development of RTB crops. The overarching objective is to involve all MP partners in a productive interaction whereby we all share our ideas about how the RTB MP can help realize the maximum impact to improve food security and the livelihoods of the poor.

RTB MP research activities would thus:

- **Create** economies of scale and scope, as scientists involved in the conservation and use of RTB explore common research questions, share labs, develop common tools and methods, coordinate work on common project sites and build capacity together.
- **Generate** income by linking farmers to markets for RTB products. Features such as improved storage and processing for added-value foods, superior livestock feed, industry-preferred starch profiles and emerging private-public partnerships will promote more stable income generation and tap into the potential for broad-scale market linkages.
- **Facilitate** capacity building and knowledge sharing through partnerships, networks and training to enhance innovation system capacity and performance.
- **Link** with other MPs to make a vital contribution to sustainable and profitable production systems and improved nutrition.
- **Provide** decision support and simulation tools and germplasm that will help in adapting to climate change or mitigating its effects.
- **Advance** gender equity and empower women and small farmer organizations through RTB innovation systems.



#### **CIP's Mission**

The International Potato Center (CIP) works with partners to achieve food security and well-being and gender equity for poor people in root and tuber farming and food systems in the developing world. We do this through research and innovation in science, technology and capacity strengthening.

#### **CIP's Vision**

Roots and tubers improving the lives of the poor.



CIP is supported by a group of governments, private foundations, and international and regional organizations known as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

[www.cgiar.org](http://www.cgiar.org)