

**EVALUATION OF THE WARO COUNCIL  
OF REGIONAL ADVISORS AND ITS ACTIVITIES**

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For

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **WARO's Council of Regional Advisors**

- Established in September 2001 with the aim of reinforcing the responsiveness of IDRC to research needs in the region.
- Composed of experts from West and Central Africa (presently six men and four women) representing fields of expertise that complement IDRC's four main program areas, namely Environment and Natural Resources Management, Social and Economic Policy, Information and Communication Technologies for Development, and Innovation, Policy and Society, as well as some cross-disciplinary areas such as health, capacity building, policy influence and gender equity.

#### **The Series of Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops**

- Started based on Council's decision during its fourth meeting held in Cotonou, Benin in August 2003.
- Six Workshops were held between July 2004 and January 2007 in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Cameroon, and Benin.
- Aimed at pragmatically exploring the relationship between researchers and policy makers in West/Central Africa, identifying bottlenecks to collaboration, and proposing sustainable mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of research results into political decision-making.

#### **Thematic Discussions**

- Five Thematic Discussions were held between February 2006 and January 2007 on Gender (Mali), on the Integration of West/Central Africa in the Globalization Process (Cameroon), Fostering Sustainability in Development Policies for West Central Africa: The Role of Research (Benin), National Strategies for Using Research Results in West and Central African Countries (Cote d'Ivoire), and Agenda and Priorities for Research on Regional Integration in the Sub-region (Cote d'Ivoire).
- Discussions were aimed at identifying and reflecting on new research problems that correspond to the realities of the West/Central African region, and to help define research topics for consideration for research support by IDRC.

### **PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION**

- Both formative and summative evaluation, assessing WARO's Council of Regional Advisors, its series of Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops, and its Thematic Discussions, focusing mainly on issues of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and replicability.
- Intended audience: program and management staff in the WARO Office and at IDRC headquarters in Ottawa.
- Evaluation was conducted to ensure that it would be useful for its targeted audience and that it would inform decisions related to the Council and the Workshop series.

## **STRENGTHS OF THE WARO COUNCIL OF REGIONAL ADVISORS**

### **Relevance to IDRC's Mission, Values and Action**

- ✚ The Council is consistent with IDRC's mission of "Empowerment through Knowledge", i.e. "to promote interaction, and foster a spirit of cooperation and mutual learning within and among social groups, nations, and societies through the creation, and adaptation of the knowledge that the people of developing countries judge to be of greatest relevance to their own prosperity, security and equity" (*sec 3.2.2.1*)
- ✚ The Council is consistent with IDRC's commitment to maintain Africa as "the priority region" (*sec 3.2.2.2*)
- ✚ The Council eloquently supports IDRC's image and identity as a donor who listens to its partners in developing countries (*sec 3.2.2.1*).

### **Relevance and Effectiveness within West and Central Africa Region**

- ✚ Activities of the Council fill some gaps in information and knowledge resulting from absent or inadequate information resources in the region (*sec 3.2.2.1*)
- ✚ Activities of the Council provide an effective mechanism to explicitly build African agendas into current international policy debates (e.g. interviews of Advisors on debt cancellation after G8 meeting). (*sec 3.2.2.1*)
- ✚ Activities of the Council provide opportunities to build capacity of Regional Advisors to be more effective in identifying problems and finding solutions in West and Central Africa. (*sec 3.2.2.4*)
- ✚ Activities of the Council increase IDRC's visibility and credibility in the West and Central Africa region. (*sec 3.2.2.5*)

### **Effective Mechanism for Environmental Scanning and Knowledge Creation**

- ✚ The Council is a proven and effective means for region-specific consultations to maintain IDRC's relevance and responsiveness in a rapidly changing external environment. (*sec 3.2.2.2*)
- ✚ Having knowledge of IDRC allows Advisors to efficiently create knowledge that is relevant to IDRC. (*sec 3.2.2.2; sec 3.2.2.3*)
- ✚ Multi-disciplinarity of Council enables it to use an integrated approach in collecting information and creating knowledge. (*sec 3.2.2.2*)
- ✚ Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops provide a framework to create knowledge in a specific area of development that is of relevance to the region. (*sec 3.2.2.3*)
- ✚ Thematic Discussions allow the Council to quickly identify research entry points that can be further developed in the future (*see 3.5.3*)

## **THE COUNCIL – CONCLUSIONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The Regional Council has succeeded, to a very large degree, in fulfilling its objectives of environmental scanning, knowledge creation, capacity building and improving the visibility of IDRC. It has been effective in sensitizing researchers and policy makers of the need for close collaboration in the sustainable use of research results. It has visibly improved regional capacity to analyze research for development problems. The Council has also contributed significantly to the development of IDRC's Corporate Strategy and Program Framework and to reports that are relevant to Africa.

- *Recommendation: IDRC should consider maintaining the Council at least for another three years to enable the Council to capitalize on its experiences. This time would be used to expand the environmental scanning and knowledge creation in the region. The initial period of this next phase should be used to fully document all the results of activities carried out to date.*
  - *Recommendation: Contributions made by WARO in the development of the next CSPF should have as its starting point the use of the documented results of the work of Council*
- The Council has not managed to fully document results of its activities, which can serve as important reference material for both IDRC and other parties.
- *Recommendation: IDRC-WARO should review all the activities of the Council and complete the documentation and diffusion of the following: results of the workshop series; and, information brochures on all remaining Thematic Discussions. In addition, all relevant information regarding the work of the Council should be organized and placed in the appropriate IDRC web site.*
- Although the Council has obtained significant achievements, information on the activities and outcomes of the Council have not been adequately shared with IDRC staff in Ottawa or in other regional offices. As a result, the potential of the Council to contribute to the IDRC's decision-making at the program level has not been seen by some IDRC staff.
- *Recommendation: IDRC-WARO should develop an information and communication strategy to regularly share information about the Council, its activities and its outcomes with IDRC colleagues. For future activities, a regular bulletin with updates about what is happening in the Council or highlights with references to the website may be a useful tool for dissemination.*
- Regional Advisors are unanimously recognized as being highly competent and committed to the work of the Council. They have impressed others with their level of expertise, their experience and interest in the development of the region. They have worked as a professional team.
- The high levels of expertise, experience and commitment of Regional Advisors, resulting from the rigorous selection criteria applied, have allowed the Council to maintain a high quality of output. The Council, however, does not have adequate representation from Central Africa.
- *Recommendation: The same rigorous selection criteria for Regional Advisors should be maintained in the future.*
  - *Recommendation: Regional Advisors should be chosen so that there is a balance in terms of nationality, gender, sub-region, fields of expertise, language, etc. Central Africa should be given priority in selecting future advisors.*
- The effectiveness and efficiency of the Council has been enhanced by the support of IDRC-WARO, which has learned from the strengths and weaknesses of the activities and has progressively taken corrective measures to improve the working environment of the Council throughout its life. Examples of this doing-by-learning resulted in the Thematic Discussions, where steps were taken to enhance knowledge creation, and in improving the outputs and effectiveness of the researcher/policy maker workshops.

- The effectiveness of the Council has been reduced by the initial absence of a strategic plan, a monitoring and evaluation plan and a plan for the dissemination of the results. However, corrective actions by IDRC helped to significantly improve the situation and to obtain positive results.
- The credibility and visibility of IDRC within the region has increased, as a result of the work of the Council. Regional Advisors have access to high level government officials and have helped to establish and/or strengthen their relationships with IDRC. The media has also been instrumental in covering workshop events. The Council has however not fully exploited the media for greater publicity coverage of its activities.
  - *Recommendation: IDRC should make specific efforts to maintain the relationships that it has established, during activities of the Council, with high-level officials in the various countries.*
  - *Recommendation: Future workshops should be exploited as opportunities for media exposure, before, during and after the meeting.*
- The Council and IDRC have used the media to popularize the work of the Council as well as to engage Regional Advisors in international debates, and to highlight the role of IDRC in supporting research for development in the region.
  - *Recommendation: Regional Advisors should continue to use the media to inform local as well as international audiences of the work of the Council as well as provide the African perspective in international debates. IDRC should share these media contributions by the Regional Advisors, with various institutions such as governments, NGOs, regional organizations (ADB, CILSS, ECOWAS, etc.), international organizations, IDRC Regional Offices and Ottawa.*
- There was some concern that Regional Advisors might confuse their advisory role with that of governance. This evaluation has confirmed that all Regional Advisors understood their roles and the limits of their activities, at a very early stage of their involvement. The concern was therefore not an issue within the Council.
- Regional Advisors were supposed to serve in the Council for up to three years. Due to various reasons, some members served beyond this time. It is noted that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council has benefited significantly from such flexibility. There is, however, a need for Advisors to have a formal orientation package and clear guidelines regarding their performance and their term in office.
  - *Recommendation: The mandate for future Advisors should be three years, renewed once.*
- The Council is an appropriate mechanism for environmental scanning and knowledge creation in West/Central Africa. It has gained experience and lessons that may be useful to other regions.
  - *Recommendation: Replication of activities by the WARO Council in other regions should depend on the local context and on an assessment of the benefits to be gained.*

## **STRENGTHS OF THE RESEARCHER/POLICY MAKER WORKSHOP SERIES**

- ✚ The Workshops provide the opportunity for policy makers and researchers to learn about each other's concerns regarding why there is insufficient dialogue and collaboration. (*sec 3.3.1*)

- ✚ The Workshops present the opportunity for researchers to learn about how to present ideas and research results to policy makers in a way that the latter can understand and eventually use them. (sec 3.3.2.1, p. xx)
- ✚ The Workshops present the opportunity for policy makers to learn how best to communicate their needs for research, and make use of research results in decision-making. (sec 3.3.2.1)
- ✚ The Workshops develop the capacity of people in the region to identify and try to solve development bottlenecks. (sec 3.3.2.1)
- ✚ The Workshops help in the identification of entry points for IDRC programming. (sec 3.3.2.3)
- ✚ The Workshops provide opportunities for IDRC to establish or strengthen relationships with policy makers in West and Central Africa. (sec 3.3.3.1)
- ✚ The Workshops help to increase the visibility of IDRC. (sec 3.3.3.6)
- ✚ The Follow-up Committees provide an effective environment for local capacity building in sustainably improving researcher/policy maker interaction.

## THE WORKSHOP SERIES – CONCLUSIONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

- The researcher/policy maker workshops, which were organized by Regional Advisors, have succeeded in getting policy makers and researchers to engage in dialogue on future collaboration regarding the use of research results.
  - *Recommendation: Future workshops should be organized by Regional Advisors. However, both policy makers and researchers should be involved from the beginning in order to develop a sense of ownership and foster their commitment throughout the process.*
- Workshops have not been sufficiently publicized, and workshop conclusions have not been adequately disseminated by IDRC. When media coverage existed, it was usually limited to the country in which the workshop was held.  
*Recommendation: The following media publicity coverage is recommended for future workshops;*
  - *A small debate in the form of a forum should be held through the media, before the actual workshop, to stimulate interest.*
  - *During the workshops, the media should be invited to cover the opening ceremony where high level government officials are usually present. The media should also be invited to participate in the workshops.*
  - *A press conference should be held at the end of the workshops to present the main conclusions and to generate support for follow-up.*
  - *IDRC could package the conclusions of the workshops in the form of concise and informative “policy briefs” for distribution to policy makers and researchers in the region.*
- The workshops and other activities of the Council have identified various areas for environmental scanning and knowledge creation. The Council can be very effective in providing useful information on these to IDRC to strengthen various programs.
  - *Recommendation: The Council should consider holding new series of workshops aimed at other important subject areas that are equally important to the region.*
- Follow-up Committees in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Benin have all basically achieved their mandates. They have sensitized researcher and policy makers, improved collaboration between them and have Action Plans for use to continue the dialogue. Mali has not obtained any significant results. Ghana has used existing national mechanisms to obtain results to encourage the use of research results to improve the private sector.

- *Recommendation: In cases where the Committees have not obtained the needed results, IDRC should work in close collaboration with the various committees so that the following are carried out: ensure strong leadership of each committee; finalize the action plans for each country and hold the validation workshop; develop a resource mobilization strategy to implement the action plans; and, disseminate the results of the work of the committees*
- *Recommendation: Given the potential impact of the researcher/policy maker dialogue, IDRC can make substantial contribution to influencing the sustainable use of research results by supporting the work of the Follow-up Committees after the development and validation of the Action Plans in each country. Support can be provided through the development of a multi-country project that seeks to improve the use of research results through improved researcher/policy maker interaction.*

### **STRENGTHS OF THE THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS**

- ✚ The Thematic Discussions are mechanisms for rapidly getting the Advisors to reflect on specific issues and identify topics of research that can be useful to IDRC programming.
- ✚ Thematic Discussions are mechanisms with the potential for providing a forum for regional feedback to IDRC regarding ideas or documents being developed.

### **THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS – CONCLUSIONS AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Thematic Discussions were an effective means for the Regional Advisors to collect information and identify potential areas for IDRC research support. The topics covered were relevant to the needs of the region as well as to IDRC's programs.
- The results of the Thematic Discussions have not been adequately packaged and disseminated. This has therefore limited the benefits of the knowledge that was created by the Regional Advisors.
  - *Recommendation: Efforts should be made by IDRC and the Commission so that the results of all Thematic Discussions will be adequately documented and disseminated.*

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## ACRONYMS

ADRF	Asian Development Research Forum
ASRO	Regional Office for Southeast and East Asia
BAME	Bureau d'Analyses Macro Economiques
CS&PF	Corporate Strategy and Program Framework
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESARO	Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ISRA	Institut Sénégalaise de Recherche Agronomiques
LACRO	Regional Office for Latin America and Caribbean
MERO	Regional Office for Middle East and North Africa
SARO	Regional Office for South Asia
WARO	Regional Office for West and Central Africa
Council	WARO Council of Regional Advisors

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

For the purpose of this evaluation, a few key terms are defined as follows:

*Coherence*: The degree to which various program elements (activities, means, resources, individuals) join together to form a whole aiming to achieve the stated objectives (UNESCO, 2005).

*Effectiveness*: The degree to which a program is achieving its objectives (Boulmetis & Dutwin, 2000, p. 3).

*Efficiency*: The degree to which a program has been productive in relationship to its resources (Boulmetis & Dutwin, 2000, p. 3).

*Environmental Scanning*: The act of seeking “information about events and relationships in a company’s outside environment, the knowledge of which would assist top management in its task of charting the company’s future course of action” (Aguilar, 1967, p. 1).

*Formative Evaluation*: Evaluation that provides information about how a program operates and how to improve it. Typical audiences for formative evaluation are program staff and managers (Torres et al., 1996, p. 2).

*Information*: Data that have been organized in a context relevant to the user (Wiig, 1997).

*Knowledge*: Information with meaning assigned to it (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000).

*Relevance*: The extent to which program objectives are consistent with the needs to be met (UNESCO, 2005).

*Replicability*: The capacity to duplicate the processes and benefits of a set of development activities in new locations after their effectiveness has been demonstrated in limited geographic areas (Narayan, 1993, p. 95).

*Summative evaluation*: Evaluation that provides information about the overall effectiveness, impact, and/or outcomes of a program. Typical audiences for summative evaluations are funders, sponsors, and/or organizational leaders (Torres et al., 1996, p. 2).

## **1. BACKGROUND**

### **1.1 Reason for Creating the Council of Regional Advisors**

IDRC is well-known for its responsiveness to the research for development needs of developing countries. In order to develop effective programs, which will lead to significant perceived change and impact, the organization must have useful information and advice regarding strategic entry points for research. The current WARO Regional Director therefore suggested the idea of the Council of Regional Advisors, and has spearheaded its development and management, with the support and collaboration of other IDRC staff members.

In September 2001, the West and Central Africa Regional Office (WARO) launched its Council of Regional Advisors, with the aim of reinforcing the responsiveness of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) to research needs in the region, according to the guidelines of its 2005-2010 Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CS&PF)<sup>1</sup> ([www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-10509-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-10509-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)). This evaluation covers the period between September 2001 and May 2008.

### **1.2 Composition of the Council of Regional Advisors**

The Council has been comprised of individuals from West and Central Africa, representing fields of expertise that complement the four main program areas identified in the CS&PF, namely environment and natural resources management, economic and social equity, and information and communication technologies for development, innovation, policy and society, as well as some cross-disciplinary areas such as health, capacity building, policy influence and gender equity. The members of the first cohort were identified in consultation with directors of program areas and regional program officers within IDRC, and Canadian diplomats. Nine Regional Advisors have left the Council since its inception, and were replaced through co-optation. New members were recruited, based on recommendations of the Council to the Regional Director on possible candidates, and their curricula vitae were reviewed and discussed before making a decision. Regional Advisors were selected based on their expertise, their achievements, their ability to influence policy making, and their proven commitment to research for development. An effort was made to maintain a balance within the Council in terms of expertise, nationality, language and gender. A list of Regional Advisors and the duration of their service is shown in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-10509-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/fr/ev-10509-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html)

**Table 1 List of present and past Regional Advisors**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>EXPERTISE - DURATION</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
<b>Present WARO Regional Advisors</b>		
<b>Ajjola</b> , Abdul-Hakeem B. D. (Mr.)	Information Technology, 2008 - present	Consultant, <b>Nigeria</b>
<b>Diallo</b> , Asseta (Dr.)	Economics, 2006 to present	International Center for Soil Fertility (IFDC), Burkina Faso
<b>Diop</b> , Mbareck (Col.) /	Civil Engineering/Environment, 2001 - present	Deputy Director General, SIPRES, <b>Senegal</b>
<b>Dzidonu</b> , Clement (Prof.)	Information & Communication Technology, 2001 - present	President & Senior Research Fellow, International Institute for Information Technology (INIIT), <b>Ghana</b>
<b>Houenou</b> , Pascal (Prof.)	Environment, 2001 - present	Director, Laboratory for Environmental Sciences, Université Abobo-Adjamé; Former Dean, UFR Environmental Sciences, <b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>
<b>Massougbodji</b> , Marina (Mrs.) (Prof.)	Medicine (Cardiology), 2005 - present	Professor/Cardiologist, Faculty of Health Sciences; Former Minister of Health, <b>Benin</b>
<b>Ndiaye</b> , Aboulaye (Mr.)	Information and Communication Technology, 2001 – present	Director, Agir – Promouvoir, <b>Senegal</b>
<b>Okolo</b> , Angela A. (Prof.)	Medicine (Paediatrics) – 2005 to present	Program Manager , ECOWAS; Director, Institute of Child Health, University of <b>Benin, Nigeria</b>
<b>Sesay</b> , Shekou (Dr.)	Geography, 2005 – present	Consultant, Former Minister of Presidential Affairs, <b>Sierra Leone</b>
<b>Yitamben</b> , Gisèle (Mrs.)	Development/Entrepreneurship, 2005 - present	President, Association to Support Women Entrepreneurs (ASAFE), <b>Cameroon</b>
<b>Past WARO Regional Advisors</b>		
<b>Abbey</b> , Joseph Leo Sekoh (Dr.)	Social Science, 2001 – 2004	Executive Director, Centre for Policy Analysis, <b>Ghana</b>
<b>Alihounou</b> , Eusebe (Dr.)	Social Science, 2001 - 2002	Director, CREDESA, <b>Bénin</b>
<b>Konaté</b> , Mama (Mr.)	Meteorology, 2003 - 2007	Director of Meteorology, <b>Mali</b>
<b>Lo</b> , Masse (Mr.)	Environment, 2001 - 2004	Regional Coordinator, Lead Afrique Francophone, <b>Senegal</b>
<b>Mindaoudou</b> Aichatou (Mrs.)	Social Science, 2001 Resigned when named Minister of Foreign Affairs.	Minister, Foreign Affairs, <b>Niger</b>
<b>Pegatienan</b> , Jacques (Mr.)	Economics, 2001 - 2002	Former Director of CIRES, <b>Cote d'Ivoire</b>
<b>Tankoano</b> , Joachim (Mr.)	Information Technology, 2001 – 2005. Minister of Posts and New Information Technologies.	Delegate General for Information technology, Prime Minister's Office, <b>Burkina Faso</b>
<b>Tiendrébéogo</b> , Alice (Mrs.)	Education, 2001 - 2005	Director General, Fund for Literacy and Formal Education; Former Minister of Education, <b>Burkina Faso</b>
<b>Touré</b> , Mamoudou (Mr.)	Economics, 2001 - 2004	Former Minister of Finance; Chairman of the Board, Senegalo-Tunisian Bank, <b>Senegal</b>

### 1.3 Activities of the Council

The activities of the Council initially involved discussions by the Regional Advisors to identify important areas of research needs using electronic forums, regular written summaries of syntheses and analysis, as well as annual meetings organized by IDRC-WARO. Activities were later formalized and were concentrated around the following areas:

- Workshops aimed at improving dialogue between researchers and policy makers
- Support provided to Workshop Follow-up Committees
- Thematic discussions to help identify research needs in the region
- Working meetings to develop ideas and documentation for wider dissemination

A summary of the main activities of the Commission from 2001 to 2008 is presented in Table 2. Written documentation of the main results of the activities of the Council is presented under “List of Publications Pertaining to Council Activities” in Annex 1.

