

Africa Rice Center
(WARDA)

27th Meeting of the Board of Trustees

18 – 23 March 2007

Cotonou, Benin

Draft Minutes of 36th Meeting of the Executive and Finance Committee

Tuesday - Friday, 15 - 18 August 2006

Present: Gaston Grenier, Chairman
Clementine Dabire, Vice-Chair & Nominating Committee Chair
Emmanuel Owusu-Bennoah, Program Committee Chair
Remi Pochat, Audit Committee Chair
Kanayo F. Nwanze, ex-officio

Secretary: Samuel Bruce-Oliver

Invited: Papa Abdoulaye Seck, Incoming Director General
Shelleemiah Keya, Assistant Director General, Research &
Development
Koen Geerts, Assistant Director General, Corporate Services
John Mwangi, Associate Director, CG IAU
Abdou Mouhidiny, Internal Auditor

Summary and Conclusions

The Executive and Finance Committee of the WARDA Board of Trustees held its 36th meeting at WARDA temporary headquarters, IITA-Benin Station, Cotonou, Benin, 15–18 August 2006. The recommendations and decisions taken by the EFC are summarized as follows:

1. To prepare for the joint IITA/WARDA Executive Committee meeting, it was agreed that a provisional agenda be prepared and that the WARDA Board Chair share it with his homologue at IITA so that both Chairs could agree on the agenda prior to the videoconference.

2. The EFC requested the submission of the consolidated report on the special expenditures related to the Ivorian crisis by the meeting of the next full Board in March 2007.

3. For ease of reference and comparisons between French and English versions of the minutes, the EFC recommends that bullet points in the draft minutes should be numbered.

4. With respect to the implementation of the CGIAR Compensation Package, the EFC recommended that the Board handbook be updated to ensure proper harmonization between what is proposed by the CGIAR and what is contained in the handbook.

5. On the issue of the WARDA headquarters at M'be, Cote d'Ivoire, regular news release should be made so that donors and partners are properly informed that the campus is being maintained and cared for during this period of WARDA's temporary relocation to Cotonou, Benin.

6. The EFC notes that two dates in November 2006 have been proposed for the organization of Research Days to benefit from an overlap between the outgoing and the incoming DG and urges that at least one trustee attends Research Days.

7. EFC recommended the reformulation of some of the contentious wording in the evaluations of the WARDA Director General and the Board Chair in the draft minutes of the March 2006 meeting of the Nomination Committee to avoid possible misinterpretation.

8. The EFC wanted to place on record its compliments to the Chair and panel of the Center Commissioned External Review (CCER) on Socioeconomics for the excellent quality of the CCER report produced.

9. The EFC approved the report of the CCER on Socioeconomics.

10. The EFC unanimously congratulates WARDA for the successful organization of the first ever Africa Rice Congress and urges WARDA to institutionalize it triennially, so that the world knows and would prepare for the holding of Africa Rice Congress every three years.

11. In discussing the nomination of new Board members, the EFC agreed on the constitution of the WARDA Board as follows:

From March 2007:

Members - Grenier, Pochat, Owusu-Bennoah, Gue, Dabire, Mokwunye, Horie and Seck; Invited future members – Becker, Traore, Getachew, Abate & a candidate from Japan

Total = 12 + 1

From March 2008:

Members – Grenier, Pochat, Dabire, Owusu-Bennoah, Gue, Becker, Traore, Getachew, Abate & Candidate from Japan

Verify the mandate of Traore and Becker

Total = 11 + 1

From March 2009:

Members – Grenier, Abate, Owusu-Bennoah, Gue, Becker, Traore, Japanese Candidate, Getachew, (replacement of Mokwunye & Dabire). Replacement of Gue is foreseen after verifying the duration of his term.

Total = 10 + 1

12. The EFC would like to be provided information on real and achieved overheads at WARDA on a regular basis.

13. On the CCER on management, the EFC recommended that action on this CCER be suspended until a more appropriate time.

14. EFC would like to be provided quarterly reports on how WARDA is doing on restricted funding.

15. The EFC approved the upward revision of the employment conditions and benefits of Postdoctoral Fellows at WARDA as proposed by management in the document submitted to the EFC.

16. With respect to the creation of the new staff category of Honorary Research Fellow, the EFC suggested that the document be further refined taking into consideration the preoccupations of the various trustees and submitted to the next Board meeting.

17. The EFC reviewed the issues paper for the 5th WARDA EMPR and suggested further improvements with respect to new strategies to diversify funding sources.

18. With respect to ongoing discussions on alignment between IITA and WARDA, the EFC agreed that the WARDA Board had the responsibility to inform and explain to the Council of Ministers and seek their endorsement with respect to joint IITA/WARDA Board membership.

19. With respect to the 5th WARDA EPMR, the EFC recommended that as part of the preparations, the information on the process be shared with all staff and that they are made to understand that the future of the institution is at stake.

20. The EFC renewed its request to the DG and to Ed Price to write a top class paper or book on critical issues within the CGIAR and how they affect small Centers such as WARDA.

21. The EFC noted progress on the implementation of the 2006 Working Budget and cashflow. No major issues of concern were noted.

22. The EFC noted the current status of the 2007 Working Budget. It also noted with some concern an apparent reduction in the levels of attributed and restricted funding. The EFC also endorsed the process of approval for the 2007 Working Budget, which is to be submitted electronically at the end of 2006 or at the latest early 2007.

23. The EFC noted progress towards the External Audit of FY 2006. For the appointment of WARDA's new auditors, the EFC approved the following approach:

- a) First, enquire if IITA would agree with WARDA on the appointment of the same audit firm, probably the current IITA external auditors of Price Water House.
- b) If this is not possible, WARDA will have to tender its external audit function for the next 5 years (2007 – 2012).

Africa Rice Center
Board of Trustees

35th Meeting of the Executive and Finance Committee
March 22 – 23, 2006
Cotonou, Benin

Provisional Agenda

1. Provisional Agenda

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

1. Chairman's Remarks
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Review of Minutes of the Previous Executive and Finance Committee Meeting
4. Action Items and Matters Arising
5. Updates:
 - (a) Staff movements and staffing
 - (b) Physical infrastructure
 - (c) Implementation of WARDA Inc.
 - (d) CCERs in areas other than research

Thursday, March 23, 2006

6. Issues on WARDA's future
 - a. Plans for M'be
 - b. Preliminary discussions on 5-year planning for Cotonou
 - c. Preparing for the EPMR
7. Cash flow and 2006 financial outlook
8. 2006 Budget and financing plan
9. Other Matters
10. Summary and Conclusions

2. Provisional Schedule of Work

Time	Wed., Mar. 22, 2006	Thu., Mar. 23, 2006
08:30-10:30		-Issues on WARDA's future Plans for M'be Preliminary discussions on 5-yr plan for Cotonou Preparing for the EPMP
10:30-10:45		
10:45-1130		-Current Cash flow & 2006 Financial outlook - 2006 Budget & Financing Plan - Other Matters - Summary & Conclusions
1230-1400		
1400-1530	-Chairman's Remark's Adoption of the Agenda Review of Minutes of previous EFC Action items and matters arising	
1530-1600		
1600-1700	-Updates Staff movements and staffing Physical infrastructure at IITA-Benin Implementation of WARDA Inc CCERs in areas other than Research	