

Consortium Communication-for-Consultation Plan

Draft prepared by PK Anderson and FJC Chandler on behalf of the CPT (10 March 2009)

Executive Summary

Building the new Consortium including the consortium architecture, the establishment of shared services platforms, development of the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF), and the conceptualization of the Consortium Programs (currently known as the Mega Programs) will require the participation and input from a broad array of stakeholder groups. The development of the SRF and the Consortium Programs will especially benefit from diverse stakeholder inputs.

The Consortium Planning Team is proposing a clear and transparent process of communication that will enable our key stakeholders to effectively and efficiently engage with and provide input to the creation of the Consortium at key points during the process. This Communication-for-Consultation Plan refers only to the responsibilities and work streams of the Alliance but it is coordinated with and supports other consultation and communication efforts underway in other parts of the CGIAR System.

The Plan covers communication for consultation along four work streams managed and coordinated by the Consortium Planning Team (CPT). A key component will be continual discussion and decisions among the Alliance members. Other work streams focus on consultation on establishing the Consortium as a legal entity, development of the Strategy and Consortium Programs, and identification of shared services provided by the Consortium. The consultations provide feedback that the work teams will use to strengthen the different pieces but will also be useful to the Alliance in the discussion/decision-making process. A variety of communication tactics will be used including face-to-face consultations, the use of appropriate social media for wider, on-line consultations and development and easy access to relevant information and documentation. The plan will be reviewed and monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure that the communication and consultation processes are effective and where necessary will be amended to better serve the interests of all stakeholders.

Introduction

Following the endorsement of the CGIAR Integrated Reform Proposal by the CGIAR membership in December 2008, the Alliance was asked to lead the development of two foundation blocks in the Reform – the establishment of the Consortium, and the development of the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) and Consortium Programs.

The new Consortium, including the consortium architecture, the establishment of shared services platforms, development of the SRF, and the conceptualization of the Consortium Programs will required the participant and input from a broad array of stakeholder groups. Therefore, the Consortium Planning Team (CPT) is not proposing a standard communication plan, where stakeholders are sent regular updates. Rather, the objective of the Consortium's Communication-for-Consultation Plan is communication that will enable our key stakeholders to effectively and efficiently engage with and provide input to the creation of the Consortium, at key points during the process. The key stakeholders for the Consortium Consultation & Communication Plan are the Alliance Board (AB), Alliance Executive (AE), the Alliance Deputy Executive (ADE), Centers' staff members (including the SWEP and CP staff), the Transition Management Team (TMT), CGIAR members and investors, other key actual and potential investors, CGIAR sponsors, CGIAR Science Council, CGIAR Systems Offices, and our Research and Development Partners (including key NARES, ARIs, national and

international private companies, national and international NGOs, farmers' organizations). A tailored communication and consultation process will be a key element to the success in the design of the new Consortium.

Coordinating Communication and Consultations across the Reform Process

This Consultation & Communication Plan refers only to the responsibilities and work streams of the Alliance. It will complement, inform and support other consultation and communication efforts undertaken by the Transition Management Team (TMT), the CGIAR Secretariat and the Centers.

The TMT will issue a *Monthly TMT Progress Report* on implementation of the Transition Plan, to be placed on the CGIAR website for general viewing. The TMT will also issue an electronic monthly newsletter, *Embracing Change*, which will include a summary of the *Monthly TMT Progress Report*, interviews, news updates from the Alliance of Centers and GFAR, links to blogs, etc. This electronic newsletter will be sent to just over 4,000 with Center Focal points requested to further distribute the newsletter to Center staff as appropriate. These communications will be a pro-active way to keep the wider CGIAR stakeholder base apprised of the implementation of the Reform.

The CGIAR Secretariat will send CGIAR members the *Members Update on the CGIAR Reform*, posted on the "members only" website. This update will be targeted to the members/investors and their particular interests. This will keep members/investors abreast and engaged as appropriate in the transition. The *Members Update* will also satisfy the CGIAR Business Meeting decision of December 08 to provide periodic progress reports.

The Secretariat has also organized a CGIAR Strategic Communication Workshop at World Fish, 23-26 March 2009, with the heads of communications from all Centers, the Challenge Programs and the CGIAR Secretariat.

The Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR) will be organizing a series of consultations during 2009. Through these consultations GFAR seeks to expand stakeholder participation, e.g. private sector, international NGOs, universities, farmer organizations. Consortium communications will be timed to support discussion in the various GFAR consultations, and encourage stakeholder participation in the GFAR consultation meetings.