**Table 2 Summary of activities of the Commission from 2001 to 2008**

Activity	Date	Location
<b>Regional Advisors Meetings</b>		
First Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Sept 10-12, 2001	M’bodiene, Senegal
Second Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jul 23-24, 2002	Dakar, Senegal
Third Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jan 13-14, 2003	Dakar, Senegal.
Fourth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Aug 5-6, 2003	Cotonou, Benin
Fifth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jan 29, 2005	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
Sixth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jul 08, 2005	Accra, Ghana
Seventh Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Feb 10, 2006	Bamako, Mali
Eighth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jun 23, 2006	Yaoundé, Cameroon
Ninth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Jan 18, 2007	Cotonou, Benin
Tenth Regional Advisors’ Meeting	May 31 – Jun 2, 2007	Dakar, Senegal
Eleventh Regional Advisors’ Meeting	Apr 10-12, 2008	Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire
<b>Workshop Series</b>		
<u>Researchers/Policy Makers Workshop: Agriculture - <i>Atelier de réflexion et d’échanges sur la synergie entre chercheurs et décideurs dans le domaine agricole au Sénégal</i></u>	Jun 29-30, 2003	Dakar, Senegal
<u>Researchers/Policy Makers Workshop: Education - <i>Atelier de réflexion et d’échanges sur la synergie entre chercheurs et décideurs dans le monde de l’éducation au Burkina Faso</i></u>	Jan 27-28, 2005	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
<u>Researchers/Policy Makers Workshop: Private Sector – <i>Promoting Private Sector Development in Ghana: The Role of Research</i></u>	Jul 06-07, 2005	Accra, Ghana
<u>Researchers/Policy Makers Workshop: Desertification - <i>Forum for Reflection and Exchange among Researchers and Decision Makers on “Drought and Desertification in West and Central Africa: The Case of Mali”</i></u>	Feb 8-9, 2006	Bamako, Mali
<u>Researchers/Policy Makers Workshop: Health – <i>Symposium de Réflexion et d’Echanges sur le Dialogue entre Chercheurs et Décideurs dans le Domaine de la Réduction de la Mortalité Maternelle et Néonatale au Bénin</i></u>	Jan 16-17, 2007	Cotonou, Benin
<b>Thematic Discussions</b>		
<u>Thematic Discussion: Gender - <i>The rights of Women, Citizenship</i></u>	Feb 10, 2006	Bamako, Mali

<i>and Development in West and Central Africa</i>		
<u>Thematic Discussion</u> : Integration and Globalization - <i>Challenges and Opportunities for a Beneficial Integration of West and Central Africa in a Globalized world</i>	Jun 23, 2006	Yaoundé, Cameroon
<u>Thematic Discussion</u> : Sustainable Development - <i>Fostering Sustainability in Development Policies for West and Central Africa: The Role of Research</i>	Jan 18, 2007	Cotonou, Benin
<u>Thematic Discussion</u> : <i>National Strategies for Using research results in West and Central African Countries</i>	Apr 10–12, 2008	Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire
<u>Thematic Discussion</u> : <i>Agenda and Priorities for Research on Regional Integration in the Sub-region</i>	Apr 10–12, 2008	Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>		
Evaluation of Council's Activities	Jun – Oct, 2005	Dakar
Evaluation of Follow-up Committees	Mar/April, 2007	Dakar
Monitoring of Activities	2005 - 2008	Ghana, Mali, Cameroon, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire

### **1.3.1 The Researcher/Policy Makers Workshop Series**

The decision to initiate a series of workshops that would bring together researchers, policy makers in West and Central Africa was made by WARO's Council of Regional Advisors, during its fourth meeting held in Cotonou, Benin in August 2003. The aim of the series was to improve the interaction between researchers and policy makers, and to develop mechanisms to better align the needs of policy makers and the research activities of scientists. The Researcher/Policy Maker Workshop series became an important activity of the Council. It started in July 2004, and was implemented over the next three years, focusing on countries represented by current advisors (Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Cameroon and Benin). (Due to the unstable political situation in Cote d'Ivoire, this country, which was among those initially selected, was replaced by Cameroon.)

Follow-up Committees were set up during each of the six workshops and were given the mandate to implement specific activities that would develop the framework needed for promoting dialogue between researchers and policy makers. These Follow-up Committees in the six countries have achieved results to varying degrees.

### **1.3.2 Thematic Discussions**

On the recommendation of the 2005 Evaluation Study, Thematic Discussions were initiated as a means of generating knowledge for use by IDRC in developing its research programs. Three of them were held at the end of the Researcher/Policy Makers' Workshops in Mali, Cameroon and Benin, and two were later held during a meeting of the Council in Abidjan in April 2008, on various topics, as shown in Table 2. The Commission subsequently spent time in developing Thematic Papers to summarize the results of the discussions.

### **1.3.3 Advisors' Meetings**

Several meetings of the Council were held during its life, as listed in Table 2. Their purpose was to plan the activities of the Commission, reflect on effective ways of documenting results of their work, and providing inputs to documents prepared by IDRC.



### **1.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Activities**

In 2005, IDRC started a process of continuous monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the Council and its Workshop Series. A mid-term evaluation was carried out and an Evaluation Report<sup>2</sup> was prepared in 2005. As a result of the evaluation, terms of reference were developed for the Council, which consisted of; Goal, Objectives, Outcomes and Performance Indicators (see Annex 2). Activities were reorganized to improve the effectiveness of the Council and to facilitate future evaluation studies.

Four of the six workshops were monitored/evaluated between 2005 and 2008. The activities of the Follow-up Committees were also evaluated during April/May 2007<sup>3</sup> to assess areas that needed to be strengthened. This present report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Regional Council and its activities, covering the 7 years of its existence. It uses information collected from all monitoring and evaluation activities to date.

### **1.4 Purpose of the Evaluation**

This evaluation, which was both formative<sup>4</sup> and summative<sup>5</sup>, assessed the activities of WARO's Council of Regional Advisors between 2001 and 2008. The activities of the Commission consisted of the following:

- A series of researcher/policy maker's workshops aimed at developing mechanisms that would bring together researchers and policy makers in West and Central Africa. The decision to engage in this activity was made by WARO's Council of Regional Advisors, during its fourth meeting held in Cotonou, Benin in August 2003. The aim of the series was to improve the interaction between researchers and policy makers, and to develop mechanisms to better align the needs of policy makers and the research activities of scientists.
- Implementation of the recommendation of the workshops by Follow-up Committees. It consisted of developing the framework that would promote dialogue between researchers and policy makers.
- Thematic Discussions aimed at generating knowledge for use by IDRC in developing its research programs.
- Advisors Meetings aimed at; planning activities of the Commission, developing ideas on documenting various outputs, and disseminating results obtained.

The evaluation assessed the activities of the Commission, focusing on the following:

- **Relevance:** The extent to which program objectives are consistent with the needs to be met (UNESCO, 2005).
- **Effectiveness:** The degree to which a program is achieving its objectives (Boulmetis & Dutwin, 2000, p. 3).

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<sup>2</sup> Ba, Leona & Bassey, Michael W., An Evaluation of the WARO Council of Regional Advisors and its Workshop Series, October 7, 2005

<sup>3</sup> Ba, Leona & Bassey, Michael W., Evaluation of Follow-up Committee of the Workshop Series of IDRC's WARO Council of Regional Advisors, April 30, 2007

<sup>4</sup> Formative evaluation provides information about how a program operates and how to improve it. Typical audiences for formative evaluation are program staff and managers (Torres et al., 1996, p. 2).

<sup>5</sup> Summative evaluation provides information about the overall effectiveness, impact, and/or outcomes of a program. Typical audiences for summative evaluations are funders, sponsors, and/or organizational leaders (Torres et al., 1996, p. 2).

- Efficiency: The degree to which a program has been productive in relationship to its resources (Boulmetis & Dutwin, 2000, p. 3). .
- Replicability: The capacity to duplicate the processes and benefits of a set of development activities in new locations after their effectiveness has been demonstrated in limited geographic areas (Narayan, 1993, p. 95).

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This evaluation was conducted using as guidelines, documents that outlined the Council's terms of reference and the evaluation's terms of reference<sup>6</sup>. It also used the experience and knowledge gained during previous monitoring and evaluation activities of the Council. The findings were intended for its targeted audience, namely the program and management staff in the WARO Office and at IDRC headquarters in Ottawa. A major effort was made to obtain information that would inform decisions related to the Council, Workshop Series and Thematic Discussions.

### **2.1 Sources of Information**

The following were the main sources of information for this evaluation:

- Relevant IDRC staff members
- Present Regional Advisors
- Members of Workshop Follow-up Committees
- Documents related to the Council
- Reports related to the Workshop Series
- Documents related to the Workshop Follow-up Committees
- Monitoring/Evaluation reports of four Workshops
- 2005 Evaluation Report of the Council
- 2007 Evaluation Report of the Workshop Follow-up Committees
- Documents and monitoring information of the Thematic Discussions

### **2.2 Data Collection Methods**

Data were collected through the review of documents, interviews (focus group, face-to-face and telephone interviews) and observation. These types of data collection methods were used to allow for triangulation of the data.

#### **2.2.1 Document Review**

Prior to developing interview guides, relevant documents were reviewed to better understand the WARO Council of Regional Advisors and its Workshop Series, in terms of its context, purpose, activities and expected outcomes. Documents reviewed included:

- IDRC's 2005-2010 Corporate Strategy and Program Framework
- Reports of Council meetings
- Workshop reports
- Follow up Committee reports
- Terms of reference of Regional Advisors' Council
- Project documents
- Correspondence of Regional Advisors posted on their email list
- Monitoring and evaluation reports of the Council, workshops and their Follow-up Committees.

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<sup>6</sup> See Annex 3 for the terms of reference for this evaluation.

### **2.2.2 Interviews**

Interviews were conducted using interview guides, which were developed based on the terms of reference developed for the evaluation. All areas of concern were thus covered adequately, for the Council, the Workshop Series, the Thematic Discussions and the Council's Meetings. The key informants were chosen based on discussions with the WARO Regional Office team and on the experience of the evaluator during past evaluation activities concerning the Council's activities. A list of the key informants interviewed is shown in Annex 4 and consisted of 21 persons including:

- Relevant WARO staff (the Regional Director, Program Officers, and the Research and Information Officer).
- Relevant staff at IDRC Headquarters in Ottawa (Vice-President of Programs and Directors).
- Regional directors in other regional offices (MERO, ESARO, ASRO, SARO, LACRO)
- Current Regional Advisors
- Members of Workshop Follow-up Committees

Interviews were conducted by telephone or during face-to-face meetings depending on the location of interviewees. Questions for a given interviewee were chosen from an Interview Guide<sup>7</sup> and depended on factors such as:

- Extent of knowledge of the Council
- Extent of involvement with the Council
- Role or position, i.e. Regional Advisor, WARO staff, other IDRC staff, Follow-up Committee member, etc
- Level of participation in activities

Interviewees were, in general very cooperative in responding to interview questions, and kindly gave of their time.

### **2.2.3 Observation**

Evaluators participated in four of the six researcher/policy makers' workshops, five Thematic Discussions, six Council Meetings, and have carried out two evaluations of the Council and the Follow-up Committees. They were therefore able to observe various aspects of the activities, which included overall organization, advanced preparation of workshops and meetings, venue of meetings and workshops, registration, selection of participants, quality and relevance of documents and presentations, facilitation of discussions, conclusions, etc.

## **2.3 Data Analysis**

Data and results from previous evaluation and monitoring activities were analyzed in conjunction with new information obtained from interviews. New data from the most recent interviews were analyzed without making any distinctions between the various categories of interviewees. This is because previous results of interviews indicated no significant differences between the various groups of interviewees. All available data were content analyzed in order to identify patterns that emerged in the data. These patterns guided the process of defining categories within which to classify the data obtained. This data was cross-validated with the information collected through observation and the review of documents. Any information collected that was not consistent with a valid and reliable source of information, such as IDRC documents or monitoring and evaluation results were not included in the final analysis.

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<sup>7</sup> See Annex 5 for the interview guide used for this evaluation

## **2.4 Limitations and Constraints**

A limitation in conducting the 2005 Evaluation was the lack of a systematic process to collect information on the processes and activities of the Council, as well as its achievements. Another constraint identified at that time was the absence of terms of reference for the Council, which outlined what was expected as outcomes. This was rectified and this final evaluation was based on a systematic monitoring of activities since 2005. The terms of reference developed for this evaluation was developed by the evaluators, taking into account lessons learned from other monitoring and evaluation activities.

One constraint is that the evaluator did not receive systematic information on some of the activities of the Council and the Workshop Follow-up Committees. Information that could have been obtained earlier was thus obtained only much later through discussions and interviews.

Another limitation was the inability to interview all of the persons closely connected to the activities. (They either did not respond to correspondence or were too busy to schedule interviews.) This was however not considered a significant factor because they had been interviewed during earlier evaluations and had since then not had any different experiences. Care was taken to choose informants who would provide information that was relevant and different from that provided by other interviewees.

## **3. EVALUATION FINDINGS**

### **3.1 Overall Context**

The preceding sections have provided information on the *raison d'être* of the Commission, the activities it has carried out and the evaluation process used to assess how the Commission has performed. This section reports and summarizes the evaluation findings, which have been collected from 2005 to 2008. The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency of all the Council's activities and to some extent their replicability. It should be recalled that the objectives of the Council had to do with environmental scanning, knowledge creation, capacity building and improving IDRC's credibility. The findings are therefore presented to demonstrate to what extent the Council has been able to fulfill these objectives taking into consideration its activities.

The four main activities of the Council (Workshop Series, Follow-up Committees, Thematic Discussions, and Advisors' Meetings) overlap to some extent. However in the interest of clarity, all of them with the exception of the Advisors Meetings will be treated separately. Activities relating to the Advisors Meetings will be discussed within the context of the three other activities since it cuts across them all.

As stated earlier, this evaluation was conducted with the aim to produce findings that would be useful for its intended audience, namely program and management staff in the WARO Office and at IDRC Headquarters in Ottawa. This audience was a determining factor especially in discussing relevance, which was mainly viewed within IDRC's Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CS&PF).

## 3.2 Council Findings

### 3.2.1 Role of the Council

The WARO Council of Regional Advisors was set up to help IDRC to better respond to the needs of the region according to the guidelines of its Corporate Strategy and Program Framework (CS&PF). The main contributions consisted of identifying priorities and needs in research for development, commenting on IDRC programs and recommending program directions based on the activities of other donors, and/or on emerging issues that are relevant to the work of IDRC. In order to play their advisory role, members of the Council had to first learn about IDRC's mission, guiding principles, strategy and programs, as well as its activities in West and Central Africa.

Regional Advisors have contributed to two important organizational processes. Environmental Scanning involved searching for information that was relevant to IDRC's regional programming then working together on Knowledge Creation. Descriptions of these terms are presented in Box 1.

#### Box 1 Definition of Environmental Scanning and Knowledge Creation

**Environmental scanning**, consists of seeking information about events and relationships in an organization's external environment, the knowledge of which would assist top management in its task of charting the organization's future course of action" (Aguilar, 1967). In this process **information** is defined as **data** that have been organized in a context relevant to the user, (Wiig, 1997)

**Knowledge** is defined as information with meaning assigned to it (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000). Thus **knowledge creation**, involves attaching meaning to the **information** collected through reflection and discussion, thus transforming it into knowledge that is relevant and valuable for the organization (Wiig, 1997).

**Information** and **knowledge** are two key terms in understanding the work of the Council.

The role assigned to the Council evolved between 2001 and 2008. It initially was supposed to be involved in electronic dialogue on regional issues that received little or no support from other actors. In addition it was supposed to provide regular summaries of reflections and analyses of current development topics. An annual meeting of the Council was also anticipated as a means of encouraging interaction between Regional Advisors and IDRC personnel. The Council operated in this manner till 2003 when it held the first Researcher/Policy Makers' Workshop in Dakar. The Workshop Series then became the main focus of activities until 2005 when the role of the Council was re-oriented as the result of the 2005 Evaluation of the Council's activities<sup>8</sup>.

The Council's evolving role was supported by changes in its terms of reference, which to a large extent clearly defined the objectives and expected outcomes of its activities. This timely and positive move can be credited to the receptiveness of both the Council and IDRC-WARO to learn from experience and quickly adjust. In general, the Council changed its role in a manner that made it more relevant and effective, as will be discussed later.

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<sup>8</sup> The 2005 evaluation indicated that the Council did not have clear and well defined terms of reference, which made it difficult to carry out an evaluation to assess progress made in attaining objectives and outcomes. This led to the development of objectives, outcomes and indicators for the Council's activities, based on which an evaluation plan and terms of references were prepared for this final phase of the evaluation.

### ***3.2.2 Relevance and Effectiveness of Council***

The Council had four specific activities and anticipated five main Outcomes as shown in Annex 2. The question of relevance and effectiveness will therefore be answered by assessing to what extent the Indicators/Outcomes/Objectives have been achieved. Data to make this assessment have been collected on a continuous basis, as mentioned under Methodology, since 2005.

It is also important to ask five fundamental questions:

- At a conceptual level, has the Council been relevant to IDRC?
- Has the information collected by Regional Advisors during environmental scanning been relevant to IDRC? Is the Council effective in environmental scanning?
- Is the Council effective in creating knowledge? Is the knowledge created by the Council relevant to IDRC?
- Did IDRC's visibility increase as a result of the work of the Council?
- Have Regional Advisors been able to improve their leadership capacity in research and development?

This evaluation attempts to provide answers to the above questions in the ensuing sections. Nevertheless a summary of how effective the Council has been in achieving its objectives has been developed and is presented in Annex 6

#### ***3.2.2.1 Relevance of the Council***

The IDRC 2005-2010 Corporate Strategy states that, "the mission of IDRC remains 'Empowerment through Knowledge,' i.e. to promote interaction, and foster a spirit of cooperation and mutual learning within and among social groups, nations, and societies through the creation, and adaptation of the knowledge that the people of developing countries judge to be of greatest relevance to their own prosperity, security, and equity." Furthermore, IDRC promotes itself, through its various publications, as an organization that empowers its target beneficiaries to produce and apply knowledge for the development of their country and/or region. It therefore follows that the Council, which was set up as a mechanism to create and apply such knowledge in West and Central Africa, is relevant to IDRC's mission, and eloquently supports the idea that IDRC listens to its partners in developing countries.

Results of interviews indicate that interviewees<sup>9</sup> unanimously believed that the Council has been very relevant for several reasons:

- ✚ There is a lack of documented information in West and Central Africa on; research needs and priorities, research activities, opportunities and challenges. Access to information in the region has significantly improved, compared to library systems that were poorly resourced and having inadequate ICT skills (UNESCO, 1999). This has been due to advances in electronic indexing, improved search engines and efforts by organizations such as: IDRC and IRD to improve access to research documents; theses from many institutions within the African Association of Universities (<http://www.aau.org/datad/index.htm>); the Fonds francophone des autoroutes (<http://cybertheses.francophone.org>); and the Systemes d'information scientifique et technique (SIST) of the French Cooperation, such as the portal for Senegal (<http://ww.sist.sn>). Regional Advisors are able to access these and other information sources to obtain information of relevance to IDRC's activities.

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<sup>9</sup> During the 2005 evaluation of the Council, 36 out of the 38 people interviewed believed that the Council was relevant.

- ✚ Since the Council is multi-disciplinary it represents IDRC's program areas and therefore allows for a holistic and integrated approach to development. The value of this multidisciplinary approach was highlighted during the Africa Regional Consultations held in Dakar for the development of the 2005-2010 IDRC Corporate Strategy and Program Framework. All Regional Advisors have indicated that participation in the Council has enabled them to acquire a broader and more integrated vision of development. The Council's discussions therefore reflect a synergy between their different areas of expertise to produce knowledge that is more holistic and useful in addressing development problems.
- ✚ The Council has been a means for IDRC to listen to the needs of its target beneficiaries and build capacities in the sub-region through all of its activities. This has provided good opportunities to build capacities in West and Central Africa to identify problems and find solutions.
- ✚ The Council provides a mechanism to build explicitly African agendas into current international policy debates. Some Regional Advisors have been interviewed, for example by BBC, on issues such as the effect on sub-Saharan countries of debt cancellation by G8 countries. Another has been involved in providing advice on international climate change.
- ✚ IDRC strongly supports gender equity and ensures that this element is incorporated within the projects that it supports. The West and Central African sub-region has development problems that are strongly linked to gender inequity. The Council has consisted of ten Regional Advisors, of which 4 are women. Given the high profile of this Council in the sub-region, and the usually low participation of women in such committees, a strong and positive message has been passed on regarding IDRC's support for women's participation in development. This is therefore relevant to IDRC's development principles.
- ✚ The work of the Council, especially the Workshop Series, has allowed IDRC to gain easy access to policy makers in West and Central Africa. This increased interaction with policy makers has increased IDRC's visibility, especially in the countries of Regional Advisors where the workshops have been held.

### 3.2.2.2 *Environmental Scanning by the Council*

The Council has been actively involved in environmental scanning. IDRC in its 2005-2010 Corporate Strategy, IDRC expresses its commitment to maintain Africa as "the priority region, in keeping with its particular challenges and Canada's commitment to the continent." Furthermore the Strategy states that due to the heterogeneity of political, social, cultural, research, economic and technical conditions, IDRC must rely heavily on country- and region-specific consultations for specific program choices. The Council has had an advantage over other bodies constituted to provide information relevant to IDRC's programs for the following reasons:

- The Council is relatively better well organized and quasi-permanent, allowing it to be more effective in obtaining information of relevance to IDRC.
- The use of ad hoc groups and key informant interviews tend to be a tedious process. In the first place it takes considerable time to identify and recruit people to carry out the work. Secondly, such individuals usually are not well informed of IDRC's mission and actions, leading to results that are not satisfactory enough.

