



**Training Workshops on
Building Capacity to Set Priorities for
Agricultural Biotechnology in West and Central Africa**
Dates: First workshop 13 to 17 March 2006
Second workshop 1-5 May 2006.
Venue: Dakar, Senegal
Languages: French and English

Preamble: In December 2004 CORAF/WECARD together with its partners finalized the development of a sub-regional strategy for the application of safe biotechnology to agriculture in West and Central Africa sub-region <http://www.coraf.org/English/biotechnology.php>. The strategy is focused on product-driven capacity building activities; partnership building between and within countries in the sub-region with respect to the use of the biotechnology tool; and the development of a biosafety framework that builds commonalities in regulatory procedures across the countries of the sub-region. The strategy development process was funded by USAID. ECOWAS has since appropriated this strategy, and in June 2005 it hosted a ministerial conference on biotechnology and biosafety. Given the importance and potential of this additional technology development tool in advancing agricultural research for development, the ministers decided to institutionalize this conference. The conference also recommended the development of an action plan on biotechnology and biosafety for the sub-region.

In order to adequately harness the benefits of this tool and positively impact on agriculture, priorities must be set right. There is a need to conduct some quantitative economic analysis of research priorities of the sub-region in order to facilitate decision-taking with respect to investments in agricultural research for development. It is in these respects that CORAF/WECARD) will be organizing **two** successive training workshops (in March and May 2006) aimed at building capacity in priority setting for agricultural biotechnology in the West and Central Africa sub-region. The first five-day workshop will occur in Dakar, March 13-17, and will equip participants with the quantitative methods needed to compute priority-setting indicators. After the workshop, on return to their home countries, participants would collect the data needed to compute those indicators for their home institution. The follow-up workshop in May would invite participants to present and discuss their results, for comparison across institutions and aggregation from national to regional priorities.

The purpose, objectives and methodology of this workshop: Through this workshop CORAF/WECARD in partnership with its technical partner, Prof. William Masters of Purdue University, proposes to train senior researchers who would become priority-setting specialists within their respective NARS/organizations and for the sub-region-wide priority setting exercises. Funding for this training exercise is being provided by USAID.

The motivating question for this workshop is how to allocate biotechnology and other crop-improvement investments to maximize poverty reduction and environmental sustainability. The conceptual framework is the same as that used by IFPRI in the DREAM model. For this training purpose a spreadsheet approach would be used. The quantitative component of the analysis is

concerned with measuring the relative size of each adoption domain, and then considering the constraints faced locally in each environment and the probabilities of local successes, which determine the catch-up opportunities to match others' successes and the complementarity of each program with the efforts of others. Methodologically, the approach focuses on developing quantitative measures suitable for answering specific questions, adding additional data to answer increasingly narrow questions. In particular, the sequence of priority-setting criteria would be:

- (a) *Gross annual research benefits* (GARB), to set priorities for initial investigations before any other information is known;
- (b) *Weighted annual research benefits* (WARB), adding in information regarding constraints and catch-up opportunities;
- (c) *Expected net present value* (ENPV), to make stop/go decisions regarding specific programs whose size and objectives are known;
- (d) *Internal rate of return* (ROR), to assess and compare investments of varying size.

The workshop will be conducted in bilingual mode, in both French and English, using Microsoft Excel software. To benefit from the workshop participants should have some familiarity with computer spreadsheets, but can come from any discipline of the agricultural sciences. Previous training in economics is not needed.

Participants at the workshop: Participants at this workshop are expected to be heads of planning units, directors of research of NARIs and research base centers of the sub-region. Such participants must be in a position to lead priority setting exercises and or train younger colleagues. Each participant must be recommended by the head of his or her institution. CORAF will be able to cover travel and expenses for a limited number of participants, and invites others to apply for participation on a self-funded basis. Prospective participants are expected to submit a dossier which should include the following:

1. Application letter, including whether CORAF travel funds are requested
2. Summary CV not longer than 4 pages
3. Recommendation of the head of his/her institution confirming the role of the participant in priority setting

Deadline for submission of applications: All applications should reach the CORAF/WECARD Secretariat by **February 15, 2006**. Application could be sent by email or post to the following address:

Email: marcel.nwalozie@coraf.org

Or

Fax: +221-8699631

Or post to
Dr Marcel Nwalozie
CORAF/WECARD,
7 Avenue Bourguiba,
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Dates for workshops: -

- 1st workshop: March 13 to 17, 2006
- 2nd follow-up workshop: May 1 to 5, 2006

Venue of workshop: Dakar Senegal