

Council for Partnership on Rice Research in Asia (CORRA)

Terms of Reference

(As approved by the Council during its 20th Annual Meeting on 25 October 2016)

I. Background and Rationale

The National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) are increasingly becoming more involved in global research. Many are taking on regional responsibilities in both research and training, and their activities are making significant contributions to overall rice research outputs. Several developing countries are now active and contributing members of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Emerging in recent years are several regional fora whose aims are to enhance linkages and interactions among NARES and to serve as common voices on regional priorities in agricultural research and development, and thus facilitating communications with such international and regional entities as the CGIAR, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI).

A strong global rice research system would integrate the comparative advantages, skills, capacities, and resources of its diverse partners. When partner institutions share their individual strengths (knowledge, techniques, and resources), and when each institution addresses a limited number of clearly defined problems within the context of overall objectives, then research will be more efficient and cost effective.

The Council is the body that decides on issues that run across two or more existing partnership mechanisms for rice research in Asia. To enhance the effectiveness of the various partnership mechanisms being employed in meeting the challenges of the global rice research system, a Council for Partnership on Rice Research in Asia (CORRA) was established in March 1996. The Council will be committed to promote and support interdependence, reduce barriers, and collectively change perspectives of all partners: research workers and administrators, policymakers and donors -- both inside and outside the region, as they become full partners in the global rice research community.

The Global Rice Science Partnership (GRiSP) was formed due to the growing need to establish a single strategy and work plan for global rice research and how it can contribute more effectively to solving development challenges at

regional, national, and local levels. It streamlines current research for development activities of the CGIAR, aligns it with numerous partners, and adds new activities of high priority in areas where science is expected to make significant contributions. In the second phase of GRiSP, known as the CGIAR Research Program called RICE , the program continues to provide new opportunities for partnerships in research and development, bringing together advanced research institutes and universities, national research, education and extension systems, international and regional fora and development organizations, CGIAR centers, emerging strong national research systems, the private sector, and civil society organizations involved in grass-roots work with male and female farmers.

II. Objectives

The main objective of the Council will be to guide, facilitate, support, and thereby strengthen the partnership among NARES in Asia, and between NARES and IRRI and other relevant institutions, in an effort to meet rice research needs of the Asian region.

The Council's specific objectives are:

- 1) Serve as an advisory council to a global program in rice (such as CRP-RICE in Asia) that shall promote and guide more effective partnership among key stakeholders on rice research and development in the region;
- 2) Formulate and recommend new initiatives and advocacy measures to support activities of a global program in rice in the region and in their respective countries including seeking local funds for the partnership activities;
- 3) Harmonize NARES views and provide feedback to a global program in rice and IRRI in particular, and to the CGIAR in general, on agricultural research needs of the Asian region.

III. Size and Membership

The Council shall consist of 16 senior officials (i.e., Heads) of selected NARES in Asia, selected for the importance of rice in their national agricultural plans and for their representation of rice ecosystems, and the IRRI Director General. The Council shall also welcome additional members whenever deemed necessary including Associate Members who, through linkage with the Council, will benefit from the deliberations of the Council.

The Chair of the Council shall be elected for a fixed term of two (2) years, and from among NARES members.

In addition, the Council shall establish a permanent primary representative and a permanent alternate representative who shall be nominated by the member NARES institution. A permanent focal person shall also be designated by the permanent primary representative from his/her office to handle all needed CORRA follow up actions and decisions. In case of the permanent primary representative's inability to attend the regular council meeting, he/she can only be represented by his/her permanent alternate representative.

IRRI shall continue to provide the office for the Secretariat of the Council

IV. Council Meetings

The Council shall meet annually, each meeting to last no longer than 2 days, to deliberate on issues proposed by one or more Council members and to be confirmed by the Chair. The meeting dates shall be determined at each annual meeting. The venues and hosting of annual meetings will be rotated among NARES members.

To optimize the usefulness of the annual meeting, it will be dovetailed or timed with an international rice event (like the International Rice Research Conference, International Rice Genetics, International Hybrid Rice Symposium, International Rice Congress, International Rice Commission) to give members an opportunity to attend such event and be updated on scientific developments in rice research. Likewise, CORRA shall take advantage of the existing events such as the International Rice Congress or AMAF/ASEAN meetings to relay CORRA's declarations for the information and/or decisions of the Ministers of Agriculture and other high ranking government officials.

As much as possible, CORRA's annual meetings may also be timed with APAARI annual meetings especially if the country hosting their meeting is a CORRA member.

V. Responsibilities of the Chairman

The Council Chairman shall have the following responsibilities:

- Determine the agenda for the meetings of the Council in coordination with the Secretariat;

- Preside over annual regular and special meetings of the Council;
- Review the implementation of decisions made by the Council;
- Interact with relevant bodies in the region;
- Report the Recommendations of the Council to IRRI Management and provide feedback to IRRI's Board of Trustees, through the minutes of the Council's annual meetings.

VI. Relationships and Mechanisms

IRRI Board of Trustees and Management -- The roles and responsibilities of the Council vis-a-vis the IRRI Board of Trustees and Management are outlined below:

- The Council's responsibility will be largely one of advising Management of IRRI and the global program in rice in the region;
- The Council, through its Chairman, will provide feedback to the IRRI Board of Trustees to ensure that IRRI Management responds to the suggestions and recommendations by the Council;
- The Council will review policy issues related to partnership activities in rice research, and their associated mechanisms between NARES in the region and IRRI (e.g., global rice program, research consortia, networks, and ecoregional initiatives) in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the partnerships.

Steering committees of networks and research consortia: -- Steering committees of networks and research consortia may continue to operate within their established terms of reference. The chairpersons of all steering committees may be invited to give progress reports to the Council at the latter's annual meetings, to provide a forum for:

- formulation of policies and guidelines;
- discussion of commitments, issues of collaboration, coordination, harmonization, and complementation; and
- strengthening of linkages among institutions and regional collaborative programs.

Other institutions -- Partnership with other relevant institutions, inside and outside of the CGIAR System, may be established as the need arises. In such cases, representatives of those institutes may be invited to attend the Council meetings.

VII. Financial Support

In-country travel and operating costs related to the hosting of the Council's annual meetings will be met by the host country. These costs shall include accommodation, local transport, meals, local secretariat;

Council members shall pay their own international travel and en route expenses, whenever possible;

IRRI shall pay honorarium and other entitlements, international airfare of the Secretariat, one hosted dinner, and other necessary incidental expenses.