IDRC's Program Officers working in West Central Africa are very effective in defining needs within their respective areas of responsibility. They are however, due to their heavy workload, unable to provide the consistent and wide environmental scanning needed to influence decision-making at the sub-regional level. In addition, given that IDRC carries out global and regional

programs and networks, rather than bilateral ones, it is difficult for a Program Officer to be very familiar with context and issues at the country level.

Regional Advisors on the other hand, have not used information gathering processes that focused on a specific program area. Instead they worked across disciplines due to their diverse areas of expertise. The fact that they were from countries in West and Central Africa made them aware of the particular context and culture, and were thus able to efficiently scan the environment to gather information that were of relevance to IDRC.

The first three meetings of the Regional Advisors were basically dedicated to information gathering and the effect of their contribution was noted by the generally perceived effective contribution of the Council to the 2005 -2010 Corporate Strategy and Program Framework. The Council, however, did not fully exploit the results of its environmental scanning activities during the first three years of its existence. The information gathered should have been more systematically documented and disseminated.

Good progress was made by the Council in this regard after the 2005 Evaluation. Having clarified their terms of reference and re-oriented their work, the Regional Advisors then put significant efforts into the Workshop Series on researcher/policy maker interaction and on the Thematic Discussions, to gather data on needs of the region. They have thus been able to produce useful information on constraints to using research results and have identified possible activities to reduce these constraints. Concrete information on some research entry points have also been identified for the sub-region. These will be further discussed under the sections on Workshop Series and Thematic Discussions.

### *3.2.2.3 Knowledge Creation by the Council*

As pointed out earlier in Box 1, knowledge creation results from environmental scanning, processing the data into information and then giving it meaning through reflection and discussion. This process of creating knowledge has been a major activity of the Council on which significant time has been spent by the Regional Advisors. They have used their knowledge of IDRC and of its work in the region to place issues within a framework that is meaningful and relevant to IDRC. This has been done through the preparation of discussion papers by researchers in the region, face to face discussions, and then interpreting all the information to create knowledge.

According to information collected during discussions with respondents, the most effective knowledge creation by the Council may have been its contribution to the development of the IDRC 2005-2010 Corporate Strategy and Program Framework. The fact that Regional Advisors were given the opportunity to be involved early in the process, to review the background paper on Research and Development in West and Central Africa, allowed them to provide substantial and very relevant input.

The Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops were also used to collect substantial information for knowledge creation. Discussions before and during the workshops were structured by the Regional Advisors to generate information that was relevant to IDRC's programs. The participation of various persons helped to obtain a wide range of views regarding possible solutions.

While the Thematic Discussions were more restrained, activities involving only the Regional Advisors, they still made use of researchers in the region to provide information on certain aspects of the topics of the meetings. The Advisors were however the key discussants and were solely responsible for the final output of the meeting. They used the information to determine some entry points for IDRC research support.



Regional Advisors have been involved in developing proposals for new areas of intervention related to peace, security, democracy, governance, regional integration and technology for information and communication. Their inputs have been considered by some IDRC staff to be valuable. An argument made for this sort of reflection and input of the Council, based on evaluations of similar advisory mechanisms, is that its contributions are more useful during the early stages of program development.

Given its approach of seeking ideas from beneficiaries in order to develop effective research-support strategies, IDRC needs strong and at times persistent input from the region. For example education is considered a very crucial program in the sub-region where illiteracy is very high and training is in demand. The Council is well placed to play this role of providing advice, regarding why IDRC should give a particular area (e.g. education) some attention, based on concrete and convincing information. At the same time the Council should be advising IDRC on what should receive less emphasis. At the strategic level, regional intelligence would, for example, be useful to IDRC to determine how AIDS or civil war affects socio-economic development. This type of knowledge creation, aimed at providing information to bring about significant change in IDRC's program direction, has not been adequately exploited by the Council.

#### *3.2.2.4 Capacity-building within the Council*

The choice of Regional Advisors was based on several factors, which include: qualification in a field of interest to IDRC's programming, proven stature and respect by peers, experience in research for development or developmental issues, proven ability to reflect across disciplines, etc. They however became members of the council being unaware, in some cases, of the details of IDRC's operations. In addition they were often not used to being involved in such wide angled reflections and packaging of ideas that cut across the development spectrum. Thus in almost all cases their involvement in the Council has also been a learning experience.

All Regional Advisors feel that they have built their capacity and are more effective in their daily work. They all have indicated that they have gained a broader and more profound understanding of development issues. They have gained more knowledge about fields other than their own. This has been due to their participation in dialogue with researchers and policy makers, attending meetings and presenting papers relevant to their work and that of the Council, with support from IDRC. All Advisors feel that their involvement in high-level meetings with support from IDRC has significantly strengthened their ability to interact at the international level. (Some of their interventions that have caused this perceived capacity building are outlined in Box 2).

Participation in the Council has encouraged Regional Advisors to collect information and create knowledge in their own fields. Some examples of how Regional Advisors feel they have built capacity are briefly discussed below:

- One Advisor has presented aspects of her work to other Council members and to IDRC WARO staff on health issues. Her involvement has broadened her perspective, enabling her to integrate health and ecosystems into her work. Her promotion to the rank of a full professor, she believes has been due, in large part, to her involvement in the Council and focusing on ecosystem and health, which was considered a significant contribution in her field.
- Another Advisor worked as a university professor for years and then had an appointment within ECOWAS. Partly because of her involvement in the Council's activities, she had learnt to approach development problems from a holistic perspective and strengthened her project/program development skills. As a result, developing projects involving 15 countries,

taking into consideration health, drought, food security, and governance issues was not an insurmountable challenge.

### **Box 2 Developing Capacities to Interact at the International Level**

IDRC-WARO decided to build capacity of Regional Advisors while at the same time raising its visibility through the interventions of high-level West Africans at international fora. These interventions can be grouped into three sets of activities as outlined below:

- Advisors represented IDRC in important meetings held in their respective countries.
- Advisors, based on their own personal expertise, are requested/invited as Regional Advisors to major conferences but make presentations related to their fields of expertise.
- Advisors served as high-level experts for international media interested in Africa, to hold interviews arranged by IDRC

Some of the activities are:

- ✚ *Regional Director systematically introduced Regional Advisors to Canadian Embassy and CIDA officials in countries where he visited. This caused certain Regional Advisors to be invited to events on behalf of IDRC and develop activities with Canadian institutions in their countries.*
- ✚ *Advisor in Burkina Faso participated in several important meetings in Ouagadougou on behalf of IDRC. Presentation was made at the Forum for Innovation and Scientific and Technical Research (FIRST) on influence of research on public policy. FIRST Forum is a major event held every two years in Burkina Faso to unit researchers and policy makers.*
- ✚ *Advisor in Ghana represented IDRC in an event in Ghana and worked with former High Commissioner in establishing the Ghana-Canadian Science and Research Council (GCRSC). He represented IDRC at a meeting of ECOWAS in Accra. He was invited to make a presentation in Ottawa at an international conference, organized by IDRC, on private sector and development in 2005.*
- ✚ *Advisor in Sierra Leone facilitated high-level visit by the WARO Regional Director to Sierra Leone, which resulted in a support project for the National Commission for Reforming the Public Service.*
- ✚ *Advisor in Senegal participated in a conference in Vancouver, Canada, in 2002, organized by the Liu Centre and University of British Columbia and University of Laval, on Environmental Security as Priority in Government Policy 2002. Advisors from Senegal and Benin invited to Annual Montreal Conference on development in the Americas.*
- ✚ *IDRC presented the Commission of Regional Advisors as a reference group on questions of development for the media, during the G8 Summits in Kananaskis (Canada) in 2002 and in Gleneagles (Scotland) in 2005.*
- ✚ *Ivorian Advisor represented WARO Regional Director at Meeting at UN Headquarters, Nairobi on mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in Africa. Advisor participated in UNESCO-BREDA Consultative Meeting on Education for Sustainable Development in Sub Saharan Africa.*

#### *3.2.2.5 Effect on Credibility and Visibility of IDRC by Council*

IDRC's corporate approach is to listen to its partners in developing countries. Using the Council as a means of obtaining information and advice from the region has strengthened IDRC's credibility as an organization that cares about the views of its partners in West and Central Africa. The whole process of planning the Researcher/Policy Maker Workshop Series was a perfect illustration of IDRC's listening attitude. The idea to organize these workshops was that of a Regional Advisor, and it was discussed and approved by the Council. The themes for the various workshops were

proposed by Regional Advisors from the countries where the workshops were held. These were discussed by members of the Council and IDRC, which collectively made the final decision. Such an approach of consultation and giving the initiative to the Council to make decisions has contributed positively to the image and credibility of IDRC. The issue of ownership of the program has been another positive outcome of the decision making and implementation process; regional advisors feel they have responsibility for their activities and as a result have been very dedicated.

IDRC very often does not enjoy the visibility it deserves due to its relative low-key approach in doing business. The activities of the Council have helped to bring out IDRC more to the public, to policy makers as well as researchers. Regional Advisors, due to their positions at work have access to policy makers and have thus enhanced the visibility of IDRC. The Workshop Series provided very good opportunities for IDRC to interact with many of these people. In Senegal, the workshop was focused on agriculture and IDRC met with the Minister of Agriculture, thus providing an opportunity to develop a basis for future collaboration. In Burkina Faso and Mali, IDRC was also able to meet with key policy makers, some of them ministers, before the workshop. The workshop on Private Sector Development in Ghana ended with a Media Day during which Regional Advisors and IDRC staff members met with journalists to discuss the conclusions of the meeting. The journalists emphasized the importance of disseminating results of the meeting to inform the public and stimulate the interest of policy makers. In Cameroon, where IDRC was not well known, the Regional Advisor accompanied the WARO Regional Director to visit organizations that may be interested in working with IDRC. In Benin, the Regional Advisor organized a meeting between the WARO Regional Director and various Ministers. An agreement was signed between IDRC and Benin, and the event was covered by television, radio, and newspapers. Minutes of this meeting were presented at the Council of Ministers, during which IDRC projects, including the Centre régional de développement et santé (CREDESA), were highlighted.

### ***3.2.3 Factors Affecting Relevance and Effectiveness of Council***

The 2005 evaluation assessed factors that affected or could affect the relevance and effectiveness of the Council. It is noted that these factors have not changed. They are presented in the following paragraphs, highlighting how they affected the performance of the Council or how actions were taken to minimize any adverse effects.

#### ***3.2.3.1 Selection of Regional Advisors***

IDRC identified prerequisite qualifications and qualities in the selecting of Regional Advisors. They had to be sound in their areas of expertise, experienced, committed to development of the region, committed to the work of the Council and being available to participate in its activities. Knowledge of IDRC's work was not really a strong requirement.

People who have met Regional Advisors have unanimously been impressed with their output, experience, expertise and commitment to the work of the Council and the region. It is popular opinion that if IDRC wants to maintain the Council then it should make sure that the quality and commitment of its Advisors is maintained.

Another important factor in the selection of Regional Advisors is balance in terms of nationality, gender, fields of expertise and language. Four of the ten current Regional Advisers are female<sup>10</sup> of whom two are medical specialists, the third an economist and the fourth an NGO leader. Seven of the current Council members are francophone but all except two can communicate in both languages. Table 3 shows the composition of the Council since it started.

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<sup>10</sup> The Commission did not have adequate female representation during its early stages.

It is noted that more Senegalese have served on the Commission followed by Burkinabes. Such a representation for Senegal is perhaps due to IDRC being based in the country. In the case of Burkina Faso this has been due to the need to replace individuals whose work duties became too demanding. Having two Senegalese Regional Advisors on the Council at a given time has improved its effectiveness due to their high-level positions, and their proximity to IDRC-WARO. This has allowed them to be involved in representing IDRC outside Senegal, in lobbying and working on documenting results of the Council's activities.

Most Regional Advisors were francophone. While nearly all of the Regional Advisors had working knowledge of English and French to various degrees, the small minority could not contribute adequately in French to in-depth reflections. Meetings were therefore carried out using professional interpretation. According to our assessment of this factor, the effectiveness of the Council's work was not reduced to any significant degree. However, as would be expected, the efficiency during meetings may have on rare occasions been reduced due to interpretation difficulties. This is however a small price to pay for working within a bilingual context. The overall effect, as observed, was always attenuated by the fact that most of the Regional Advisors were bilingual. Thus if the Council continues its work, it would be helpful if a large percentage of Regional Advisors remain bilingual.

**Table 3 Composition of the Regional Advisors' Council**

Nationality	Sex	Specialization	Language	Current	Duration
Senegalese	Male	Civil Engineering, Environment	French/English	Yes	2001–now
Ghanaian	Male	Computer Science, University Professor	English	Yes	2001–now
Ivoirien	Male	Environment	French/English	Yes	2001–now
Burkinabe	Female	Economics	French/English	Yes	2006–now
Beninoise	Female	Medicine/Cardiology, University Professor, Former Minister	French/English	Yes	2005–now
Senegalese	Male	Information Systems	French/English	Yes	2001–now
Nigerian	Female	Medicine/Paediatriy, University Professor	English/French	Yes	2005–now
Sierra Leonean	Male	Geography	English/French	Yes	2005–now
Cameroonian	Female	Entrepreneurship Development	French/English	Yes	2005–now
Nigerian	Male	Information Technology	English	Yes	2008– now
Burkinabe	Female	Education	French	No	2001–2005
Ghanaian	Male	Political Science	English	No	2001–2004
Senegalese	Male	Environment	French/English	No	2001–2004
Nigerienne	Male	Social Science	French	No	2001–2001
Burkina Faso	Male	Information Technology	French/French	No	2001–2005
Senegalese	Male	Economist/Former Minister	French	No	2001–2004
Ivorian	Male	Economist	French	No	2001–2002
Malian	Male	Meteorology	French	No	2003–2007

Only one country from Central Africa has been represented on the Council. This has been related to difficulties in identifying potential candidates. It is not felt that this lack of representation has negatively affected the Council's relevance or effectiveness. This is because fundamental research-for-development problems across the sub-region are to a large extent similar irrespective of geographical zones. Nevertheless, if the Council's work continues, this aspect should be rectified to ensure a more equitable representation.

### 3.2.3.2 *Replacement of Regional Advisors*

It would be an ideal situation to see Regional Advisors being replaced after serving for say two years. Assessment of the operation of the Council quickly shows that Advisors are very busy and are often find it difficult to dedicate the time needed to review documents, contribute in writing, etc. Replacement has taken place by attrition. Very often, Regional Advisors have had to resign due to other pressing duties; several of them have become Government Ministers or cannot find the time to fully participate as Advisors. It is also observed that despite their work schedule some Regional Advisors are very active and contribute substantially to the work of the Council. The question therefore arises as to the wisdom of limiting the service of a very productive individual without being sure about how long it would take to find a replacement or whether the replacement would perform satisfactorily. IDRC has therefore adopted the position of working with productive regional advisors and encouraging those that are too busy to resign. This approach has allowed for substantial turnover, as noted in Table 3, while allowing the Council to remain productive.

A concern which has been expressed by several people is that, as Regional Advisors become more and more familiar with each other, there is a risk that a kind of exclusive club spirit will develop, which is not conducive to generating new ideas or identifying new trends.<sup>11</sup> Monitoring and evaluation activities have not identified any such behavior within the Council. Instead, all of the Advisors interviewed during all of the monitoring and evaluation activities have been very insistent regarding the need to diversify the partners involved in the work of the Council.

Another important and related issue is that of standards regarding what is expected of Regional Advisors in terms of their performance (attendance at meetings, regularity of input, participation in activities, etc), and clear procedures for removing non-contributing members from the Council. It is noted that there have been some difficulties with effective participation by some Council members but this was not quickly dealt with. A clear-cut set of guidelines for application in such cases would have helped in dealing quickly with such situations and would have improved the Councils efficiency. Having to deal with such situations on an ad hoc basis is considered to be too time consuming and complicated.

### 3.2.3.3 *Management of Expectations of Regional Advisors*

The 2005 evaluation showed that management of expectations was the most often stated factor among those that might affect the relevance and effectiveness of the Council. Respondents felt strongly that care must be taken not to raise expectations among members of the Council that the issues they identified would be the ones selected as focal areas. This indeed was a legitimate concern but one that had been already been dealt with by the WARO Regional Director, who informed Regional Advisors that their input would not systematically be taken into account by IDRC.

Assessments have confirmed that Regional Advisors have been well aware and accept that the Council is an advisory mechanism, and not one of governance. The difference between these two types of mechanisms was clear to all of them and there was thus no confusion between the role of Regional Advisors and that of members of the Board of Governors. Thus this factor was not an issue as far as the Council was concerned.

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<sup>11</sup> The evaluators have carefully looked for this phenomenon during monitoring activities but have not identified any such behaviour. Instead it is noted that there are nearly always divergent views on various issues but consensus is then obtained through discussion.

#### *3.2.3.4 Duration of term of Regional Advisors*

We discussed, above, the question of the replacement of Regional Advisors in case they were not performing as expected. This is however different from the duration of their term in office. As mentioned earlier their length of stay may affect the overall performance of the Council positively or negatively. This present discussion is aimed at trying to assess to what extent the duration of service has affected the performance of the Council.

The initial intention was to have each Regional Advisor serve for a year and then renewed twice. This was not applied rigidly because the attritions rate of Advisors was significant enough to ensure, change within the council and the introduction of new ideas on a regular basis. Also, given the difficulty of identifying the right calibre of persons as Advisors, those who have been very productive and committed were retained on the Council. Four of the ten current Regional Advisors had been part of the Council since its inception in 2001, and remained because of their exceptional commitment to its work. Over time, eight Regional Advisors left the Council for diverse reasons, such as the end of their term and an increase in workload (e.g. ministerial appointment). New Regional Advisors were selected through co-optation.

Attempting to apply very rigid rules regarding duration in office of Regional Advisors may not have been the best approach to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council. IDRC-WARO's approach has worked well, in terms of using flexibility to maintain productivity. Within the context of the Council, Advisors insist that it takes more than one year for someone to understand what they need to accomplish as an advisor, and to feel part of something larger than their own perspective. Thus limiting the term of Regional Advisors to two or three years might result in a loss of the value created through the Council.

As mentioned by a key respondent, such a Council has to go through a learning curve and can in some cases take up to five years for members to know each other well and to establish a good working relationship, in order to engage in a movement that will create collective thinking. It is however acknowledged that renewal of members is important over time, but replacements should not take place too often. Otherwise, the processes of team-building and knowledge creation may be significantly disrupted by the departure of a large number of Regional Advisors. In view of the experience of the operation of the Council, it appears that a term of three years, renewed once would be adequate. This view is basically shared by all of the Advisors.

#### *3.2.3.5 Commitment and Involvement of Regional Advisors.*

Continuous observation of Regional Advisors at work, during workshops, meetings and through electronic interaction, indicates a high level of commitment to the Council. This has been noted not only by members of the Council regarding their colleagues but by others within Workshop Follow-up Committees and by IDRC staff. Regional Advisors work long hours during meetings without complaints. For example, on the last day of the Researcher/Policy Maker Workshop held in Accra in July 2005, they worked past 23h00 to cover all items on the agenda.

The opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills provides incentives for Regional Advisors' commitment and active participation. They often share information with each other on their own initiative. In July 2005, one of the Regional Advisors participated in an IDRC-sponsored training program on researcher capacity-building in Durban, South Africa, focusing on the use of information and communication technologies for qualitative research. She shared what she had learned with other Regional Advisors on their email list, and highlighted two aspects of her learning. She learned about the NVivo software and its effectiveness and efficiency for processing and analyzing qualitative data. In addition, she discovered that her use of commonly used software

such as Word and Excel was limited to about 10% of their capacity. In 2007 the Council put in place plans to document results of the Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops with the help of a consultant. When the consultant was unable to continue with the work, which was in its early stages, one of the Regional Advisors volunteered to complete the work. The draft chapters of the document were then reviewed by colleagues of the Council. There are several examples of such dedication that confirm the commitment of the Regional Advisors.

Despite their diligence and commitment it should be mentioned that aspects of the work of the Council at times took too long to be achieved. This was a result of the workload of some Regional Advisors who could not respond in time, especially when asked to make comments on documents. To a small extent this affected the effectiveness of the Council because the final versions did not benefit fully from valuable inputs from all Regional Advisors. IDRC-WARO should in the future put in place a mechanism that would help to improve this situation.

Council members received a very small allowance, which did not compensate to any significant extent for income lost by their involvement in the work of the Council. Although they were committed to the Council, some Regional Advisors have mentioned that a greater level of compensation might have released Regional Advisors from other income-generating activities, and enabled them to focus on the work of the Council. While this may provide some incentive and in fact improve the effectiveness of the Council, a major concern is that if Regional Advisors are viewed as paid employees of IDRC, they may lose credibility, and the freedom to express ideas that may not be popular within IDRC.

