

A NEW CIP VISION We are in times of dramatic change. Globalization, free trade, and increasing control of agricultural trade by multinationals are redefining needs and opportunities in agriculture. Funding from traditional public sector donors is declining, while investment by the private sector in agricultural research and development is growing dramatically. Meanwhile, there is increasing concern over rural–urban linkages, a new biotechnology revolution is underway—with proponents and opponents highly polarized—and issues of proper governance, transparency, and broad participation are becoming fundamental concerns.

One of the primary challenges that CIP and other research centers of excellence face is that of maintaining a relevant, coherent, high-quality research agenda in the context of an increasingly complex and dynamic external environment. A well-articulated vision—to support the definition of guidelines for decision making and to prevent compromising long-term strategic needs and responsibilities in the face of immediate, external pressures—is critical.

WAYS OF WORKING

With the endorsement of our Board of Trustees, CIP launched a vision and strategic planning exercise in October 2002. We recognized that our past priority-setting exercises had been primarily internal in nature. In order to open up the process and make it more participatory, we created a CIP vision plenary comprising CIP's Board of Trustees and staff, as well as representatives from our key stakeholders: donors, international organizations, advanced research organizations, regional research networks and organizations, national research systems, and nongovernmental organizations.

In October and November 2002, we conducted the first plenary consultation. The broad objectives were: to explain the process we were using for the visioning exercise; to agree upon the boundaries for the exercise; and, within the agreed boundaries, to generate a "map" of CIP's specific development challenges.

We proposed the Millennium Development Targets, which contribute to eight broad Development Goals, as the starting point for setting the boundaries for CIP's vision exercise. These 18 Development Targets—ratified in the year 2000 by 192 countries after several years of meetings and discussions—affirm, in quantitative terms, what the international development community within which we operate expects to accomplish in the decades to come. The vision plenary accepted the Millennium Development Targets as the general boundaries for the vision exercise. Within those boundaries, it selected eight development challenges to which the Center could make significant contributions (see *CIP's development challenges*, page 95).

CIP's Vision Statement, which will be published in 2003, will spell out our potential contribution to these challenges, forming the basis for our strategic research and implementation plan. An exercise on impact targeting and assessment, a needs and opportunities evaluation, and a realignment analysis will help us to answer the questions of *where* we should be working, *what* we should be doing, and *how* we realign to get there. These are also scheduled for 2003. The CGIAR priorities and strategy exercise being led by the Science Council will provide critical input during this process, allowing us to ensure that our new vision and strategy will continue to contribute to and support the overall vision and strategy of the CGIAR system. The following section illustrates some of the ways of working that have been hallmarks of CIP's past success and will surely contribute to the accomplishment of our challenges—and the fulfillment of our vision—in the years ahead.