Consortium Work Streams and Stakeholder Engagement

There are 4 work streams that must be managed and coordinated by the CPT. These 4 work streams will engage a distinct set of stakeholders (Table 1).

Work stream 1: Continual discussion and decision-making by the Alliance and Center Boards. To facilitate continuous discussion and decision-making by the Alliance and the Center Boards, the CPT proposes that Guido Gryseels, Steve Hall and Anne-Marie Izac continue the standard communications with the Alliance, reporting back on CPT and TMT meetings and bringing back all content issues to the Alliance for discussion and approval as the Reform process moves forward. The Communication-for-Consultation Plan is meant to provide stakeholder input to discussions and improve the quality of the Consortium outputs, before they are brought back to the Alliance for discussion and approval.

Work stream 2: Legal establishment of the Consortium, including the appointment of the Consortium Board and the Consortium CEO. This work stream must engage the AB, AE and CGIAR members.

Work stream 3: Design and management of shared services, for both administration and research support. This work stream must the AB, AE, ADE (Science and Finance), the CGIAR Systems Offices, and selected investors.

Work stream 4: Design of the Strategy and Results Framework and Consortium Program portfolio, including the design/management of the Consortium Programs. This work stream will require consultation with the entire range of stakeholders.

Work stream 1 includes a list of all of the decisions that will come back to the Alliance for discussion/decision (which is why the stakeholders for most of Work stream 1 are only the Alliance). The triggers in the other three work streams relate to the consultations that will be undertaken. The idea is that the consultations provide feedback that the work teams will use to strengthen the different pieces but will also be useful to the Alliance in the discussion/decision-making process. The schedule of communication-consultation will depend upon the process in each of these three work streams and will be defined by trigger events (see Table 1 for examples).

Principles

The CPT acknowledges that communication and consultation are critical aspects of the Consortium planning, design and implementation. The principles underlying this Communication-for-Consultation Plan are:

- Communication that is relevant, accurate, consistent, and just-in-time
- Communication that is clear and concise (e.g. avoiding CGIAR acronyms and jargon)
- Consultation that is participatory, inclusive with an iterative process of dialogue
- Consultation that provides options for engagement
- Communication and consultation that respects the time limitations of key stakeholders
- Communication and consultation that respects the technology limitations of key stakeholders
- Communication and consultation that complements, informs and supports other consultation and communication efforts, and encourages stakeholders to bring additional voices into the dialogues.
- Communication and consultation should build on a diversity of existing social networks and communications channels such as RIMISP, SCIDEVNET, Donor Platform for Rural Development, regional organizations and professional organizations.

Communication Tactics

It is envisioned that a variety of communication-for-consultation approaches and tools will be used in order to push out and attract information, views and opinions from the diverse range of stakeholders that this plan attempts to reach out to. These approaches and tools fall into three main areas of focus. Each area of focus will require clear feedback mechanisms on how the feedback is going to be requested, received and processed.

Information Packages. Hard and electronic copies of information on the work streams and their progress with the aim to share information and generate feedback. One such example would be a “Board Information and Discussion Package”. The CPT has suggested that to support Board Chairs, the Alliance Office (F. Chandler) would prepare an information and discussion package for the Boards. Guido has collected a series of questions from Board Chairs that we would put to Kathy Sierra, in a video interview. In addition to the video with KS, we would prepare an information package on the Reform process with a set of questions to guide Board discussions, with an update for the set of Board meetings in the second half of the year. CPT members would also be available for video conferences with Boards, if that would be helpful. If desired, we could prepare the same type of information and discussion packages to be used by DGs with the Center Staff.

Face-to-Face Consultations. The Alliance Office will develop a calendar of key events with different stakeholders, including the GFAR consultations. We will request time slots to share with stakeholder groups progress on the CG Reform implementation, and set up discussion/consultation sessions. Feedback from these interactions would be feed into the appropriate work streams.

Social Media. Social networking has created new ways to communicate and share information that are often web-based and provide a variety of ways for stakeholders to interact. Given the array of stakeholders, their geographical dispersion and the articulated desire to contribute to the design of the new Consortium, particularly the Strategy and Consortium Programs, a web-based system for communication-consultation is needed. The ICT-KM System Office of the CGIAR has developed an extensive toolbox of online tools that can be used for knowledge sharing and consultation (<http://www.kstoolkit.org/>). Further exploration of the tools and the needs of the stakeholders will determine which of these processes can be effectively applied at what stages during the different work streams.