#### *3.2.3.6 Support from IDRC*

The IDRC-WARO Regional Director was the key initiator of this Council and provided the necessary leadership to keep it on track. He was assisted by Program Officers and Program Assistants located in WARO to provide support and information to the Council. The WARO team, which included the Regional Director, the Research and Information Officer, and the Director's Assistant, was very supportive in terms of providing logistical, financial and moral support.

It was necessary for IDRC to provide catalytic support to Council for it to function properly. The Research and Information Officer kept communication open amongst the Regional Advisors. This was done through the provision of; documentations, notes and other written materials in both English and in French, coordination of the preparing documents, establishment and maintenance of communication using an email list, and moderation of electronic discussions. The activities of the Council have benefited from such inputs, causing them to be carried in a relatively short time.

While activities of the Council were carried out, with substantial freedom being given to regional Advisors, it was noted that IDRC-WARO at times did not provide adequate monitoring and timely follow-up for some activities. This, as will be discussed later, led to a reduced productivity regarding documentation and dissemination of results of the Council's activities. This shortcoming appeared to be related to a shortage of personnel to carry out certain tasks.

Staff from Ottawa at the program- and management-level has participated actively in some meetings. The president of IDRC has participated in two researcher/policy maker workshops and some board members attended the workshop in Mali. Regional directors from several of the regional offices have also participated in activities of the Council. This has been highly viewed by all Advisors as a manifestation of interest and support by IDRC of the work of the Council.

Some concern has been expressed regarding the low level of feedback obtained from IDRC regarding the outputs of the Council. Some of the Advisors would have liked to see more feedback

from Ottawa-based staff to help them to produce useable information. Discussions with IDRC staff indicates that due to their workload and the Council being a WARO-based activity, they have considered it appropriate to be informed of the progress of the Council by the WARO regional director and not to venture into dialogue with the Council. It is felt that this situation could be significantly improved by timely information being provided regarding the work of the Council that is of interest to IDRC staff.

#### *3.2.3.7. Dissemination of Results of the Council*

The Council has obtained significant information through its environmental scanning and knowledge creation activities, during meetings and workshops. The 2005 Evaluation mentioned the need to develop an information and communication strategy to regularly share information. It was also mentioned that the results of the Commission were not appropriately packaged and disseminated. Indeed concern was expressed by IDRC program and management staff in Ottawa and Regional Directors that results were not shared more broadly. Discussions with them revealed that they know little of the concrete outputs of the Council and only a few knew that information on the work of the Council, as well as workshop reports, was posted on the WARO website. Most respondents indicated not seeing on a regular basis communication about issues discussed by the Council. They expressed the desire to receive such information, to which they could then respond or share with colleagues.

While some efforts have been made since then to improve on the availability of publications for dissemination, this situation, was not adequately rectified by IDRC-WARO and the Council. It should be mentioned that substantial amount of time was dedicated by the Council between 2005 till 2008 to try and document the results of the various workshops and the Thematic Discussions. Apart from two good resumes from Thematic Discussions on gender and globalization, no others have been done. This apparent slowness in documenting and dissemination of Council outputs has been due to; inadequate personnel and lack of expertise to appropriately package the available information. It is also partially related to the fact that a strategy for identifying results, packaging and disseminating them was not available to guide this process.

This lack of information dissemination, despite the useful results obtained by the Council has been cited by both IDRC staff as well as Regional Advisors as a constraint to getting the recognition that the Council deserves.

In order to capitalize on past work, IDRC-WARO and the Council should spend some time to document, in a very concise manner, all results obtained. The first step would be to complete the synthesis of the results of the Workshop Series (which is already in progress), then finalize the two remaining brochures on Thematic Discussions. The final step would then be to carefully review the outputs of all the meetings of the Council since 2001, to identify main contributions and lessons learnt and document them very briefly. These suggestions will ensure that the experience gained from the work of the Council over the past seven years are available for consultation by a wide audience within IDRC as well as by countries in the region.

#### *3.2.3.8 Cost of Council in Relation to its Benefits*

An issue of interest with IDRC Staff in Ottawa was how the cost of the Council compared with its benefits. This sort of analysis is not easy to accomplish because monetary value of the outcomes must be known to obtain any meaningful assessment. A better measure would be the cost-effectiveness analysis, which would attempt to analyze the cost of the activities of the Council with respect to the effects produced. Indicators would then determine whether stated objectives have



been achieved. These indicators have been monitored over time for the Council. As noted in Annex 6, the Council has succeeded, to a large extent, in achieving the indicators in its terms of reference.

The short-term benefits obtained include; inputs to the corporate program framework, the sensitization of researchers and policy makers, improving the visibility of IDRC in the sub-region, strengthening the Center's credibility with partners, and identifying research opportunities. Longer-term benefits will include the number and cost of projects that will be supported by IDRC and increase in numbers of collaborators and beneficiaries in various countries. For the purpose of this evaluation, the conclusion that can be made, which is opinion shared by the majority of respondents, is that the Commission has contributed to the identification of information and generation of useful knowledge.

The cost effectiveness of the Council can also be assessed within the context of change that may occur when the regional director is replaced. The region would present a substantial learning curve for a new director. The presence of Regional Advisors can be exploited by this person to help her/him to quickly learn about the region, through consultations on a range of issues.

### 3.3 Findings for Workshop Series

#### 3.3.1 Overall Organization of Workshop Series

During its fourth meeting held in Cotonou, Benin in August 2003, WARO's Council of Regional Advisors identified the lack of interaction between researchers and policy makers as the key problem in the use of research results. Consequently, the Council launched a series of workshops that would bring together researchers and decision-makers in West and Central Africa. The Researcher/Policy Maker Workshop Series was set up to determine the relationship between researchers and policy makers, identify bottlenecks to collaboration, and propose sustainable mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of research results into political decision-making. IDRC-WARO and the Council organized and held six workshops in West and Central Africa in collaboration with various institutions. The locations, themes, and dates for these workshops are shown Table 4.

**Table 4 Locations, Themes and Dates of Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops**

COUNTRY	DATES	THEME
<i>Senegal</i>	June 29-30, 2004	<b>Agriculture</b> : Reflection and exchanges on the synergy between researchers and policy makers in the area of agriculture in Senegal
<i>Burkina Faso</i>	January 27-28, 2005	<b>Education</b> : Reflection and exchanges on the synergy between researchers and policy makers in the field of education in Burkina Faso
<i>Ghana</i>	July 06-07, 2005	<b>Enterprise</b> : Promoting Private Sector Development: The Role of Research
<i>Mali</i>	February 08 -09, 2006	<b>Desertification</b> : Reflection and exchanges between researchers and policy makers on drought and desertification in Mali
<i>Cameroon</i>	June 21 – 22, 2006	<b>Governance</b> : Symposium for Reflection and Exchange on the Dialogue between Researchers and Decision-Makers in the Field of Governance in Cameroon
<i>Benin</i>	January 16 – 17, 2007	<b>Health</b> : Reflection and exchanges on the dialogue between researchers and policy makers for the reduction of maternal and neonatal death in Benin

The meetings started in 2004 and were held nearly every six months. The Advisor in the country where the workshop was to be held, suggested the theme, and assumed overall coordination and

responsibility for the activities within the country. Other Advisors volunteered their support, during the whole process of organizing workshops. IDRC-WARO provided scientific, logistical and financial support for planning and holding the workshops and worked closely with the responsible Regional Advisor. Program Officers from IDRC provided intellectual support for the workshops through the preparation of background material, such as papers on IDRC's programs, which were used for the discussions during the workshops. Local institutions such as universities, government agencies were also strongly involved in all aspects of the planning and implementation to ensure country ownership

As soon as agreement was obtained on the theme for the workshop the following activities were carried out:

- The responsible Advisor suggested a date, location, logistics, an agenda, participants, presenters, etc., and decisions were made after consultations with IDRC staff in WARO and Ottawa and other Advisors.
- Several months before the workshop, the Regional Director and the Research and Information Officer visited the country where the workshop would be held to plan the workshop with the Regional Advisor and various research and government institutions.

All workshops lasted for two days and emphasized a balance in participation between researchers and policy-makers. During the workshop, discussion papers were initially presented followed by discussions in plenary. Working group sessions were then held, followed by presentations of conclusions and recommendations in plenary. The final sessions of the workshops consisted of discussions on the way forward. The final activity during the workshops was to select Workshop Follow-up Committees, which were given the mandate to prepare Action Plans that would serve as a framework to develop closer collaboration between researchers and policy makers.

### ***3.3.2 Relevance and Effectiveness***

Throughout all phases of the evaluation of the Commission and its activities, people interviewed (Regional Advisors, IDRC-WARO Program Officers, IDRC-Ottawa personnel, Regional Directors, and members of the Follow-up Committees) believed the workshop series has been relevant and effective in improving the relationship between researchers and policy makers in the region. Some of the main elements related to the relevance and effectiveness of the Workshop Series are presented below.

#### ***3.3.2.1 Researcher-Policy Maker Interaction.***

The Workshop Series was successful in encouraging interaction between researchers and policy makers during all six workshops. It proved to be a learning experience for researchers and policy makers. The workshop reports for the first and second workshops in Senegal and Burkina Faso clearly outlined the rich and animated exchange between these two groups. The third, fourth fifth and sixth workshops held in Ghana, Mali, Cameroon and Benin respectively, at which the evaluator was present, were similar to the first two with regards to the interaction between researchers and policy makers. These two groups, which tended not to communicate very seriously, discussed the reasons for to this lack of interaction and agreed on what should be done to rectify it. It was interesting to observe the dynamics between the two groups during the working groups and the plenary sessions. They were very open and appeared to genuinely want to learn from each other and to see the elimination of identified bottlenecks.

### *3.3.2.2 Identification of Common Problems across Countries*

Each workshop had a well defined theme that was of interest to the country. A close assessment of all workshops showed that researchers had the opportunity to learn about how to present ideas and research results to policy makers in a way that the latter can understand and eventually use them. Policy makers learnt how to best communicate their needs for research, and make use of research results in decision-making. The most important lesson learnt from the workshop was therefore not specific to the theme of the workshop but rather it was related to relationships and how to interact. There was thus a common thread linking the problems in all the six workshops, which could form a basis to generalize about researcher/policy maker interactions in West/Central Africa. This argument makes the Workshop Series very relevant to the interests of IDRC.

### *3.3.2.3 Identification of Program Entry Points*

The workshops collected valuable information regarding priorities and needs in the region and potential areas for research. Thus the focus on a specific theme allowed workshops to identify entry points for IDRC programming. This has however not been fully exploited by IDRC or the Council. As mentioned earlier in Section 3.2.3.7 on Dissemination of Results of the Council, all results of the work of the Council have not been fully exploited. To date no list of research entry points, resulting from these workshops have been developed. Such information would help to improve the relevance and effectiveness of the Council with regard to environmental scanning and knowledge creation.

### *3.3.2.4 Presence of Media*

Some of the workshops, for example in Ghana, made very good use of the media during the workshops to focus attention on the poor interaction between the policy makers and researchers. All workshops made use of the media but to varying degrees. This public exposure of the problem was expected to make both policy-makers and researchers more conscious of the need to pay particular attention to establishing and maintaining improved channels of dialogue. A constraint to using the media was the request by some of them to be paid to provide coverage of the workshops. While the workshops did not suffer from lack of media coverage, it is felt that their presence could have been more fully exploited.

### *3.3.2.5 Follow-up Committees*

Each workshop selected a Follow-up Committee to first of all assess the existing framework for dialogue and to develop Action Plans. Each committee was requested to present a work plan and a budget to IDRC to enable it to have the needed resources to carry out the work within a given deadline. This arrangement was intended to improve the effectiveness of each workshop, so that the process of improving dialogue between researchers and policy makers would not end after the workshop. Although this kept the discussion alive within each country after the workshop, the work of the Follow-up Committees did not progress rapidly in all of the countries. The effectiveness and efficiency of the Follow-up Committees in completing their mandate were reduced. An evaluation of the Follow-up Committees was carried out in April 2007 and recommendations were made to improve the situation. Further details regarding the work of the Follow-up Committee will be discussed in Section 3.4.

### ***3.3.3 Factors Affecting Relevance and Effectiveness of Workshop Series***

#### *3.3.3.1 Planning of Workshops*

The success of the workshops, in terms of participation, its effectiveness in achieving its objectives, and having a good follow-up, depended on the planning process. In the case of the Workshop Series, IDRC-WARO started planning months before the holding of the workshops in each country. As mentioned in Section 3.3.1, locations, themes, and other details were considered well in advance of the meeting. Country visits by the IDRC-WARO Regional Director and the Research Information Officer were carried out to foster commitment of officials, ensure quality, prepare and coordinate support and logistics. This was an aspect that was noted by partners and one that impressed them. They liked the participatory approach adopted for the meeting. These pre-workshop visits not only gained the commitment of important policy makers but it also convinced many of them to attend parts of the workshops and/or send their key staff to participate in them.

During the planning process the Regional Advisor was given substantial freedom to organize the workshop. Each workshop thus had its own particular character, from organizational and scientific perspectives. The workshops also progressively became better organized as a result of two factors; learning from preceding activities and the organizational qualities of the Regional Advisor. The monitoring and evaluation of the last four workshops was very useful in improving quality because recommendations from one workshop were used to make improvements on the following ones. The willingness of IDRC and the Council to take corrective measures was also a factor that helped to increase the effectiveness and relevance of the workshops.

The need to allow Regional Advisors to take initiative in organizing the workshops without clear limits may have in some cases been cause for misunderstandings. For example, IDRC was of the opinion that people preparing papers for the meeting would not be remunerated whereas some form of payment was expected. It was also noted that Regional Advisors were under certain pressures to respect certain local conditions, which were not obvious to IDRC. These were solved through dialogue and in most cases had no significant residual effect on the activities of the workshop.

Some lessons learnt from this planning process are the following:

- Policy makers should be contacted well ahead of the workshops (at least a month in advance)
- Key policy makers must be contacted before setting dates for the workshops
- When communicating with policy makers it is necessary to respect the existing hierarchy (e.g. if a director of a ministry is invited the correspondence should be addressed to the minister)
- The capacity of the Regional Advisor to organize such events is one of the most crucial factors regarding the success of the workshop
- IDRC should outline in advance what can be financially supported and what outputs must be obtained

#### *3.3.3.2 Themes and Titles for Workshops*

Workshop themes were chosen because they were of interest to the particular country. This in some cases created a real problem of relevance. For example, Education was chosen for

Burkina Faso, but IDRC does not have programs in this area. The question was therefore raised as to the reason for having the workshop if it was not relevant to IDRC's activities. A possible answer is that the workshops were interested in determining how to best improve researcher/policy maker dialogue and that the themes were just examples to illustrate the point. This however did not do

anything to reduce expectations regarding IDRC's support for projects. Caution should therefore be exercised to ensure that themes are relevant to IDRC's program or the reason for making the choice clearly explained to all concerned.

The titles of workshops did not always reflect the aim to improve researcher/policy maker dialogue. The title for the workshop in Accra was, *Promoting Private Sector Development: the Role of Research*. This title may have led policy makers to feel that they were invited to a researchers' meeting. Adding "and Policy" at the end of the title could have made a difference.

Overall, the themes and titles were relevant to the local contexts and generated significant interest and participation. For example, in Benin the First Lady opened the workshop and showed her clear support for the theme. In other countries government ministers or top-level policy makers supported the workshops during the opening and closing sessions.

#### *3.3.3.3 Ensuring Ownership of Workshops*

Ownership of the workshops by all partners was a very important condition imposed by IDRC. The aim was to ensure that the workshops were not managed by IDRC but collectively by the Regional Advisors on one hand and researchers and policy makers on the other hand. Thus the responsibility for the workshops was not centered on just a single person or group. Policy makers and researchers were fully involved in all aspects of planning and implementation of the workshops. In many cases, governments made significant contributions to the holding of the workshop by providing logistical support and transportation. It was observed that policy makers participated fully when the workshops were organized under the auspices of key institutions that were in charge of managing issues that were being discussed.

#### *3.3.3.4 Selection of Workshop Participants*

The selection of participants was very crucial to the overall success of the workshops. The diversity and the level of expertise of participants determined the quality of the workshops. Workshop participants were selected to ensure a balance between policy makers, researchers, representatives from civil society and the private sector. In general, there tended to be more researchers compared to other groups. It was therefore important to manage especially the working groups very well, using strong chairpersons to avoid discussions being dominated by one group.

#### *3.3.3.5 Choosing Speakers and Facilitators*

The spirit of the meetings was set by key papers presented by speakers who were requested by the workshop organizers to prepare them. Their role was critical in determining the success of the workshops as they were supposed to create the conditions that would encourage interaction between the different groups of participants. These presentations should be relevant and focused. This, however, was not true in all cases because some of the papers strayed from the subject matter making them less relevant. Thus, discussions based on them did not produce effective results. One had the opinion, in some cases, that the papers were quickly put together or that the author only prepared what she/he felt was needed. A substantial number of the papers were thus not of the required quality because they either strayed from the topic or did not treat it to any reasonable depth.

Most of this could have been minimized if very clear terms of reference had been prepared for each commissioned paper, including a suggested list of contents. It would have also been useful to provide some indication of the quality of presentation needed using PowerPoint. Based on

discussions with various people, it is felt that the quality of papers would have been better if the right people had been identified and authors had been remunerated for their work.

Facilitators were also very crucial to the overall quality of the meeting. A conscious decision was made to use Regional Advisors as facilitators. Past experience with using other participants as facilitators had given varied results and mainly unsatisfactory because the discussions were unfocused and timing was not respected. Given their knowledge of the expectations of the meeting, Advisors provided good leadership during plenary and working groups. They were very effective in guiding the discussions to obtain useful conclusions. Attaining this efficiency however had a price; some participants complained of not being given the opportunity to express themselves, which was not true. Due to time constraints, the facilitators had to make sure that the discussions were not monopolized by any one person and therefore adopted some guidelines to manage the meetings. The Regional Advisors in general performed this duty very competently during all the workshops.

#### *3.3.3.6 Publicity of Workshops*

The publicity of workshops has in general being limited. The best effect of using the media would have been obtained by having workshops widely publicized before, during and after, to attract the attention of policy makers, who constitute the group that is hardest to reach. This has not been systematically done during all workshops, due to country-specific situations. The media have been very responsive in some countries due to the need to get information. In others where there is a wider choice of stories to cover, the media tended to make demands that were not acceptable. Examples of good coverage were obtained for example in Ghana, and Benin. In these cases significant efforts were made to make the appropriate plans. It appears that a useful strategy to adopt would be to have a small debate in a forum, or through the media, to stimulate interest before the actual workshop. At the end of the workshop, a press conference, focusing on workshop conclusions, with Regional Advisors upfront, may be a good way to jump-start the follow up process.

#### *3.3.3.7 Reporting Workshop Activities*

Reporting workshop results should be quickly done after the activities. There were mixed results for various workshops. The Senegal workshop reporting was very efficiently done. The rapporteur summarized discussions and decisions during the course of the workshop. A journalist in Ghana who was hired to prepare the report was unable to deliver it even a month after the workshop. In Benin, for example, a draft report was available at the end of the workshop, which was presented by the rapporteur. Some of these delays could have been avoided if reporting was done by a person who was knowledgeable about the topic. An innovation in Ghana was to ensure that each participant left with a compact disc containing all workshop papers, as well as the list of participants.

Conclusions of the workshops have not been circulated widely. It would have been very useful to do a concise resume of each workshop and at least circulate them in all countries where Regional Advisors were present, not only in the organizing country.

### *3.3.4 Efficiency of Workshop Series*

#### *3.3.4.1 Organization of Workshops*

An efficient method of organizing the workshops was to have Regional Advisors being in charge of the meeting in their respective countries. They had the advantage of knowing the national context and culture, and having access to key researchers and policy makers. This strategy has allowed

available resources to be reasonably used during the workshops and to obtain timely results. IDRC-WARO has also contributed to improving the efficiency of carrying out the workshops, through the provision of planning and intellectual support, and administrative and financial controls.

#### *3.3.4.2 Operation of Working Groups*

Working groups were used as a means of efficiently obtaining information on various issues regarding the workshops. The advantage of this was that few people in a group would quickly discuss issues and come up with conclusions and recommendations, which would be compared to proposals by other groups. Each working group, chosen by the workshop organizers, was provided with clear terms of reference regarding objectives and expected outcomes. They were facilitated by Regional Advisors who had instructions to respect the time allocated to the activity. Each group chose its rapporteur who at the end organized the results obtained and presented them in plenary.

Working groups met in different rooms or in the same large hall. In Senegal and Burkina Faso different rooms were used whereas in Ghana and Benin they were located in the plenary hall. The participants were either in mixed groups or in groups consisting of policy makers or researchers. It was considered disruptive to have all groups in the same room during working group discussions, due to noise and movement of people. Having separate rooms assigned to working groups was considered a more effective arrangement in terms of getting participants to focus on discussions with the minimum of interference and to work quickly to achieve the required results.

Working groups consisted of only policy makers, only researchers, or a mix of both, depending on the subject being discussed and all the groups had the same mandate. While these approaches have their individual merits, it was noted that the effectiveness of working groups depended on two factors: the understanding of the mandate by each group, and the competence of the facilitator. The fact that Regional Advisors were used as facilitators substantially improved the efficiency of these working groups.

