

AGRODEP Steering Committee (SC)

Annual Meetings · Nov 12, 2012 · Afternoon Session · Dakar, Senegal

**Minutes**

**Steering Committee Participants**

**Yemi Akinbamijo**, African Union; **Ousmane Badiane** (SC Co-Chair), IFPRI; **Joy Kiiru**, AGRODEP Member Representative; **John Makuka**, COMESA ; **Mustapha Sadni-Jallab**, WTO; **Greg Traxler**, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; **Terrie Walmsley**, GTAP

**AGRODEP Staff Participants**

**Betina Dimaranan**, IFPRI; **Alimatou Diop**, IFPRI-Dakar; **Ismael Fofana**, IFPRI-Dakar

**Meeting Agenda**

The business meeting of the Steering Committee was conducted during the afternoon of November 12, 2012. The following meeting agenda was adopted: (1) Steering Committee membership and meeting schedule, (2) 2012 Progress and 2013 Workplan, and (3) Miscellaneous Issues.

**Steering Committee Membership and Meeting Schedule**

**Size of SC Membership**

- The current membership of 20 institutional representatives is too large and is thus difficult to coordinate; getting a quorum for decision-making and for attendance in meetings will always be a problem with a large group.
- In deciding on SC membership, AGRODEP should consider what each member institution can contribute to the consortium and should explore alternative ways of getting other institutions involved without being in the Steering Committee.
- It should be noted that in most RECs (e.g. COMESA, ECOWAS), it is one individual who is assigned as representative to various committees and is thus spread too thinly; Rotating REC membership should be considered for the AGRODEP SC.
- To trim the SC membership down from 20 to 12 members, the following eight (8) institutions may be considered for removal from the Committee: AfDB, ASARECA, CEPIL, CORAF/WECARD, ECOWAS, FAO, USITC, World Bank Institute. ASARECA and CORAF/WECARD are already in the Network Advisory Committee.

**SC meetings**

- The participants agreed to have a virtual meeting sometime in May 2013 and a physical meeting during the second week of November 2013. The meeting in November can be with less participants after SC membership has been trimmed down.

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## **2012 Progress and 2013 Workplan**

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### **New phase for AGRODEP**

- The past year has made a lot of difference in AGRODEP's progress. The objectives from the past year were achieved, including increase in membership and access to models and useful data. AGRODEP is now entering a new phase with new challenges and needs to prepare for this new phase. This includes :
  - Using training to help network members to progress to midterm senior research level.
  - Increasing linkage with other networks and institutions
  - More work on models and data
  - Expanding network of experts to areas where more skills that are available in IFPRI are needed, e.g. impact evaluation

### **Linkage to CAADP**

- Given equally qualified research proposals, priority should be given to the proposal which is more linked to CAADP profile preferences.

### **Trainings and Workshops**

- Should consider having workshops with senior AGRODEP members and external scholars to mentor younger members
- Should consider organizing trainings within and for the RECs (after the first phase of AGRODEP)
- Should consider giving training courses on report writing and communications of scholarly results in non-technical fashion
- Should consider using the funds for research valorization grants for organizing national conferences

### **2013 Workplan**

- The 2013 Workplan was unanimously approved by the seven Steering Committee members who were present at the meeting.

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## **Miscellaneous Issues**

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### **Support from partner organizations and advocacy**

- AGRODEP should identify other potential partners in the continent and invite other organizations (aside from SAB and SC members) to attend annual conferences/workshops.
- Should target the conferences organized within the continent to link AGRODEP members to others, for visibility of the network; can also organize side events in these conferences (e.g. African agricultural economist conference in August 2013)
- Should reach out to partner organizations, e.g. UNECA and African Development Bank, to develop activities with AGRODEP (similar to WTO sponsorship of AGRODEP members of the 2012 GTAP conference in Geneva)
- Need to market the consortium towards the research community but at the same time find a way to appeal to decision makers; look at how to leverage the academic elements of AGRODEP into policy
- Operationalize AGRODEP's communications and outreach plan; work with RESAKSS

### **GTAP conference**

AGRODEP will host the annual GTAP conference in 2014 in Dakar, Senegal. Terrie Walmsley provided background information about GTAP and the annual GTAP conference. As conference host, AGRODEP will handle the logistics in Dakar.

- AGRODEP should approach for funding/co-sponsorship of the conference that following institutions: African Union Commission, ACTESA, ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD, ECOWAS, FARA, UNDP, and government of Senegal (e.g. Ministry of Finance)
- Institutions should be approached by early in 2013 so that they can still include the needed funding in their 2014 budgets.
- Conference side events (pre- or post-conference) should include field visits (aside from the option of visiting Goree Island).
- AGRODEP should form committees to handle finance/fund-raising, program, events, and will have a monthly meeting about the GTAP Conference.

### **Friends of AGRODEP**

- AGRODEP should develop a plan document regarding “friends of AGRODEP” and “affiliate members.” The document should indicate eligibility criteria, what benefits/services they have access to (e.g. training, grants, models, data), what roles they play, and what service they contribute to AGRODEP. The terms or reference should be developed for these members.
- Affiliate members may include members who move out of Africa, Africans living outside of Africa, and researchers in international organizations based in Africa who would like to become AGRODEP members.
- Affiliate members should go through the membership application process.
- Friends of AGRODEP and affiliate members can be tapped as trainers and mentors for AGRODEP.
- The plan should be circulated for approval at the next virtual meeting.

### **OFAC and Sudan**

- AGRODEP members from Sudan cannot avail of grant funding and cannot fully participate in AGRODEP activities because of the US embargo on Sudan. IFPRI is applying for a license to be able to provide funding to the AGRODEP members from Sudan.
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