Next Steps

If the general approach to Communication-for-Consultation is acceptable to the Alliance, then there are a number of immediate tasks:

1. Construct a Donor Consultation List and send each of official donor reps a brief summary of the Consortium Communication-for-Consultation Plan and the request that they name their focal point for the consultations.
2. Construct R&D Partners List. Compile a list of partners from CGMap, to be used as a basis for constructing the R&D partners list, and will solicit email address for partners. This will help us access International and National NGOs, NARES (not active in GFAR), ARIs, national private sector groups. We will also solicit contacts from the Private Sector committee. These will be added to the GFAR contact list.
3. Identify appropriate feedback mechanisms to solicit and capture feedback from consultations using appropriate technology and methods for the style, type, size and target audience of the consultation
4. Solicit Calendar of Key Events, where we would aim to have face-to-face presentations/consultations.
5. Re-develop the Alliance Office website, including an ‘archive’ facility for information and documentation (draft prepared)
6. Design a common structure for documents for consultation (draft being designed by AO and BCG)
7. Prepare a more detailed (content-triggered) calendar for communication-consultation (coordinated with other efforts)
8. Prepare a more detailed activity and resource plan for this strategy.

Consortium Communication-for-Consultation Plan

Table 1. EXAMPLES OFWork streams, stakeholders, and consultation triggers

	Work stream	Trigger	Stakeholders	Communication-Consultation Format	Responsibility
1	CPT Communications and Alliance Decision Points				
	CPT Meeting Minutes	Immediately after CPT meetings	AB-AE-ADE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of CPT meetings prepared and approved (by CPT) and then circulated to Alliance Executive and Alliance Board by email 	CAO
	CPT Chair Updates	Bi-monthly for the remainder of 2009	AB-AE-ADE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memo from CPT Chair on CPT discussions and decisions including briefs on events/activities from the TMT and GCARD Written in a short, succinct style and sent by email to Alliance Executive and Alliance Board 	CPT Chair
	CPT Content Consultations: Legal Establishment of Consortium	Pre-ExCo (May)	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consortium “founding” documents circulated via email (constitution, board charter, CEO/ED job description) for Alliance comments and discussion at the Alliance meeting (11-13 May). Based on Alliance input a report will be prepared for ExCo 	CPT/BCG
		ExCo gives “green light” on Consortium concept	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and circulate plan for Stage 2 of the Consortium consultancy (Consortium Board search and selection; shared services; costs of Consortium) 	CPT/BCG
		Consultancy milestone (July)	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress update on Stage 2 (via email) 	CPT
		Consultancy milestone (Sept)	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance review of final Stage 2 report with phased implementation plan and decision on next steps (via email?) Short listing of Consortium Board (via email?) 	CPT
		Consortium Board interviews completed	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement and selection of Consortium Board members and agree on any non-binding recommendations to Consortium Board by Alliance at Alliance meeting (Oct or Nov?) 	
		Alliance agreement of Consortium	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratification process by Centers 	AB-AE
	CPT Content Consultations: Design and Management of Shared Services	Approval from investor	CPT-AB-AE-ADE-SO-Donors-TMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance approval of TORs for the strategic review of the shared services opportunities in the Centers (via email) 	ADE
		Project completed	AE-AB-ADE-SO-Donors-TMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and comment of final report and decision on next step at Alliance meeting (Oct-Nov?) 	CPT

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	CPT Content Consultations: Strategy-Program	TORs prepared	AB-AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email circulation on a <i>no objection</i> basis 	CPT
		Selection of team(s)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email consultation with Chair of Strategy Development Task Team Email consultation with AE-AB 	CPT
		Task Team milestone (bi-weekly)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress updates (PowerPoint) to CPT/AB/AE 	Strategy & Program Task Teams
		Pre-ExCo (May)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Strategy and 'mock up's of Programs to be reviewed and discussed at Alliance meeting (May 11-13). Based on Alliance input a report will be prepared for ExCo 	Strategy & Program Task Teams
		Milestone (Sept)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Team's recommendations regarding the Mega-Programme portfolio sent to full Alliance for review and comment (via email?) 	CPT
		Milestone (Oct)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Alliance meeting (Oct/Nov?) agree on beginning slate of Mega Programmes to recommend to Consortium Board 	CPT
		Pre-GCARD	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consortium Board agrees on Strategy and Program Portfolio to take to CGARD 	
	CPT Support to Boards	First round of Board meetings with updates as required	AB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Video interview with CGIAR Chair, Kathy Sierra Package of relevant information including FAQs (tailored for BOT audiences), links to 'official' documents, a power point presentation prepared for Board Chairs to deliver to Centre Board meetings Offer an invitation for a member of the CPT to speak at Center BOT meetings on the Consortium planning, SRF and mega programme development Feedback mechanism 	CPT/AO/BCG
	CPT Support to DGs	AE endorsement of Consultation for Communication Plan	AE-ADE-Center Communication officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Package of relevant information including FAQs (tailored for Center audiences) 'official' documents, a power point presentation prepared for DGs to deliver during Centre staff meetings Feedback mechanism 	CPT/AO/BCG