The presentation of working group reports for earlier workshops was not efficiently done. Rapporteurs were not well prepared and the presentations tended to be too long. To improve the efficiency, subsequent workshops ensured that each working group recorded their results on portable computers, which were then converted to PowerPoint format and used by the rapporteur for his/her presentation during plenary. This method substantially increased the effectiveness of the working groups.

#### *3.3.4.3 Duration of Workshops*

Workshops were held over a period of two days. This was considered to be ideal for efficiency because it would have been difficult to have the full attention of participants for more than this period. A period of three days would have provided more discussion time but this would have been less efficient because participants might have concentrated less on the workshop, especially if the venue was near their workplace.

#### *3.3.4.4 Availability of Information before Workshops*

Workshops had to achieve various outcomes in two days. Little information, if any, was given to participants ahead of workshops. The tendency was to distribute documentation only at the workshop. Participants were required to review several background materials. Presentations were often hurried and at times not clear in certain areas. Therefore, given the time constraint of the workshop, it would have been useful for participants to have received and studied the documents before the meeting. Even if 20% of participants read them this would have increased the efficiency

of the workshop significantly and also its effectiveness. Participants would have been better prepared and their contributions would have been richer.

An attempt was made during a workshop to get participants to fill out questionnaires before the meeting. This was intended to make them reflect on issues related to the workshop and to be aware of its content and objectives. The questionnaire used to collect the information had several weaknesses including leading questions, incomplete categories and unclear questions.

### **3.4 Findings for the Workshop Follow-up Committees**

This section summarizes the evaluation findings of the six Follow-up Committees, which examined their relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. The evaluation was focused on the accomplishments of the Follow-up Committees in each country, the extent to which their composition affected their achievements, the effect of the support provided by IDRC and others on their outputs, and the availability of resources to achieve their objectives. These findings result from continuous monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the Council.

#### **3.4.1 Composition of Follow-up Committees**

Members of the Follow-up Committees were selected at the end of each researcher/policy maker's workshops using methods shown in Box 3. The list of members of the committees from various countries is shown in Annex 7.

#### **Box 3 Method Used to Choose Members of the Follow-up Committee**

Follow-up Committees were constituted at the end of each workshop. The various methods used to choose its members are outlined below:

- ✚ Served in the organizing committee of the workshop and subsequently asked to be part of the committee.
- ✚ Invited to the workshop and chosen to serve in the committee.
- ✚ Proposed by an Advisor to become a member of the committee.
- ✚ Chosen by a stakeholder group (researchers, policy makers, civil society, religious leaders, etc) to represent them as a group in the committee.
- ✚ Asked as a Regional Advisor to coordinate committee.
- ✚ Nominated by workshop participants to be part of the committee.

#### **3.4.2 Organization of Work within Follow-up Committees**

##### **3.4.2.1 Planning Processes within Committees**

Workshop Follow-up Committees did not in general perform as expected. This was related to the planning process used by some of them. The experiences of Burkina Faso and Benin showed the importance for committees to plan their work with specific objectives, activities to achieve them, responsible persons and timelines. Benin was assessed as having the most effective Follow-up Committee, in the early stages of its activities. Their processes for planning and organizing the work of the committee started even during the preparation of the workshop, which was probably the most structured and organized. Regular meetings with minutes were sent to IDRC. The follow up process was planned before the workshop, which included activities such as contacts with donors. It was obvious from the way the workshop was planned and organized that Benin drew lessons from previous workshops. As they worked together, in most cases, committees selected 2 or 3 people



who completed the bulk of the work and then shared it with others for feedback. In the case of Benin, each member was responsible for aspects such as communication, resource mobilization, treasury, lobbying, etc. This was a positive way of allocating responsibilities and ensuring ownership. Other committees did not have such a process as part of their methodology of work.

#### *3.4.2.2 Transfer of Information and Communication*

All Follow-up Committees acknowledge difficulties in having regular meetings due to busy schedules and/or geographical distances. In the case of Cameroon committee members were located in three cities with distances of as much as 400 km apart. The committees carried out their work by attending meetings or by email, suggesting the importance of members having access to email for increased efficiency and effectiveness of the committees.

Being able to communicate with policy makers to obtain information and/or meet with them was one of the tasks of the committees. This was facilitated by having members who had high level positions in the researcher and policy maker community.

#### *3.4.3 Follow-up Committees' Understanding of Their Mandate*

The 2005 evaluation indicated that there might have been some misunderstanding of the mandates given to the Senegal and Burkina Faso committees. Observations of the outputs of subsequent committees in Ghana and Mali indicated that they did not follow the mandates given to them by their respective workshops. Further evaluation of these committees in 2007 indicated that they all had a very clear view of what they were to achieve and how to go about doing it. A summary of various views expressed regarding the mandate were:

- Translate the decisions of the workshop into reality by coming up with an action plan to enhance decision maker/researcher dialogue, and then hold a validation workshop involving a wide range of stakeholders.
- Ensure that mechanisms are developed that will allow the action plan to be implemented. (The committee is not responsible to implement the action plan but to put in place the plan and the process of implementation).

There were for some committee members the need for clarification regarding: the extent to which the committee should carry out their work (when do they stop?); whether the committee should implement the action plans they developed; the structure that was responsible for coordinating the work and who had responsibility to report to IDRC; and, how the committee's recommendations would be implemented. Insufficient guidance was given regarding how the committee would be financed, nor what would be covered by the funds.

It is the evaluator's opinion that this apparent lack of clarity was a result of the manner in which the tasks were presented to the committee members at the end of the workshop. Since setting up the committee was the last item on the Agenda and time was a constraint, it was in most cases rushed. It would have been more effective to have prepared a detailed mandate and discussed it fully during the workshops. This should have then been followed by a formal undertaking between IDRC and the coordinating institution of the Follow-up Committee, supported by a detailed terms of reference.

#### *3.4.4 Support Provided by IDRC*

IDRC's support to the Follow-up Committees was crucial to their performance. This section assesses the support that was provided to these committees and how it helped them to effectively carry out their mandate.

#### *3.4.4.1 Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities of Committees*

Some committee members were unclear regarding their status with respect to IDRC. They understood the relationship between the Regional Advisors and IDRC but not theirs. They would have preferred to have a more formal relationship outlining their roles and responsibilities. This would have increased their level of motivation.

#### *3.4.4.2 Provision of Funds*

All Follow-up Committees were informed by IDRC-WARO that funding would be provided to cover the cost of the committees' work to develop the Action Plans, hire a consultant and hold a validation workshop. Ghana mentioned that it did not need IDRC funds because its vision of follow-up was different from that developed during the workshop. All the countries submitted their budgets quite late. Mali's budget did not conform to the mandate given to its committee. It instead developed a research project. Due to this late submission the committees did not benefit from the financial support of IDRC soon after the workshops.

#### *3.4.4.3 Monitoring of Committee*

It is the general view that committees could have been more productive if IDRC-WARO had monitored them more closely. IDRC was not very proactive in dealing with the various committees; the view being that the committees should have taken responsibility. However committee members would have liked to see IDRC-WARO being more closely involved by encouraging them to respect their work plans and time commitments, reviewing minutes of meetings and providing feedback, participating in some of their meetings if possible, and providing technical support to review work of consultants and making visits to countries.<sup>12</sup>

Committees cited a lack of moral support for their work. This they mentioned could be achieved through expression of confidence in their work, which would be perceived as an important incentive for improved performance. This could have also been achieved through positive and critical comments and assessments of their work. For example, several committee members perceived the 2007 evaluation of the committees as an indication of IDRC's interest and faith in ongoing work.

Another area where IDRC-WARO could have provided support was by sharing the results of all committees on a systematic basis. The dissemination of regular information on: what other Follow-up Committees are doing; how they have done it; what has worked; what does not work; etc, would have provided guidance for committees, and helped to improve their effectiveness.

#### *3.4.4.4 Lobbying and Partnership Development*

The work of the Workshop Follow-up Committees was one that involved having discussions with various institutions to, for example, explain the work achieved. Most of them did not have the time or the skills needed for lobbying or partnership development. They expected some support from IDRC in this area and suggested that information notes written to policy makers, in particular those who attended the workshop would have been helpful. They however needed support from IDRC

IDRC would support the committees and improve their performance by having regular dialogue with government and other institutions regarding the work of the committees. For example, contacts with government institutions involved in the committees, explaining the work achieved, would

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<sup>12</sup> After the evaluation of the Follow-up Committees in 2007, IDRC-WARO took corrective, action based on the recommendations of the evaluation.

inform key officials of efforts being made. It was suggested that a letter be sent to key researchers and policy makers, in particular those who attended the workshop, to inform them of progress made and to reassure them that the work begun at the workshop was continuing. This letter would sensitize them to the need for continued dialogue and should help renew their support, and possibly open avenues for future collaboration. In hindsight it would have been useful to develop partnership with an organization that was familiar with communicating and working with policy makers.

#### *3.4.4.5 Provision of Technical Support to Committees*

Most of the Follow-up Committees were not experienced in carrying out their mandate. IDRC-WARO initially adopted the approach of allowing them to take initiatives to plan and carry out the specified work. This approach did not produce quick results. Thus, close support from the start, in defining their work plans, methodologies to carry out the work, monitoring, and continuous encouragement would have made the committees more effective in a shorter time. As noted in early 2007, the fact that only one Follow-up Committee had produced its Action Plan indicated that there was a need to encourage them to be more productive. Overall it was felt that IDRC should have set up mechanisms to enhance closer involvement and contact with each of the Follow-up Committees to help them to plan and carry out their mandate.

Regional Advisors also were not in general able to immediately surmount most of the difficulties that slowed down the pace of the work. They were, however, after substantial delays able to overcome the obstacles and revive the work. Progress has been made in four countries as a result of the input of the Advisors playing a catalytic and at times leadership role.

#### *3.4.4.6 Responsibility for Leadership of the Follow-up Committees*

Some committee members expressed concern regarding who was in charge of the work of the Follow-up Committees. Perhaps the case where there was no ambiguity regarding which institution was in charge was that of Senegal. While this arrangement did not improve the effectiveness or efficiency of the committee due to administrative problems, it had the benefit of assigning clear responsibilities.

Two possible options were available in terms of assigning responsibility for the work of the committees. Institutions may slow down the work due to internal bureaucracy and conflicts, whereas Advisors may be seen as having authority and representing IDRC. These two options have advantages and disadvantages and a choice of leadership should therefore be based on country-specific issues and the quality and motivation of the Advisor.

Regional Advisors have played a leadership role in four countries to encourage the advancement of the work of the committees. In fact without their intervention there may not have been any meaningful progress. IDRC encouraged this intervention in view of the need to make progress.

### ***3.4.5 Performance and Effectiveness***

#### *3.4.5.1 Summary of Achievements*

The main mandate of the Workshop Follow-up Committees was to use the results of the workshop to produce an action plan that would be used to continue the dialogue between researchers and policy makers. The goal was to improve the interaction between these two groups, leading to the mainstreaming of research results into policies and the development process. They were also asked to organize a stakeholder workshop to validate the work done and to decide on the implementation

of the work plan. Each Follow-up Committee was given the same mandate and 4 months to submit its action plan.

#### *3.4.5.2 Overall Progress of Follow-up Committees*

In general the Follow-up Committees, with the exception of Benin started off slowly. All of them with the exception of Mali and Ghana have responded to the mandate given at the workshops. Senegal and Burkina Faso have developed their action plans and held their validation seminars. Cameroon and Benin will have their Action Plans discussed in May and July respectively. Mali has not made any substantial progress. Ghana is pursuing the follow-up activities within the framework of national initiatives aimed at using research results to develop the private sector. More details of progress made are outlined in Box 4.

### Box 4 Summary of Activities of Follow-up Committees

#### Senegal

- The start of the work of the committee was slow due to administrative bottlenecks.
- IDRC intervened to help improve the situation.
- All objectives of Follow-up Committee achieved.
- Action Plan done in August 2005.
- Validation workshop done in August 2005.
- IDRC and Regional Advisor encouraged ISRA to continue the work of the committee.
- The head of BAME is supervising the follow-up activities.
- ISRA is working on developing a good system of information sharing.
- Website of BAME has been updated as an information source.
- Regular contact with policy makers has been initiated.
- The Minister of Agriculture is aware of the work for the follow-up to the workshop and gives his support.

#### Burkina Faso

- Initial period of the work was unproductive.
- Former Regional Advisor was encouraged to revive the work.
- Work was initiated to develop work plans and budget for the committee.
- Substantial sensitization activities have been carried out to collect information and to involve a range of policy makers and researchers.
- An Action Plan consisting of mechanisms to enhance researcher/policy maker's dialogue was developed.
- Follow-up activities have been planned.

#### Ghana

- The Follow-up Committee did not meet to develop an Action Plan.
- This was not considered necessary in light of several activities within Ghana by the Government to achieve objectives similar to the mandate of the committee.
- Several members of the committee were involved in the national initiatives.
- There is high level of collaboration in developing the private sector and the use of research results in policy development.

#### Mali

- Follow-up Committee has not been able to submit an acceptable work plan.
- No information has been received on sensitization of policy makers and researchers.
- A work plan was developed but it was for a project instead of being aimed at developing an Action Plan.
- IDRC has taken positive actions to revive the work but little feedback has been received.
- No Action Plan has been prepared.

#### Cameroon

- The researcher/policy maker workshop was well organized and a Follow-up Committee chosen comprising of high-level individuals.
- Attempts at convening the committee did not work out due to the large distance between members and their busy schedules.
- A long period of inactivity occurred with little results being obtained.
- IDRC encouraged the Regional Advisor to take over the management of the committee in October 2007.
- The Regional Advisor and the Coordinator of the National Governance Program (NGP) worked with other members to develop the work plan and budget, which were approved by IDRC in October 2007.
- Meetings of the committee were held to develop a strategy for developing the Action Plan.
- A website [www.chercheurs-decideurs.net](http://www.chercheurs-decideurs.net), dedicated to the work of the Follow-up Committee, has been established and is in full operation. This is the only website developed so far by any of the six countries where the workshops were held.
- The validation seminar to discuss the Action Plan will take place at the end of May 2008.

#### Benin

- Many meetings of the committee have taken place to plan and carry out the work.
- The committee is well set up and managed.
- A work plan has been developed and submitted to IDRC.
- Work did not advance for some months due to administrative problems regarding which institution would manage the funds for the work plan provided by IDRC. This was finally solved.
- The Action Plan is now being finalized

### *3.4.5.3 Overall Effectiveness of Follow-up Committees*

The 2007 evaluation of the Workshop Follow-up Committees showed that all but two of them had not performed as expected. Senegal had developed the Action Plans but the validation workshop had not been carried out. Benin which had held its Researcher/Policy Maker's Workshop in January 2007 had made substantial progress towards the development of Action Plans. As noted in the preceding section, all of the Follow-up Committees with the exception of Mali have made significant progress in moving the process of improving dialogue between researchers and policy makers forward.

The effectiveness of the Senegal committee was due to the dedication of its members who had neither adequate institutional support, nor funds to carry out the work, although IDRC provided funds for its operations. The level of work attained is considered commendable given the difficulties experienced by the committee. Many key policy makers have been sensitized through interviews and other discussions, of the need for researcher/policy maker dialogue. The Government has now taken up the process and making progress in improving communication and exchange between the various groups.

All of the other countries have carried out substantial sensitization activities to inform especially policy makers of the work of the committees and to have their participation in the process. Although the process has been slow, the committee members are convinced that they have been effective in generating the momentum needed to mainstream the research/policy maker dialogue into the development process. The committees have however not yet succeeded in promoting the sustained dialogue that was anticipated during the workshop. This is expected to take place over the medium term.

### *3.4.5.4 Capacity of Activities of Follow-up Committees to Create Environment for Dialogue*

The workshops provided the opportunity for discussions between researchers and policy makers, enabling the building of dialogue between these two groups. The contents of the discussions during the workshops were very useful and served as a basis for Follow-up Committees to develop their action plans. The work of the committees involves continued dialogue with and sensitizing the various actors (policy makers and researchers). The action plans should integrate input from all concerned groups.

The activities of the Follow-up Committee should create the necessary mechanisms that will improve dialogue in a sustained manner for the following reasons:

- Dialogue between researchers and policy makers has been initiated and the mandates given to the committees are clear and uncomplicated to carry out.
- The action plans developed are aimed at harmonizing activities and streamlining research results into decision making.
- The process of interaction between researchers and policy makers will be formalized but will remain flexible to accommodate changes within the research/development context.
- In general, committees are interested and willing to carry out the work.

The methodology adopted by committees is to have the involvement of all actors in the process of developing the action plans in order to have a wide ownership of its results. This approach which is now well established should increase the chances of having long-lasting collaboration between all concerned.

### *3.4.5.5 Activities of Committees Needed to Improve Dialogue*

Even though all committees have not obtained results as rapidly as anticipated it was observed that in general they could increase their chances of achieving the desired results if the following activities were carried out:

- Finalize the Actions Plans taking into account all the concerns raised during the various workshops, while keeping close contacts with all stakeholders and IDRC-WARO for their input in the process.
- Hold a well planned validation workshop to inform key actors in research and policy making of the results and to agree on the next steps of implementation.
- Develop a revised Action Plan based on results of the validation workshop with well defined milestones and timelines regarding its implementation. The plan should be carried out in phases so as not to attempt to do too much at the same time with limited resources.
- Develop a resource mobilization strategy in consultation with IDRC-WARO and Governments regarding support for the implementation strategies developed.
- Creation of few but effective key “champions” that will work together to maintain the momentum of Follow-up Committees.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for each of the committees to determine their performance, effectiveness and impact.

### *3.4.6 Factors Affecting the Performance and Effectiveness of Follow-up Committees*

#### *3.4.6.1 Motivation for Committee Members*

Committee members in all the six countries stressed the importance of reflecting on how members could be motivated to do the work. This was an important factor that could affect the quality of work. Some people suggested that an incentive could have been the integration of committee members into in IDRC activities and networks of interest to them.

Members of the committee stressed the fact that they were involved in the committees due to their interest in the subject area of the workshop. They also mentioned that that they were committed to having good results. The significant amount of time involved in carrying out the committees’ activities was considered to be a de-motivating factor. Some of them were using their personal resources to cover expenses such as transportation and communication. Some remuneration to compensate the committee members for the above-mentioned expenditures would have motivated them.

Another factor that affected motivation was the perceived lack of monitoring of their work and lack of appreciation of work being achieved. Committees needed to be reassured that they had strong IDRC and country support and that the work they are doing would not be in vain. The members needed to feel that they had “an open arm waiting to receive the work”.

Committee members also wanted to be recognized by their institutions for the work that they were doing. They wished there were discussions between the various institutions of committee members. This would have minimized the resistance by institutions to the participation of their staff in the committees.

#### *3.4.6.2 Effect of Team Composition of Committees on Results*

The characteristics and effect of the composition of the various teams can be described as follows:

- The committees were made up of members from different backgrounds and experiences.
- Some members were both researchers and policy makers.

- Women were present in all of the committees except that of Senegal.
- Members occupied positions of responsibility making it difficult, in some cases, to have them participate effectively in the committees. It was therefore, in some countries, difficult to hold meetings due to this constraint. It was also necessary, due to their busy schedule, to hire a consultant to assist with various tasks of the committees.
- Most committees had three or four members. However some of them, as was the case of Benin and Cameroon and Ghana, had between 5 and 9. Based on the positive results being obtained in the case of Benin, which had 9 members, no conclusions can be made regarding the effect of the size of a committee on its effectiveness. In fact there may be arguments, according to some members, that it might have been more useful to have larger committees because having one or two persons absent would not have adversely affected their work.
- Teams that were producing results were very motivated to the extent that they did not wait for financial support to work.
- Committees were interdisciplinary and were therefore able to discuss issues from a wide perspective.
- In general, all members of the committees felt that the diversity of interests within each group helped them to function well.

It is concluded that, the composition of the various teams was considered to be adequate. What was missing in the majority of cases was motivation. Strong leadership appeared to be a solution, as noted in cases where progress was made in achieving results.

#### *3.4.6.3 Regularity of Committee Meetings*

The committee in Benin was the only one that held meetings regularly. Members reserved specific times every second Tuesday for meetings. This arrangement worked very well but experienced some cancellations due to the absence of a critical mass. The committee in Senegal was unable to meet regularly due to various difficulties regarding support from ISRA. Funds provided by IDRC for use by the committee were not made available due to internal problems between the administration and the ISRA person on the committee. However, the committee was still able to carry out the work, albeit several months late, and produce the action plan. The rest of the committees did not succeed in holding meetings as needed perhaps due to a combination of lack of leadership, commitment and distance. Distance however appeared to have played a role only in the case of Cameroon where some members were far apart.

#### *3.4.6.4 Effectiveness of Regional Advisor in Supporting Committees*

Advisors in Senegal were not involved in the work of the Follow-up Committee. One of them however has successfully played a role in reviving the committee. They were however asked to play a coordinating role in the committees in other countries. Except in the case of Benin, Advisors were unable to quickly develop productive teams. However, the Advisor in Benin was very dynamic and effective in assisting the team to make good progress in a relatively short time, through persistent facilitation.

Factors responsible for the performance of a Regional Advisor in providing support to the committees may include; willingness to be involved, time availability, experience in leading similar activities and encouragement from IDRC-WARO. It is not felt that there was a very clear mandate given to Regional Advisors to be responsible for the committees.



#### 3.4.6.5 *Involvement of Policy Makers in Organization and Follow-up of Workshop*

*Senegal* - Policy makers were not highly involved in the organization of the workshop. IDRC played an active role of coordinating the workshop and invited policy makers related to research to participate. However, the Follow-up committee was under the coordination of ISRA, the institution responsible for agricultural research. One of the three members of the committee represented government policy makers. During the development of the action plan, policy makers were heavily involved in the data collection carried out by a consultant, who met parliamentarians, policy makers in government, researchers, etc.

*Burkina Faso* - Policy makers were involved by being made aware of the workshops through visits by IDRC. The Follow-up Committee subsequently did an effective job of involving policy makers in the post-workshop activities, including the seminar to discuss the Action Plan.

*Ghana* - IDRC met with four government ministers before the workshop in Ghana. It was noticed that the lowest involvement of policy makers in a workshop occurred in this country. Even though they were invited, their attendance was below expectation. Those who attended did not stay for discussions. The Follow-up Committee did not function as expected. However information available from this evaluation indicates that policy makers and researchers are constantly in touch in developing programs regarding the application of science and technology in the development of the private sector. There is apparently a movement within the government to promote dialogue and collaboration between various groups of key players.

*Mali* - Policy makers were involved in the preparations for the workshop. The presence of a dynamic parliamentarian contributed significantly to the workshop by explaining how policy makers can provide a leadership role in the improvement of the dialogue between researchers and policy makers. However, since the Follow-up Committee did not function effectively, no concrete comments can be made regarding the involvement of policy makers in the committee.

*Cameroon* - The government institution, *Programme National de Gouvernance (PNG)*, responsible for good governance collaborated closely with the Cameroonian Advisor during the organization of the workshop. There was a strong presence of policy makers who came mainly from civil society. The Follow-up Committee has made substantial progress under the leadership of both the Advisor and the Coordinator of PNG.

*Benin* - Benin had the most policy maker involvement in organizing the workshop. The office of the director of research at the Ministry of Health had the responsibility to organize the workshop, in collaboration with the IDRC Advisor, and took care of all logistics. Follow-up Committee members reflected representation from various policy maker and research groups. Five of the nine members were policy makers and had responsibilities within the committee.

#### 3.4.6.6 *Effect of Coordination by an Institution*

All the committees, except one, were coordinated by an Advisor. In the case where an institution had the coordinating role, this slowed down the work of the committee due to the unavailability of funds. But even though the person ensuring leadership of the committee was no longer part of the institution and the committee was without funds, the work continued to its completion. Thus, motivation to carry out the work appeared to be the deciding factor in obtaining results. No conclusive statement can be made, at this time, regarding the effect of the coordinating role of an institution on the performance of Follow-up Committees.

There are however several arguments for housing the committees within institutions, which include:

- Sustainability – The results of the work of the committees will be applied to improve researcher/policy maker dialogue over the long term. Thus, having an institution responsible for the activity should in principle ensure continuity, which is a condition needed for sustainability.
- Moral Responsibility – Having an institution being responsible gives stakeholders a reference point to which all queries, comments, etc. can be addressed.
- Credibility – An institution would have credibility in the eyes of both policy makers and researchers. Policy makers in particular may perhaps be more comfortable with such an arrangement especially if the institution is part of or close to decision making.

Such institutions do not necessarily have to be under government. In fact, an autonomous but respected structure would ensure a neutral role and could be effective in bringing together a wide range of actors. It could be a willing NGO or private structure with the necessary experience and qualities of competence and impartiality. Preferably, one of the committee members should hold a high position in the selected institution.

### 3.5 Thematic Discussions Findings

Environmental scanning and knowledge creation were two objectives of the IDRC-WARO Commission. After a review of the activities of the Council in 2005, members made the decision to step up their search for information, analyzing them and making them available to IDRC. The Thematic Discussions were thus initiated and the first one was held after the Researcher/Policy Maker’s Workshop in Mali followed by others in Cameroon, Benin and Cote d’Ivoire.

#### 3.5.1 Relevance of Thematic Discussions

The various topics of the Thematic Discussions have been presented in Table 2. The themes and a summary of the main topics covered by the discussions and presented below in Table 5 indicate the relevance to IDRC’s programs and their appropriateness to the development problems of the region. The results for the Thematic Discussions on Gender and Globalization have been documented and information brochures have been prepared and disseminated by IDRC. Similar brochures are not yet available for the other Thematic Discussions.

**Table 5 Summary of areas covered during Thematic Discussions of the Regional Advisors**

<b>Mali Thematic Discussion</b>
<i>The rights of women, citizenship and development in West and Central Africa</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Main Areas Covered:</li> <li>❖ Women’s access to justice and equality in terms of justice</li> <li>❖ Migratory phenomena and their consequences on women</li> <li>❖ Women’s health</li> <li>❖ Women’s participation in decision-making bodies</li> <li>❖ Modes of economic emancipation of women</li> <li>❖ Status of research on women</li> <li>❖ Commitment towards political, religious and community partners</li> </ul>
<b>Cameroon Thematic Discussion</b>
<i>Challenges and opportunities for a beneficial integration of West and Central Africa in a globalized world</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Main Areas Covered:</li> <li>❖ International negotiations in commerce</li> <li>❖ Economic integration and sub-regional industries</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Security and access to land</li> <li>❖ Reorganization of urban and rural areas</li> <li>❖ Delocalization and development of the sub-region</li> <li>❖ Information communication technology and unemployment</li> <li>❖ Role of the diaspora in the emergence of the sub-region</li> <li>❖ Monitoring and evaluation of policies and reforms</li> <li>❖ Development of transports</li> <li>❖ Health of populations</li> <li>❖ Cultural integration</li> </ul>
<p><b>Benin Thematic Discussion</b></p> <p><i>Fostering Sustainability in Development Policies for West and Central Africa: The Role of Research</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Main Areas Covered:</li> <li>❖ The capacity of African researchers to play a leading role in sustainable development</li> <li>❖ Features of sustainability in West/Central Africa, which makes research useful to decision-makers</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cote d'Ivoire Thematic Discussion 1</b></p> <p><i>National Strategies for using research results in West and Central African Countries</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Strengthen capacities of institutions that give value to research results</li> <li>❖ Promote and popularize the products of research with a view to achieving the Millennium Development</li> <li>❖ Adapt research to the needs of national development</li> <li>❖ Favor the transfer of research results to users (sale of licenses or creation of enterprises based on the results of research)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cote d'Ivoire Thematic Discussion 2</b></p> <p><i>Agenda and Priorities for Research on Regional Integration in the Sub-region</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Search for funding</li> <li>❖ The geographical challenge linked to the coherence of regional areas</li> <li>❖ The challenge of the delegation of sovereignty of States to different experiences of regional integration</li> <li>❖ The challenge of the new citizenship to build around these regional experiences</li> <li>❖ Improving the infrastructure of communication and transport in order to open up some member countries</li> <li>❖ The challenge of mass production and sufficiently diversified, capable of influencing regional and international markets</li> <li>❖ Problems related to the free movement of factors of production</li> <li>❖ The challenge of using gains due to integration for both the States and the populations</li> <li>❖ The challenge of using technical training and academic quality to better fit the current requirements</li> <li>❖ Climate change that threaten to destroy coastal areas having high population density</li> </ul>

### 3.5.2 Implementation and Efficiency of Thematic Discussions

Planning of Meeting. All Thematic Discussions were held after the Researcher/Policy Maker's Workshops. The planning of the meetings went through a well defined process. Suggestions for the themes were made in collaboration with the Regional Advisors and a choice was made by IDRC. Topics were chosen ahead of the meeting but it was noted that the choice could have been made

somewhat earlier to allow for documents to be prepared and circulated before the meeting. The duration of the discussions, a half-day, was considered to be too short to allow for full discussions of relevant issues.

Background Documents. The quality of external input was generally satisfactory. The consultants prepared papers that had a wide scope and which provided a good basis for the discussion by the Regional Advisors. It was noted that the Thematic Discussion on Sustainable Policies, which was held in Benin was perhaps handicapped because the terms of reference for the discussion were not very clear. Again the background papers could have been better prepared if enough time and guidance were given to the authors.

Facilitation of Meetings and Advisors' Participation. The Thematic Discussions were facilitated by Regional Advisors and they also recorded the proceedings of the discussions. Ideally it would have been more productive to have the meeting facilitated by someone other than a Regional Advisor. This would have freed her/him to be more immersed in the discussion. The arrangement used did not however, appear to have prevented the Regional Advisors from participating actively. It may also be argued that an external facilitator might not have been able to draw out the necessary details if he/she were not close to the activities of the Council.

Extent of Environmental Scanning and Knowledge Creation. In carrying out the Thematic Discussions the Council increased the scope of its environmental scanning activities from having meetings at which it discusses research for development in more general terms to looking at specific development problems. The Regional Advisors succeeded in accumulating information, analyzing and documenting them. It is however unfortunate that these Thematic Discussions did not start earlier.

### ***3.5.3 Effectiveness of the Thematic Discussions***

The discussion papers, which guided the discussions during the Thematic Discussions, provided a wide range of information. Regional Advisors were able to draw out important issues on which to base their discussions. This process has increased the Council's effectiveness in environmental scanning and knowledge creation because it allowed Advisors to quickly identify research entry points that can be further developed in the future. As noted by Council members themselves, the various ideas developed during the Thematic Discussions will need further attention, if they are of interest to IDRC. The value of some of the Thematic Discussions has been enhanced by the preparation of information brochures for dissemination. The remaining documentation should be completed very soon.

## **3.6 Replicability**

The WARO Council of Regional Advisors has been in existence for about seven years and substantial experience has been obtained regarding its appropriateness for the region. All of the people with whom the evaluator has been in contact have mentioned that the Council has been useful to WARO. Some IDRC persons have mentioned that the Council appears to work within the context of the WARO region, citing its contributions to several IDRC activities and processes.

Responses received from IDRC personnel, over the period the Council has been evaluated, regarding the extent to which they feel work of the Council may be replicable, are summarized below:

- ✚ Regional offices are located in areas where countries have different cultural differences, different capacities and different ways of collaborating, and approaches that are effective for WARO may not be applicable across all regions.

- # It may be interesting to try some aspects of the Council's activities in other regions, if both financial and human resources are available.
- # It may be useful to use the concept of the Council but on a short term basis and only if it makes sense to do so.
- # In some regions, which are highly competitive and with cultural differences that are substantial, the approach of using the Council for obtaining regional intelligence may be difficult to apply.
- # The use of the Council alone would not give all the intelligence needed in other regions.
- # IDRC should try to extract lessons from this WARO experience to assess what works within various contexts in terms of environmental scanning and knowledge creation.
- # If the Council is adopted by any regional office, then it may be useful to support it within the framework of a project which is run by the Regional Director and his assistants, but provision should be made for some supplementary staff support.
- # A concern regarding adopting the Council elsewhere is the availability of time and resources. This may be partially attenuated if a less formal structure is used.
- # Feedback on having similar Councils in other regions may have been partially muted because the merit of the Council has not been adequately demonstrated and because other Regional Directors have their own mechanisms for obtaining regional intelligence.

What is concluded from this evaluation regarding replicability is that, each regional office decides on the best approach to use for environmental scanning and knowledge creation, based on regional specificities. It is possible that some activities may be useful to other regions. In this case it would be useful for the WARO experience to be documented so as to provide information based on which decisions can be taken.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1. The Council of Regional Advisors

The main conclusions and recommendations obtained from this evaluation are presented in this section. They attempt to draw attention to areas that have demonstrated strengths, weaknesses as well as possible actions for the future if the work of the Council is continued. Conclusions are presented followed by related recommendations in italics.

4.1.1 The Regional Council has to a very large degree succeeded in fulfilling its objectives of environmental scanning, knowledge creation, capacity building and improving the visibility of IDRC. The Council has been effective in sensitizing researchers and policy makers of the need for close collaboration in the sustainable use of research results. It has visibly improved regional capacity to analyze research for development problems. The Council has also contributed significantly to the development of IDRC's Corporate Strategy and Program Framework and other reports relevant to Africa.

*Recommendation: IDRC should consider maintaining the Council at least for another three years to enable the Council to capitalize on its experiences. This time would be used to expand the environmental scanning and knowledge creation in the region. The initial period of this next phase should be used to fully document all the results of activities carried out to date.*

*Recommendation: Contributions made by WARO in the development of the next CSPF should have as its starting point the use of the documented results of the work of Council.*

4.1.2 The Council has not managed to fully document results of its activities, which can serve as important reference material for both IDRC and other parties.

*Recommendation: IDRC-WARO should review all the activities of the Council and complete the documentation and diffusion of the following: results of the workshop series; information brochures on all remaining Thematic Discussions. In addition, all relevant information regarding the work of the Council should be organized and placed in the appropriate IDRC web site.*

4.1.3 Although the Council has obtained significant achievements, information on the activities and outcomes of the Council have not been adequately shared with IDRC staff in Ottawa or in other regional offices. As a result, the potential of the Council to contribute to the IDRC's decision-making at the program level has not been seen by some IDRC staff.

*Recommendation: IDRC-WARO should develop an information and communication strategy to regularly share information about the Council, its activities and its outcomes with IDRC colleagues. For future activities, a regular bulletin with updates about what is happening in the Council, or highlights with references to the website may be a useful tool for dissemination.*

4.1.4 Regional Advisors are unanimously recognized as highly competent and committed to the work of the Council. They have impressed others with their level of expertise, their experience and interest in the development of the region. They have worked as a professional team.

4.1.5 Although capacity building of Regional Advisors was an objective of the Regional Council and some important activities took place, these were not guided by a clear strategy.

4.1.6 The high levels of expertise, experience and commitment of Regional Advisors, resulting from the rigorous selection criteria applied, have allowed the Council to maintain a high quality of output. The Council, however, does not have adequate representation from Central Africa.

*Recommendation: The same rigorous selection criteria for Regional Advisors should be maintained in the future.*

*Recommendation: Regional Advisors should be chosen so that there is a balance in terms of nationality, gender, sub-region, fields of expertise, language, etc. Central Africa should be given priority in selecting future advisors.*

4.1.7 The effectiveness and efficiency of the Council has been enhanced by the support of IDRC-WARO, which has learned from the strengths and weaknesses of the activities and has progressively taken corrective measures to improve the working environment of the Council throughout its life. Examples of this doing-by-learning were; steps taken to enhance knowledge generation through the Thematic Discussions, and improving the outputs and effectiveness of the researcher/policy maker workshops.

4.1.8 The effectiveness of the Council has been reduced by the initial absence of a strategic plan, a monitoring and evaluation plan and a plan for the dissemination of the results. Corrective actions by IDRC helped to significantly correct the situation and to obtain positive results.

4.1.9 The credibility and visibility of IDRC within the region has increased, as a result of the work of the Council. Regional Advisors have access to high level government officials and have helped to establish and/or strengthen their relationships with IDRC. The media has also been instrumental in covering workshop events. The Council has however not fully exploited the media for greater publicity coverage of its activities.

*Recommendation: IDRC should make specific efforts to maintain the relationships that it has established, during activities of the Council, with high-level officials in the various countries.*

*Recommendation: Future workshops should be exploited as opportunities for media exposure, before, during and after the meeting.*

4.1.10 The Council and IDRC have used the media to popularize the work of the Council as well as to engage Regional Advisors in international debates, and to highlight the role of IDRC in supporting research for development in the region.

*Recommendation: Regional Advisors should continue to use the media to inform local as well as international audiences of the work of the Council as well as provide the African perspective in international debates. IDRC should share these media contributions by the Regional Advisors, with various institutions such as governments, NGOs, regional organizations (ADB, CILSS, ECOWAS, etc.), international organizations, IDRC Regional Offices and Ottawa.*

4.1.11 There was some concern that Regional Advisors might confuse their advisory role with that of governance. This evaluation has confirmed that all Regional Advisors understood their roles and the limits of their activities at a very early stage of their involvement. The concern was therefore not an issue within the Council.

4.1.12 Regional Advisors were supposed to serve in the Council for up to three years. Due to various reasons, some members served beyond this time. It is noted that the effectiveness and efficiency of the Council has benefited significantly from such flexibility. There is, however, a need for Advisors to have a formal orientation package and clear guidelines regarding their performance and their term in office.

*Recommendation: The mandate for future Advisors should be three years, renewed once.*

*Recommendation: For future Advisors, IDRC should consider the development of an orientation package that would include information on IDRC, the history of the Council, its objectives, its role, examples of achievements of the Council, examples of how Council members have benefited from participation in the Council (professional development, capacity-building, etc). In addition, there needs to be clear standards of what is expected of Regional Advisors in terms of their performance (attendance at meetings, regularity of input, participation in activities, etc), and clear procedures for removing non-contributing or controversial members from the Council. Having to deal with such situations on an ad hoc basis would be too time-consuming and complicated. Such a package will ensure that new Regional Advisors understand their role and what is expected of them, as well as possible rewards of their position.*

4.1.12 The Council is an appropriate mechanism for environmental scanning and knowledge creation in West/Central Africa. It has gained experience and lessons that may be useful to other regions.

*Recommendation: Replication of activities by the WARO Council in other regions should depend on the local context and on an assessment of the benefits to be gained.*

## **4.2 The Researcher/Policy Maker Workshop Series**

4.2.1 The researcher/policy maker workshops, which were organized by Regional Advisors, have succeeded in getting policy makers and researchers to engage in dialogue on future collaboration regarding the use of research results.

*Recommendation: Future workshops should be organized by Regional Advisors. However, both policy makers and researchers should be involved from the beginning in order to develop a sense of ownership and foster their commitment throughout the process.*

4.2.2 Workshops have not been sufficiently publicized, and workshop conclusions have not been adequately disseminated by IDRC. When media coverage existed, it was usually limited to the country in which the workshop was held

*Recommendation: The following media publicity coverage is recommended for future workshops;*

- *A small debate in the form of a forum should be held through the media, before the actual workshops, to stimulate interest.*
- *During the workshops, the media should be invited to cover the opening ceremony where high level government officials are usually present. The media should also be invited to participate in the workshops.*
- *A press conference should be held at the end of the workshops to present the main conclusions and to generate support for follow-up.*
- *IDRC could package the conclusions of the workshops in the form of concise and informative “policy briefs” for distribution to policy makers and researchers in the region.*

4.2.3 The workshops and other activities of the Council have identified various areas for environmental scanning and knowledge creation. The Council can be very effective in providing useful information on these to IDRC to strengthen various programs.

*Recommendation: The Council should consider holding new series of workshops aimed at other subject areas that are equally important to the region.*

### **4.3 The Workshop Follow-up Committees**

4.3.1 Follow-up Committees in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Benin have all basically achieved their mandates. They have sensitized researchers and policy makers, improved collaboration between them and have Action Plans for use to continue the dialogue. Mali has not obtained any significant results. Ghana has used existing national mechanisms to obtain results to encourage the use of research results to improve the private sector.

*Recommendation: In cases where the Committees have not obtained the needed results, IDRC should work in close collaboration with the various committees so that the following are carried out: ensure strong leadership of each committee; finalize the action plans for each country and hold the validation workshop; develop a resource mobilization strategy to implement the action plans; and, disseminate the results of the work of the committees*

*Recommendation: Given the potential impact of the researcher/policy maker dialogue, IDRC can make substantial contribution to influencing the sustainable use of research results by supporting the work of the Follow-up Committees after the development and validation of the Action Plans in each country. Support can be provided through the development of a multi-country project that seeks to improve the use of research results through improved researcher/policy maker interaction.*

4.3.2 The most productive committees were those that planned their work with specific objectives, activities to achieve them, assignment of responsibilities and timelines.



4.3.3 IDRC's approach has been to let committees plan and organize how to complete the work assigned to them. Although this approach has allowed some committees to find ways of being more effective, other committees have been delayed in their work because they were not sure how to proceed next

4.3.4 Committees would have performed better if they had been monitored more closely. Too much time elapsed between communications with IDRC requesting updates on the status of work. Committee members therefore tended to take longer to complete tasks assigned due to heavy workloads. .

4.3.5 The effectiveness of committees depended on; the leadership, top managerial positions of members, diversity of members (researchers, policy makers, civil society, etc). Their leadership positions enabled them to easily gain access to key players, while their diversity enabled them to reach actors in different sectors and to discuss from different perspectives. Committees' performance was also enhanced if members knew each other before being part of the committees.

4.3.6 The performance of committees would have been better enhanced if they had received very clear mandates from IDRC-WARO regarding all aspects of the Follow-up Committees.

4.3.7 Committees that were coordinated by very active Regional Advisors produced good results in a timely manner. It may however be advantageous to link the committees to key institutions. Some reasons for this include; sustainability, moral responsibility, and credibility. Decisions regarding the appropriate institutional leadership for the Follow-up Committees depend on the local context.

*Recommendation: Ideally, institutions should be outside of government institutions to ensure that they are autonomous and that they are able to bring together all stakeholder groups (researchers, civil society, policy makers, etc.). Ideally, the institution would be an NGO, a research institution or an organization in the private sector, and a member of the Follow-up committee should hold a high position within the institution.*

4.3.8 Motivation was a key factor in determining the effectiveness of committees. Members were not remunerated for income lost in being part of the committee and made the sacrifice due to personal interests. Nevertheless committee members would have liked IDRC-WARO to find financial and non-financial means of motivating committees.