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	Work stream	Trigger	Stakeholders	Communication-Consultation Format	Responsibility
	CPT review of Communication-for-Consultation process	April, August, December 2009	CPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative and qualitative review of communication and consultation efforts to determine where more or less efforts are required 	AO
2	Legal Establishment of the Consortium				
	Consortium	Belief audit & benchmarking finished	AB-AE-ADE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation with Board Chairs, DGs and select DDGs (Research and Finance) via telephone and in person 	CPT/BCG
	Consortium	High level Consortium governance options developed	AB-AE-ADE-Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin consultations with stakeholders 	BCG
	Consortium	Alliance comments on 'founding documents	AB-AE-ADE-Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare report for ExCo 	CPT/BCG
	Consortium	ExCo gives "green light" on Consortium concept	AB-AE-ADE-Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence stage 2 of the Consortium Planning with consultations regarding the search and selection for Consortium Board members, costing, shared services. 	CPT/BCG
	Consortium	Phase 2 of consultancy approved by Alliance	AB-AE-Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal ratification of Consortium Charter starts via Centers' official channels Selection process for Consortium office (via email?) Search and selection process for Consortium Board members begins (via email?) 	AB/AE CPT/BCG
	Consortium	Legal establishment of Consortium	AB-AE-Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational meeting of the Consortium Board 	Interim Consortium Office
3	Design and management of shared services				
	Project	Project started (anticipate May)	CPT-AB-AE-ADE-SO-AIARC-select investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations and feedback mechanisms to be further elaborated on in the TORs 	ADE
	Project	Recommendations drafted (anticipate Oct)	CPT-AB-AE-ADE-SO-AIARC-select investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report; briefings; presentations provided to stakeholders for comments and feedback (feedback mechanism to be designed) 	ADE

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	Work stream	Trigger	Stakeholders	Communication-Consultation Format	Responsibility
4	Design of the Strategy and Results Framework and Consortium Program portfolio				
	Strategy-Program Development	Launch (Feb17-20)	CPT-AE-ADE-GFAR-SC-TMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick off meeting at Bioversity, Rome 	
	Strategy-Program Development	Gender consultation	CPT- ADE- G&D contacts list	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As agreed at AGM08, IFPRI (Ruth Meinzen-Dick (RM-D)) will lead a gender consultation as inputs for the design of the SRF and Consortium Programs 	RM-D
	Strategy-Program Development	Identification of Strategy and Program Development Task Teams	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exchange of information with the Program Portfolio 'mock up' team Consultations with stakeholders (to be identified, designed and implemented, including feedback mechanisms by Task Team in consultation with CPT) 	Strategy Development Task Teams
	Strategy-Program Development	Post ExCo meeting (June)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on input from ExCo continue presenting draft strategy and programs and discussing with partners (eg, at GFAR regional consultations) Consultations with other stakeholders (to be identified, designed and implemented, including feedback mechanisms by Task Team(s) in consultation with CPT) Design other consultation processes based on combination of face-to-face and social media approaches Keep Alliance website updated with current documentation 	Strategy Development Task Teams
	Strategy-Program Development	Post Alliance meeting (Oct-Nov?)	AE-AB-ADE-R&D Partners, TMT, SC, Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultations with Consortium Board (if identified) on the Draft Strategy and Program Portfolio 	Strategy Development Task Teams

Note: Development and timing of Strategy and Program Portfolio *post-June* is largely dependent on the progress and work of the teams undertaking the consultations and will be determined more clearly after the ExCo meeting in June.

Acronym Guide:

AB	Alliance Board
ADE	Alliance Deputy Executive
AE	Alliance Executive
AIARC	Association of International Agriculture Research Centers
AO	Alliance Office
ARI	Advanced Research Institute
BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CAO	Chief Alliance Officer
CGIAR	Consultative Group for International Agriculture Research
CPT	Consortium Planning Team
DG	Director General
G&D	Gender and Diversity
GFAR	Global Fund for Agricultural Research
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
NARES	National Agriculture Research and Extension Systems
R&D	Research and Development
SC	Science Council
SO	System Offices
SWEP	System wide and Ecoregional Program
TMT	Transition Management Team

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