*Recommendation: In order to motivate committee members, IDRC could formalize the creation of committees by giving them a name and preparing a document that states the membership of the committee as well as its terms of reference. Where the committee is housed in an institution, the institutions should be informed of the work accomplished by committees, in particular their staff member(s) who may thus enjoy professional recognition.*

#### **4.4 The Thematic Discussions**

4.4.1 Thematic Discussions were an effective means for the Regional Advisors to collect information and identify potential areas for IDRC research support. The topics covered were relevant to the needs of the region as well as to IDRC's programs.

4.4.2 The results of the Thematic Discussions have not been adequately packaged and disseminated. This has therefore limited the benefits of the knowledge that was created by the Regional Advisors.

## 5. FINAL THOUGHTS AND NEXT STEPS

Based on the findings of this evaluation, WARO's Council of Regional Advisors is a strategically useful tool to support IDRC's programming process in West and Central Africa, and it is responsive to research needs of the region. The Council has gone through a learning process and has progressively strengthened its outputs. It is now poised to benefit from its experience to further assist the regional office in collecting and reporting regional intelligence.

The Council's financing should soon be coming to an end, raising the question of "What happens next?" Given the perceived usefulness of the Council by the regional office, and supported by this evaluation, consideration should be given by IDRC to maintain the existence of the Council in some useful form.

The next steps in this process may be the following:

- Consolidate and document past work with the view to demonstrating all achievements of the Council. This is needed to convince certain IDRC personnel who have so far not clearly seen all the results of the Council's activities. This can be done quickly within a year.
- Maintain dialogue between the Regional Advisors so that they can continue to provide improved and sound support to the regional office, based on a well defined and strategic work plan for the next three years. This work plan can be based on the recommendations outlined above and can include:
  - Thematic Discussions
  - Documentation and dissemination of outputs
  - Support for the researcher/policy maker dialogue in the six countries
  - Assessment of the extent to which IDRC support has concretely influenced researcher/policy maker interaction.

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## ANNEX 1. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS PERTAINING TO COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

<b>WORKSHOP IN THE AREA OF AGRICULTURE, DAKAR, SENEGAL, 29-30 JUNE, 2004</b>		
<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Title of Publication</b>	<b>Identification</b>
Reports	<i>Compte-rendu de l'atelier sur la synergie entre chercheurs et décideurs de Dakar - 29 &amp; 30 juin 2004</i>	DAK - 01
Documents on Analysis	<i>Présentation des résultats du sondage par questionnaires</i> Par Dr Innocent Butaré, Spécialiste principal de programmes, CRDI - Dakar	DAK - 02
Case Studies	<i>Importance de l'implication des décideurs dans la diffusion des résultats de recherches: Cas de la vulgarisation de la culture du manioc au Burkina Faso</i> Par Dr Rémy DABIRE , Chef du Centre Régional de Recherches Environnementales et Agricoles de l'Ouest, INERA, Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso	DAK - 03
	<i>L'information et la valorisation des résultats de recherche auprès des décideurs de l'agriculture au Sénégal: Réflexion à partir de l'expérience du BAME de l'ISRA,</i> Par MM Cheikh Oumar BA et Guillaume DUTEURTRE, ISRA-BAME, Dakar, Sénégal	DAK - 04
Monitoring Process	<i>Synergies entre chercheurs et décideurs dans le domaine agricole au Sénégal: Etude exploratoire, Par le Comité de suivi de l'Atelier de Dakar, Juin 2004)-</i> Par ISRA, Septembre 2005	DAK - 05
	<i>Plan d'actions sur le partenariat chercheurs décideurs dans le domaine de l'agriculture au Sénégal, Par le Comité de suivi de l'atelier de Dakar de juin 2004</i>	DAK - 06
<b>WORKSHOP ON THE WORLD OF EDUCATION IN BURKINA FASO, OUAGADOUGOU, BURKINA FASO, 27-28 JANVIER, 2005</b>		
<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Title of Publication</b>	<b>Identification</b>
Reports	<i>Compte-rendu de l'atelier sur la synergie entre chercheurs et décideurs de Ouagadougou - janvier 2005, Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) - 27 et 28 janvier 2005</i>	OUA - 01
Documents on Analysis	<i>Recherche et décision politique en éducation : ensemble ou dichotomie?</i> par M. Mamadou Ndoye, Secrétaire exécutif de l'ADEA	OUA - 02
	<i>Témoignage d'un ancien ministre de l'éducation du Burkina Faso</i> par Monsieur SANOU Baworo Seydou, ancien ministre de l'Education de Base	OUA - 03
	<i>La recherche économique et la politique éducative au Sénégal: l'expérience du CREA</i> par M.Gaye Daffé, Faculté de Sciences Economiques et de Gestion de l'Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar	OUA - 04
	<i>De la recherche en éducation à la décision politique : l'expérience du PASEC en matière de communication pour favoriser l'utilisation de la recherche</i> par Katia Vianou, conseillère en communication, PASEC/CONFEMEN	OUA - 05
Case Studies	<i>Le degré d'utilisation des résultats de la recherche à la lumière de la revue GTASE-Burkina (2001),</i> par M. ILBOUDO K Ernest, Maître Assistant à l'UFRSEG, Coordonnateur du ROCARE BURKINA	OUA - 06
	<i>L'expérience de la collaboration entre les chercheurs du ROCARE et le ministère de l'éducation de base pour la réforme éducative au Mali</i> par M. Bréhima Tounkara, ancien coordonnateur du ROCARE-MALI	OUA - 07

Monitoring Process	<i>Rapport d'activités du Comité de suivi de l'atelier de Ouagadougou – Mars 2007</i>	OUA - 08
<b>ROUND TABLE ON THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN GHANA, ACCRA, GHANA, 6-7 JULY, 2005</b>		
Type of Document	Title of Publication	Identification
Reports	<i>Rapport de la Table-Ronde d'Accra</i>	ACC - 01
Documents on Analysis	<i>Setting the Scene: Examining the Interplay Between Research, Private Sector Development, and the Policy Domain</i> by Prof. Clement Dzidonu, INIIT, Ghana	ACC - 02
	<i>Research and Private Sector Development in Ghana: The Experience, Challenges and Achievements,</i> By Prof. E. Owusu-Bennoah, CSIR, Ghana	ACC - 03
	<i>Private Sector Development in Ghana: The Challenges and the Lessons</i> by Dr. Osei Boeh-Ocansey, Private Enterprise Foundation, Ghana	ACC - 04
Case Studies	<i>Research Support for Policy Formulation and Private Sector Development: The Case of Ghana ICT4AD Process,</i> By Dr Godfred Frempong CSIR-STEPRI, Ghana	ACC - 05
	<i>Policymakers - Private Sector Relationships: Case of the ICT Cluster in Senegal,</i> By Abdoulaye Ndiaye, IDRC Regional Advisor, Senegal	ACC - 06
<b>FORUM ON DROUGHT AND DESERTIFICATION IN WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA: THE CASE OF MALI, BAMAKO, MALI, 8-9 FEVRIER 2006)</b>		
Type of Document	Title of Publication	Identification
Reports	<i>Rapport final du Forum de Bamako - 8 &amp; 9 février 2006</i>	BAM - 01
Documents on Analysis	<i>Acquis et potentiels de la recherche sur la sécheresse et la désertification au Mali par M. Lassine Diarra (IER) et M. Alhousseini Bretaudeau (IPR/IFRA)</i>	BAM - 02
	<i>Utilisation de l'information météorologique par le monde rural pour améliorer la sécurité alimentaire au Mali</i> par M. Birama Diarra, Météo-Mali (DNM)	BAM - 03
Case Studies	<i>Gestion des terroirs villageois et lutte contre la désertification : le Siwaa en zone CMDT</i> par M. Ngolo Coulibaly (ESPGRN Sikasso)	BAM - 04
	<i>Les résultats du Réseau d'observatoires et de surveillance écologique à long terme (ROSELT) et le projet sur l'ensablement du fleuve Niger dans la région de Gao</i> par M. Samou Sangaré, Député, Assemblée nationale du Mali	BAM - 05
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>Monitoring and evaluation of WARO Council of Regional Advisors' workshop and Thematic Discussion, Bamako Mali, February 2006,</i> by Michael W. Bassey, Evalueateur	BAM - 06
Monitoring Process	<i>PLAN D'ACTION: Synthèse des solutions aux contraintes et facteurs de blocage pour un dialogue durable entre chercheurs et décideurs</i>	BAM - 07
<b>SYMPOSIUM ON THE AREA OF GOVERNANCE, YAOUNDE, CAMEROUN 21-22 JUIN, 2006</b>		
Type of Document	Title of Publication	Identification
Reports	<i>Rapport final du Symposium de Yaoundé – 21 &amp; 22 juin 2006</i>	YAO - 01
Documents on Analysis	<i>« Impact de la recherche sur la prise de décision pour la bonne gouvernance au Cameroun »</i> Par Dorothee KOM, Ministère de la recherche scientifique	YAO - 02
	<i>« Mettre en oeuvre la gouvernance par la recherche en Afrique: le Mécanisme Africain d'Evaluation par les Pairs (MAEP) du NEPAD»,</i> par Mme Marie-Angélique Savané, première Présidente et membre éminente du	YAO - 03

	<i>MAEP</i>	
	« <i>L'expérience du Programme national de gouvernance au Cameroun</i> », par Prof. Dieudonné OYONO, Coordonnateur national du PNG	YAO - 04
Case Studies	« <b>Eclairer la gouvernance par la recherche : l'expérience du rapport sur la corruption dans le secteur de la santé au Sénégal</b> », par M. Abdou Ndao, Coordonnateur Programme Recherche du Forum Civil (Sénégal)	YAO - 05
	« <i>La gouvernance socioéconomique comme urgence de dialogue entre chercheurs et décideurs : le cas de l'UGICAES à Santchou</i> », par Prof Charly Gabriel MBOCK, Directeur de recherches	YAO - 06
Monitoring and Evaluation Documents	<i>Monitoring and evaluation of WARO council of regional advisors' workshop and thematic discussion, Yaoundé, Cameroon, June 2006</i> by Michael W. BASSEY	YAO - 07
<b>SYMPOSIUM ON MATERNAL AND NEOATAL MORTALITY, BÉNIN, JANUARY 16 &amp; 17, 2007</b>		
<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Title of Publication</b>	<b>Identification</b>
Reports	<i>Rapport final du Symposium de Cotonou – 16 &amp; 17 janvier 2007</i>	COT - 01
Documents on Analysis	Le rôle de la recherche dans la lutte contre la mortalité maternelle et néonatale en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre, par Professeuse Yveline AGBO HOUENOU, Professeuse de Pédiatrie Néonatale à l'Université d'Abidjan Cocody (Côte d'Ivoire)	COT - 02
	<i>Etat de la recherche au Bénin en matière de mortalité maternelle et néonatale</i> par Dr Sourou GBANGBADE, consultant international	COT - 03
	<i>Le dialogue chercheurs-décideurs en santé au Bénin : le point de vue d'un parlementaire</i> par l'honorable Léon BIO BIGOU, Député à l'Assemblée nationale	COT - 04
Case Studies	Dialogue chercheurs-décideurs pour la réduction de la mortalité maternelle à Sakété par Prof José de SOUZA, Coordonnateur RPMM - Bénin	COT - 05
Follow-up Committee	<i>Comptes-rendus des réunions du Comité de suivi</i>	COT - 06
Monitoring and Evaluation	<i>An Evaluation of the WARO Council of Regional Advisors and its Workshop Series, October 7, 2005</i> , by Leona Ba, & Michael W. Bassey	EVAL-1
	<i>Evaluation of the Follow-up Committees of the workshop series of IDRC's WARO Council of Regional Advisors, April 30, 2007</i> , by Michael W. BASSEY	EVAL-2
<b>THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS</b>		
<b>Type of Document</b>	<b>Title of Publication</b>	<b>Identification</b>
Brochure	<i>Integrating the Gender Dimension into Research in West Africa</i> , Feb 2006, Regional Advisor Commission, IDRC	Mali
Brochure	<i>Research towards a Beneficial Participation of West and Central African Countries in Globalization</i> , February 2007, Regional Advisor Commission, IDRC	Cameroon
Brochure	<i>National Strategies for using research results in West and Central African Countries</i> , Regional Advisor Commission, IDRC, In Press	Cote d'Ivoire
Brochure	<i>Agenda and Priorities for Research on Regional Integration in the Sub-region</i> , Regional Advisor Commission, IDRC In Press	Cote d'Ivoire

# REGIONAL ADVISORS

## INTRODUCTION

A major limitation in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan for the activities of the WARO Regional Council has been the lack of definition of clear expected Outcomes. These Outcomes were essential because they would provide the basis to define indicators that would be monitored within the framework of a monitoring and evaluation plan. During the Yaoundé Researcher/Policy Maker workshop, a session was held with Advisors on June 24, 2006 to obtain their views on expected Outcomes for the Council until the period ending May 2008. The information collected served as a basis to develop the current plan.

The goal and objectives of the Council provide the framework for the monitoring and evaluation plan. The *overall goal* of WARO's Council of Regional Advisors is **to assist IDRC to better target the needs of the region according to the guidelines of its Corporate Strategy and Program Framework** (CS&PF – or IDRC five-year Plan). *Specific objectives* of the Council are:

- **Scanning the environment** for opportunities, challenges, and emerging issues in the region of relevance to IDRC's work, in particular, but not limited to their area of expertise.
- **Creating knowledge for IDRC and its partners** by sharing information on specific issues, raising questions on these issues to frame discussions, and making specific contributions regarding the issues.
- **Building the capacity of Regional Advisers** in providing leadership in the development and implementation of research for development strategies in West/Central Africa.
- **Improving the Credibility and Visibility of IDRC** within and outside the West/Central Africa region.

In the following section, Outcomes and indicators will be defined for each of these four objectives.

## DEFINING OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

For the purpose of this plan, an indicator is defined as a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development program or organization.



1. Environmental Scanning	1.1. Information provided to IDRC on current and emerging issues on research in West/Central Africa	1.1. Concrete input provided to IDRC on regional (West/Central Africa) issues for the development of the Center's 5-year Corporate Framework and Regional Strategy. 1.2 At least 12 separate reflections carried out by Regional Advisers to identify issues of relevance to the region
2. Knowledge Creation	2.1. Dialogue between policy makers and researchers improved  2.2. Advisors contribute to IDRC programming activities (strategy for research support, orientation of programs, projects, etc.)	2.1.1 Six country researcher/policy maker workshops held on specific themes in different areas of development and of major relevance to the region. 2.1.2 The process of developing researcher/policy maker interaction in West Africa is documented. 2.1.3 Follow-up committee(s) developed plans for improving researcher/policy maker dialogue. 2.1.4 Policy briefs prepared and disseminated on researcher policy maker workshops.  2.2.1. Three Thematic Discussions of Regional Advisers, which provide research programming entry points for IDRC intervention in the West/Central African region, are held. 2.2.2. Policy briefs prepared and disseminated on results of thematic discussions on subject areas of importance to the West/Central African region.
3. Capacity Building	3.1. Leadership capacity of Regional Advisers developed in: influencing policy; research strategy development; multi-disciplinary reflection on issues; working across national and regional boundaries	3.1.1 Increased opportunities to influence policy (e.g. as member of a committee, task force, etc.)  3.1.2 Advisers receive recognition/advancement as a result of their involvement in IDRC's activities.
4. Improving the Credibility and Visibility of IDRC	4.1. Improved credibility and visibility of IDRC	4.1.1 IDRC meets high level officials in various countries. 4.1.2 Web site created to disseminate information on activities of the WARO Commission. 4.1.3 Involvement of high level officials in activities of the commission. 4.1.4 Collaboration between IDRC/ACDI/Canadian Embassy improved in West Central African countries. 4.1.5 Media recognizes IDRC's work in various countries. 4.1.6 Regional Advisers represent IDRC internationally 4.1.7 Partnerships with regional bodies (e.g., CEDEAO, CEMAC) established.

This evaluation is (both formative and summative) and will cover the period from September 2001 to April 2008, when the financing will end for the activities of the Council.

The evaluation will cover **four** components that are distinct but complementary:

- 1) The Council itself
- 2) Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops
- 3) The Follow-up Committees
- 4) The Thematic Discussions.

The audience for the evaluation report will be the WARO Regional Director and headquarters in Ottawa.

### **Evaluation Objectives**

The evaluation will determine:

- 1) If the existence of the Council has served a strategic purpose in ensuring that global IDRC program development addresses the specific needs of the West and Central Africa region.
- 2) If the series of Researcher/Policy Maker Workshops has succeeded in influencing the use of research results in informed decision-making.
- 3) If the series of workshops could be used as a model to support IDRC's action in improving the use of the results of IDRC-funded research in decision-making.
- 4) If the Council's Thematic Discussions have contributed or have the potential to contribute to improving IDRC's research support for West/Central Africa.
- 5) If the leadership capacities of Regional Advisers in influencing policy, research strategy development, and working across national boundaries have been improved by their involvement in the Council.
- 6) If the visibility and credibility of IDRC have been improved by the activities of the Council.
- 7) If the Council as a strategy could be replicated to other regional offices and according to which criteria.

The evaluation will in effect determine to what extent the Outcomes in the terms of reference of the Council<sup>13</sup> (*Environmental Scanning, Knowledge Creation, Capacity Building and Improving the Visibility and Credibility of IDRC*) have been achieved, based on the assessment of the performance indicators.

This evaluation will answer the following questions:

Relevance

- 1) How did the perception that IDRC and the Regional Advisors have of the role and mandate of the Council evolve over time? Did this evolution enable the Council to improve its relevance, effectiveness, and/or efficiency?

Effectiveness

- 2) Were the objectives of the Council achieved?
- 3) What factors facilitated or prevented the achievement of these objectives? More specifically, examine the factors that could affect the performance of the Council:
  - a. Selection criteria (profile and qualifications of Regional Advisors).
  - b. Individual characteristics: motivation, commitment, participation, availability, etc.
  - c. Characteristics of the team: role and mandate, composition, structure, communication, relationship among Regional Advisors, (cohesion, team dynamics, collaboration, etc.), level of consensus regarding the role and mandate of the Council, duration of service, mechanism to replace Regional Advisors.
  - d. Support provided to the Council by IDRC (services, relevant information, resources, etc.).
- 4) What impact has the Council had on WARO and IDRC in general (regional intelligence, reputation, visibility, relationship with beneficiaries, responsiveness of programming to the specific needs of the region, involvement/participation of IDRC decision makers from headquarters in Ottawa or elsewhere, etc.)? More specifically, examine the performance of the Council in the following areas:
  - a. Identification of challenges and opportunities in the external environment of IDRC (environmental scanning), in particular in the West and Central Africa region;
  - b. Creation of knowledge for IDRC through the integration of the Council's outputs (e.g. identification of needs and emerging issues) into IDRC's global programming;
  - c. Knowledge sharing within the Council and with relevant IDRC staff;
  - d. Organizational memory: the extent to which the Council could establish itself as a mechanism integrated in WARO's organizational processes.
  - e. Impact of the Council on Regional Advisors and on their organizations and/or countries. How has such an impact benefited IDRC?

Efficiency

- 5) Did the Council have a structure, a composition, and a mode of operation that enable it to reach its objectives?  
Did the fact that Regional Advisors were volunteers affect their level of participation?
- 6) How could WARO improve its management and use of the Council?

This evaluation will assess whether the workshops have led to a greater use of research results by policy makers in decision-making. For this purpose, it will answer the following questions:

- 1) In what way and to what extent has the workshop series influenced policy-making processes? More specifically:
  - By improving the capacity of researchers to take into consideration the needs of policy makers in their work;
  - By increasing policy makers' awareness of the advantages of using relevant research results to inform their decision-making;
  - By influencing policies.
- 2) Which factors affected the influence of workshops on policy making?
- 3) How could WARO improve the series of workshops as an approach in order to improve its influence on policy making? How could this strategy be replicated in other regions?

In order to determine the impact of the workshop series, evaluators will focus on all six workshops and the activities of the Follow-up Committees.

#### *Scope of the evaluation of Thematic Discussions*

The Thematic Discussions were initiated to allow the Council to fulfill its Outcomes pertaining to environmental scanning and knowledge creation. The evaluation will answer the following questions:

##### Relevance

- 1) Were the discussed topics of relevance to IDRC's programs?
- 2) Did they cover important and/or new areas of research in the region?
- 3) Did they treat development problems?
- 4) How were these discussions perceived by both the Regional Advisors and IDRC in terms of contributing to knowledge creation?
- 5) Should they be continued?

##### Effectiveness

- 6) Did the discussions involve adequate environmental scanning and knowledge creation?
- 7) What effect did the Thematic Discussions have on both IDRC's programs and what feedback did they produce?
- 8) How have the results of the discussions influenced programming within IDRC and to what extent?
- 9) What improvements should be made to improve the effectiveness of these discussions.

##### Efficiency

- 10) Did the method used for the Thematic Discussions allow the Councilors to produce useful results?

IDRC:  
In order to answer these questions, the evaluators will review the activities carried out for the Thematic Discussions and the results obtained.

## **Deliverables**

A draft evaluation report will be submitted to the IDRC WARO Regional Director by March 31, 2008 for comments. The work for the evaluation will then be finalized and a final report submitted by May 31, 2008. This evaluation report will be used by IDRC:

- ❖ To decide if there is value in maintaining the Council of Regional Advisors;
- ❖ To make adjustments to the Council if/as needed;
- ❖ To decide on the follow up actions to take regarding the series of Researcher/Policy maker workshops, if any;
- ❖ To decide on follow up actions to take regarding the Thematic Discussions, if any;
- ❖ To decide if the Council of Regional Advisors is a mechanism that could be replicated to other regional offices, and if so, according to which guidelines.

## **Methodology**

### *Data Collection Methods*

#### Review of documents

This review will enable evaluators to better understand the context for the evaluation. The documents to be reviewed include (see Annex 1):

- The documents concerning the setting up and composition of the Council
- Reports of the Workshop Series
- Reports and documents concerning the Follow-up Committees of the Workshop Series
- IDRC's Corporate Strategy and Program Framework and other IDRC documentation
- Monitoring and Evaluation Reports of the Researcher Policy Makers Workshops held in various countries
- The Evaluation Report of the WARO Commission of Regional Advisors in 2005
- The 2007 Report of the Evaluation of the Follow-up Committees
- Various documentation pertaining to the Thematic Discussions

#### Meetings and interviews with key informants

Interviews (face to face, telephone, questionnaire if necessary), will be used to collect information from a range of informants who will belong to various groups; Regional Advisors, IDRC personnel and members of the Follow-up Committees.

### *The Evaluation*

The evaluation will focus on the period from the creation of the Council in September 2001 to



NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
<b>IDRC</b>		
<b>Forget, Gilles</b>	Regional Director	WARO
<b>Butare, Innocent</b>	Senior Program Specialist	WARO
<b>Gérard, Jérôme</b>	Research and Information Officer	WARO
<b>Schryer, Chantal</b>	Director, Communication Division	Ottawa
<b>Fuchs, Richard</b>	Regional Director	ASRO
<b>Lebel, Jean</b>	Director, Environment and Natural Resource Management	Ottawa
<b>Medhora, Rohinton</b>	Vice-President, Program and Partnership Branch	Ottawa
<b>Freeman, Connie</b>	Regional Director	ESARO
<b>Rached, Eglal</b>	Regional Director	MERO
<b>Burone, Frederico</b>	Regional Director	LACRO
<b>McGurk, Stephen</b>	Regional Director	SARO

NAME	POSITION	COUNTRY
<b>Present WARO Regional Advisors</b>		
<b>Ajjjola, Abdul-Hakeem B.D</b>	Regional Advisor	Nigeria
<b>Diallo, Asseta</b>	Regional Advisor	Burkina Faso
<b>Diop, Mbareck (Col.)</b>	Regional Advisor	Senegal
<b>Dzidonu, Clement</b>	Regional Advisor	Ghana
<b>Massougbodji, Marina</b>	Regional Advisor	Bénin
<b>Okolo, Angela A.</b>	Regional Advisor	Nigeria
<b>Sesay, Shekou</b>	Regional Advisor	Sierra Leone
<b>Yitamben, Gisèle</b>	Regional Advisor	Cameroon
<b>Follow-up Committee</b>		
<b>Bio-Bigou, Leon</b>	Member	Benin
<b>Ndiye, Papa Nuhine</b>	Member	Senegal
<b>Tiendrebeogo, Alice</b>	Member	Burkina Faso

## INTRODUCTION

- My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I work as a consultant with the IDRC Regional Office for West and Central Africa (WARO) to evaluate its Council of Regional Advisors. This evaluation also studies the cycle of researcher-policy maker workshops, the Workshop Follow-up Committees, the Thematic Discussions and the Council's Meetings. The evaluation puts emphasis on aspects related to pertinence, effectiveness and efficiency.
- The results of the interviews will be used, in addition to other information, to evaluate the work of the Council from 2001 to 2008. This includes the following activities: workshops and Follow-up Committees of the workshops held in the six countries; Senegal (June 2004), Burkina Faso (February 2005), Ghana (July 2005), Mali (February 2006), Cameroon (June 2006) and Bénin (January 2007); three Thematic Discussions held in Mali, Cameroon and Benin, and several working Council Meetings.
- I would like to thank you for your participation and assure you of the confidentiality of your answers.
- Before starting, do you have any questions?

## INFORMATION ON RESPONDENT

Title/Name:

Institutional Affiliation:

Position:

Profession/Training:

*Different sets of the questions below were used to interview the Regional Advisors, IDRC personnel and members of the Follow-up Committees. Questions were selected from the list below, depending on the interviewee's role and his/her level and duration of involvement.*

## QUESTIONS ON THE COUNCIL OF REGIONAL ADVISORS

### Background/history

- 1) How long have you been involved with the Council?
- 2) What do you think about the duration of service for Regional Advisors?

### Relevance

- 3)
  - a. How have the objectives and the role of the Council evolved over time?
  - b. How has this evolution affected the relevance of the Council? Its effectiveness? Its efficiency?



to the needs in research for development. In your opinion, to what extent has the Council achieved this objective?

5) What factors (external to IDRC and/or within IDRC) have contributed to the Council achieving its objectives?

6) What factors (external to IDRC and/or within IDRC) have constituted a barrier to the Council achieving its objectives?

***The next set of questions focus on factors that may affect the performance of the Commission***

7) What do you think about the selection process for Regional Advisors?

8) To what extent are regional advisors in the Council qualified to do the work required of them?

9) To what extent are regional advisors committed to the Council?

10) To what extent is there agreement among Regional Advisors on the role and objectives of the Council?

***The next set of questions focuses on the application of the work of the Commission***

11) To what extent does IDRC provide the resources, information and support the Council needs in order to achieve its objectives.

12) To what extent are the inputs of the Council regarding needs, challenges and opportunities integrated in IDRC's strategy and programming process?

13) Organizations use various ways to identify the needs they will address in their programs. According to you, how relevant and effective is a mechanism like the Council for such a purpose?

14) How could IDRC improve its use of the outcomes of the Council?

15) a. How do Regional Advisors communicate with each other?

b. To what extent do Regional Advisors share information with each other?

16) To what extent do Regional Advisors share information with relevant people at IDRC (i.e. those involved in strategy development and programming)?

***The next set of questions focuses on the results of the Commission***

17) To what extent has your involvement in the Council affected your professional and personal development?

20) Does the Council have a structure, composition and mode of operation that enables it to work in an efficient manner?

21) How could WARO improve its management of the Council?

22) How could IDRC better ensure that the Council provides outcomes that it can use?

### **Replicability**

23) a. According to you, to what extent is the Council an approach/model that could/should be replicated in other regional offices of IDRC?

b. Can it be used in its current form or would it have to be adapted to different regional conditions?

## **QUESTIONS ON THE WORKSHOP SERIES**

### **Background/History**

24) a. How and when did you become involved in the follow up committee?

b. In your own words, what is the main objective of the committee?

25) In what workshops have you participated?

26) To what extent has the workshop allowed the development of an action plan?

### **Implementation and efficiency**

27) a. Which workshops have you attended?

28) Please comment on different aspects of the workshop(s) focusing on both strengths and weaknesses:

a) Achieving objective of improving dialogue between policy makers and researchers

g) Agenda

c) Selection of theme

d) The choice of speakers

(e) Selection of participants

(f) The implementation of the workshop (logistics, duration, use of time, etc.)

(g) Sensitizing and informing participants and other interested parties in preparation of the workshop

(e) The evaluation of the workshops by participants

(f) The preparation of the action plan at the end of the workshop

(g) Follow-up after the workshop to encourage the use of the workshop results.

### **Relevance**

Effectiveness

30) To what extent have the workshops led researchers to take into consideration the needs of policy makers so that research results obtained are relevant to the work of policy makers and easily accessible (user-friendly) to them. Can you give examples?

31) To what extent have the workshops influenced policy makers to use research results? Can you give examples?

32) What factors have affected the workshops' influence on policy decisions? (Institutional? Financial? Human Resources? External pressures (outside IDRC)? Internal pressures (within IDRC)?)

### **Replication**

33) Should this concept of regional workshops be replicated within other regions of IDRC? Why or why not? If yes, how could it be replicated?

34) Is there anything you would like to add that you believe is relevant but was not addressed in previous questions?

## **WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEES**

### **Background/History**

35) In what workshops have you participated?

36) a. How and when did you become a member of the follow-up committee?  
b. Based on your understanding, what is the principal objective of the follow-up committee?

37) To what extent has the workshop allowed the development of an action plan?

### **Organization of the Committee**

38) To what extent did the policy makers participate in the organization of the workshops and their follow-up?

39) What was the mandate given to the follow-up committee?  
Has this mandate changed with time?

40) To what extent were terms of reference of the follow-up committee clear?

41) In your opinion, to what extent has the composition of the team affected the level of results obtained?  
How could this composition be improved?

42) To what extent were the results clear?

- 46) How well did the Committee respect the deadlines set?
- 47) Were activities of the Committee carried out according to a plan?
- 48) To what extent were these plans followed?
- 49) How were the resources for the Committee managed?
- 50) How well did the Committee use the expertise of the various members of the Committee?

### **Support of IDRC**

- 51) What was needed so that the committee could produce concrete proposals for the follow-up of the workshop?
- 52) What type of support from IDRC would help the committee to obtain the best results?
- 53) What suggestions do you have to motivate the members of the follow-up committee?
- 54) What level of involvement should IDRC have in the functioning of follow-up committees so as to make them more effective?
- 55) To what extent has IDRC monitored the work of the committees?
- 56) How could IDRC play a better role to supervise the committees?

### **Performance and Effectiveness**

- 57) In your opinion what were the results of your committee?
- 58) How many reports or other documents has your committee produced?
- 59) To what extent have the advisors been effective in their support to the functioning of the follow-up committees?
- 60) What would have been the effect on the committee to have housed the committee within an institution?
- 61) In your opinion, to what extent have the follow-up activities of the workshops created the conditions and mechanisms, which improve dialogue between researchers and policy makers?  
What type of activities would improve this dialogue?
- 62) Would you have other comments?

## **THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS**

### **Background/History**

- 66) Please comment on various aspects of the Thematic Discussions focusing on strengths and weaknesses:
- a) Overall planning of the meeting's agenda
  - b) Selection of the theme
  - c) Choice and quality of external input in form of papers prepared and presentation
  - d) Facilitation of the meetings
  - e) Quality of discussions
  - f) Timing of various aspects of the meetings
  - g) Level of participation of advisors
  - h) Achieving the objective of environmental scanning
  - i) Achieving the objective of knowledge creation

### **Relevance**

- 67) To what extent were the topic of the meetings of importance to IDRC's programming?
- 68) To what extent were the Thematic Discussions a relevant and effective approach to address the problem of identifying research entry points for IDRC?

### **Effectiveness**

- 69) How did the results of the Thematic Discussions contribute to IDRC's programming? Can you give some examples?
- 70) To what extent did the Thematic Discussions influence any non-IDRC activities?

## **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

### **Background**

- 71) Which meeting did you attend?
- 72) Who initiated the meeting?
- 73) What was the objective of the meetings?

### **Implementation and efficiency**

- 74) What were the strengths and weaknesses of the meetings with respect to:
- a) Overall organization
  - b) Timing
  - c) Preparation of contents of meetings
  - d) Facilitation of meetings
- 75) How well was the competence of each Regional Advisor used during the meetings?

### **Relevance**

79) Who benefited from the results of the meeting?

80) To what extent did the quality of the meetings improve or become worse?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME.**

**If you have other comments please let me know by email.**

**OBJECTIVE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING****Outcome 1.1. Information provided to IDRC on current and emerging issues on research in West/Central Africa**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
1.1 Concrete input provided to IDRC on regional (West/Central Africa) issues for the development of the Center's 5-year Corporate Framework and Regional Strategy.	Council contributed effectively to the development of the 2005 – 2010 CS&PF during the Africa Regional Consultations in January 2004. They provided very detailed, creative and relevant input. This indicator was fully achieved. Feedback from IDRC regarding this input was very positive.
1.2 At least 12 separate reflections carried out by Regional Advisers to identify issues of relevance to the region	Regional Advisors have carried out 17 reflections and have identified issues, for research, which include: researcher policy maker interaction, gender, regional integration and globalization, sustainable development policies, strategies for using research results.

**OBJECTIVE 2. KNOWLEDGE CREATION****Outcome 2.1 Dialogue between policy makers and researchers improved**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
2.1.1 Six country researcher/policy maker workshops held on specific themes in different areas of development and of major relevance to the region.	Six researcher/policy maker workshops have been held in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Cameroon and Benin on agriculture, education, enterprise development, desertification, governance and health respectively. Both researchers and policy makers in these countries have been sensitized regarding the need for dialogue and collaboration.
2.1.2 The process of developing researcher/policy maker interaction in West Africa is documented.	Reports on the six workshops are available and have documented the constraints to effective dialogue between researchers and policy makers. They also contain suggestions for better interactions between the two groups. A publication on the synergy between researchers and policy makers, based on the results of the workshop series has been prepared in draft form.
2.1.3 Follow-up committee(s) developed plans for improving researcher/policy maker dialogue.	Six Workshop Follow-up Committees were formed in the countries where workshops were held. Action Plans, which outlined the framework for improved researcher/policy maker interaction has been developed for Senegal, Burkina Faso and are in the process of being completed for Cameroon and Benin. Cameroon has developed a website. Ghana is working to promote the researcher/policy maker interaction through national initiatives already in place. The Committee in Mali is not functional.
2.1.4 Policy briefs prepared and disseminated on researcher policy maker workshops	No policy briefs have been prepared. A draft document outlining the results of all the six workshops has been prepared and discussed by the Council for publication and dissemination.

**Outcome 2.2 Advisors contribute to IDRC programming activities (strategy for research support, orientation of programs, projects, etc.)**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
2.2.1 Three Thematic Discussions of Regional Advisers, which provide research programming entry points for IDRC intervention in the West/Central African region, are held.	Five Thematic Discussions were held by Regional Advisors in Mali (gender), Cameroon (integration and globalization), Benin (sustainable development policies) and Cote d'Ivoire (strategies for using research results) and (priorities for regional integration). Each of these discussions identified areas for IDRC research support.
2.2.2 Policy briefs prepared and disseminated on results of Thematic Discussions on subject areas of importance to the West/Central African region.	Two information brochures on gender and globalization have been published and disseminated by IDRC. Two others are in preparation.

**OBJECTIVE 3. . CAPACITY BUILDING****Outcome 3.1 Leadership capacity of Regional Advisers developed in: influencing policy; research strategy development; multi-disciplinary reflection on issues; working across national and regional boundaries**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
3.1.1 Increased opportunities to influence policy (e.g. as member of a committee, task force, etc.)	An Advisor is a member of an IDRC/DFID advisory board on climate change program. A Advisor is a member of a national policy making committee in the country.

as a result of their involvement in IDRC's activities.	research, resulting from discussions within Council. Advisor is member of international climate change advisory committee.
<b>OBJECTIVE 4. IMPROVING THE CREDIBILITY AND VISIBILITY OF IDRC</b>	
<b>Outcome 4.1 Improved credibility and visibility of IDRC</b>	
<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
4.1.1 IDRC meets high level officials in various countries	Regional Director met many Ministers, other high-level policy makers, research leaders and NGOs in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Cameroon and Benin. Opportunities were used to inform them of IDRC and the work of the Commission.
4.1.2 Web site created to disseminate information on activities of the WARO Commission.	Information on the work of the Council is available in the IDRC web site. Some of the activities carried out still have to be updated and documents added.
4.1.3 Involvement of high level officials in activities of the commission.	Many officials were involved in the organization of or participation in the Workshops. Some of them are listed below. <b>Senegal:</b> Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Water; Director General of Agricultural Research, Canadian Ambassador <b>Burkina Faso:</b> Minister of Education, Canadian Embassy officials, IDRC President <b>Ghana:</b> Deputy Minister of Environment and Science, Acting High Commissioner of Canada, Director General of Scientific Research <b>Mali:</b> Secretary General of Equipment and Transport, Director of Cooperation of the Canadian Embassy <b>Cameroon:</b> Canadian Ambassador, CIDA officials <b>Benin:</b> First Lady of Benin, Minister of High Education and Professional Training, Canadian Embassy officials
4.1.4 Collaboration between IDRC/CIDA/Canadian Embassy improved in West Central African countries.	The Canadian Embassy was informed and involved in all the workshops held in the six countries. Key officials also participated in the workshops. In some countries, such as Cameroon and Ghana, CIDA were also involved in the planning of the workshops.
4.1.5 Media recognizes IDRC's work in various countries.	The media were present during the workshops and wrote articles (e.g. Senegal - Walfadjri, Sud Quotidien; Burkina Faso - Le Pays, L'Observateur; Ghana - Daily Graphic). IDRC staff and Regional Advisors were also interviewed for radio and television. A Media Day was held in Ghana during which the IDRC and the Advisors interacted with the media.
4.1.6 Regional Advisers represent IDRC internationally	Advisors participated in: scientific forum in Burkina Faso; ECOWAS meeting in Ghana; conference on private sector in Canada; environment conference in Vancouver, Canada; Americas conference in Montreal, Canada; UN meeting in Nairobi, Kenya.
4.1.7 Partnerships with regional bodies (e.g., CEDEAO, CEMAC) established.	This indicator was not achieved.



## ANNEX 7. MEMBERS OF WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEES IN SIX COUNTRIES

NAME	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
<b>Follow-up Committee, Dakar Workshop</b>		
Ba, Cheikh Omar	Former Director - <i>(Researcher)</i>	BAME, ISRA
Diallo, Gorgui Djibril	Statistics Officer - <i>(Policy maker)</i>	Ministry of Agriculture
Seck, Madieng	Journalist - <i>(Civil Society)</i>	JADE/SYFIA West Sahel Agency
<b>Follow-up Committee, Ouagadougou Workshop</b>		
Compaoré, Félix	<i>(Researcher)</i>	Institut National des Sciences de la Société
Ilboudo, Ernest	National Coordinator - <i>(Researcher)</i>	ROCARE
Tiendrébéogo, Alice	Directrice Générale - <i>(Policy maker)</i>	Fonds pour l'alphabétisation et l'éducation non formelle
Bourgou, Moussa	Director General - <i>(Policy maker)</i>	Basic Education, Burkina Faso
<b>Follow-up Committee, Accra Workshop</b>		
Dzidonou, Clement	Regional Advisor – <i>(Researcher)</i>	Professor, Valley View University, Ghana
<b>Follow-up Committee, Bamako Workshop</b>		
Diarra, Lassine	Directeur Scientifique – <i>(Researcher)</i>	Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER)
Diarra, Birama	Chef de la Division Recherche et Développement – <i>(Researcher)</i>	Direction Nationale de la Météorologie
Konaté, Mama	Directeur – <i>(Researcher)</i>	Direction nationale de la Météorologie du Mali
Moustapha, Amadou	Directeur Général – <i>(Policy maker)</i>	Institut du Sahel (INSAH/CILSS)
Dr Bino TEME	Directeur Général – <i>(Policy maker)</i>	Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER)
<b>Follow-up Committee, Yaounde Workshop</b>		
Tamba, Isaac	Professor - <i>(Researcher)</i>	Secrétaire Exécutif, CREDDA
Yitamben, Gisèle	Regional Advisor – <i>Civil Society</i>	Director of ASAFE, Doula, Cameroon
Oyono, Dieudonne	National Coordinator - <i>(Policy maker)</i>	National Program on Governance
Moto, Ferdinand	Business Person - <i>(Private sector)</i>	
Sokoundjou, Rameau	Traditional King - <i>(Civil Society)</i>	Traditional King, Cameroon

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<b>Follow-up Committee, Cotonou Workshop</b>		
Ayivi Blaise (Mr)	Paediatrician; Head of Paediatrics, CNHU / HKM ; Professor - ( <b>Researcher</b> )	CNHU / HKM; Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Abomey - Calavi
Guedou Fernand (Mr.)	Director of Research in Health, ( <b>Policy maker</b> )	Ministry of Health
TCHIBOZO Hugues (Mr.)	Health Economist / Health manager ; Assistant to General Secretary, Ministry of Health - ( <b>Policy maker</b> )	Ministry of Health
Akande Olofindji (Mr.) Vizir	Geologist ; President, Africa Cultures International Institute - ( <b>Civil Society</b> )	Africa Cultures International Institute
Massougbodji A. Marina (Dr)	Regional Advisor, Cardiologist, CNHU – HKM; Professor, Former Minister of Health - ( <b>Researcher</b> )	CNHU/HKM ; Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Abomey-Calavi
Boko Nadjo, Genevieve (Mme)	Magistrate, Justice Department; President, ONG “Women in Law and Development in Africa” (WILDAF) - ( <b>Policy maker</b> )	Government of Benin
Ahoyo Veronique (Mrs.)	Sociologist; President, Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians (REFAMP); Former Minister of Labor and Social Affaires; Former Ambassador to Canada - ( <b>Civil Society/Policy maker</b> )	
Bio-Bigou, Leon (Mr.)	Lecturer, Former 1st Vice President, of the National Assembly - ( <b>Policy maker and researcher</b> )	University of Abomey-Calavi
Perrin Rene (Dr)	Gynecologist Obstetrician, Head Doctor ; Professor - ( <b>Researcher</b> )	Women and Children’s Hospital and University of Abomey-Calavi