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THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SYSTEM IN
THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	Background to the Development of the Agricultural Research System of the Dominican Republic.
7	Process of Building Consensus for IDIA; the Adaptation of a Methodology.
16	IDIA and the Future
21	Conclusions
22	References

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The Institutionalization of the Agricultural Research System in the Dominican Republic.

INTRODUCTION

Mature western democracies developed with an equilibrium of power relations between the city and rural areas. More, in many instances, rural areas were able to dominate the urban centers to demand and obtain favorable institutional arrangements and economic policies. This does not follow in the case of new democracies in the developing world, particularly in Latin America, where rural inhabitants have suffered discrimination. In Latin America, agriculture is not important to legislators; they do not respond to rural needs. Unfavorable policies to agriculture have nothing to do with their tenure in Congress. The Dominican Republic has not been immune to this problem and we can not pretend to change this situation. What we have tried to do in our country is to develop a mechanism for communication, for discussion, with government, executive and legislature, to inform these determining powers of rural needs, and justifications for the needs. I expect to emphasize today how the means for influence was developed and how, in the case of the Dominican research system, the International Service for National Agriculture Research (ISNAR) recognized the tool and used it to advantage.

I

Background to the Development of the Agricultural Research System of the Dominican Republic.

Over the last fifty years the economic growth of the Dominican Republic could be described as dramatic, although the widespread rural poverty has not diminished. Rural urban migration has tempered poverty-creating policies. While poverty could be attributed in part to disruptive marketing, price and credit policies, the principal causes are intricately interwoven: ineffective technology generation, lack of access to land, lack of access to non farm employment, and excessive population growth. It is now almost axiomatic that rural poverty is indicative of a deficient or stagnant or decreasing per capita agricultural production. This is the case of the Dominican Republic with a particularly interesting exception: rice. (There are several other exceptions, due probably to the lack of government intervention.) In 1963, a rice research center, which by 1975 was to become an effective technology generating program, was founded. In 1972, the Dominican government began a vigorous land reform program, concentrating efforts in areas of rice production. Rice price policies have generally been responsive to this singular political interest of the different governments, thus coinciding with growers' interests. The result of this combination of technology, credit, prices, and access to land, has been increasing rice productivity and production.

The experience with rice was to contribute much later, after 1981, to the building of a political base for support of an effective national research system. How that experience was used in the national research institution building process to be described, explanations of a favorable environment among legislators and now political support have been achieved during a most difficult economic depression are the main objectives of this paper.

The history of agricultural education and research, like all aspects of Dominican life, were deeply affected by the thirty one year dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961). The first agricultural school of the country, opened in the 1920's, was closed by Trujillo in the early years of his regime and the first important agricultural research effort (early 50's), a rice research center initiated with Trujillo's approval, was interrupted brusquely two years later when that rice research center was closed. Another initiative, supported by the Point IV Program, quickly aborted when Trujillo ordered the suspension of all activities. In the last years of the dictatorship, fortunately, three agricultural high schools were founded by religious orders (Salesians and Jesuits).

The period 1961 to the present is the period of the founding of numerous agricultural colleges, perhaps too many for the size and population of the country, and the initiation of important and permanent agricultural research programs. Agricultural education and research, in this period, received initial impulse and assistance from the Ford Foundation and U.S.A.I.D.

Subsequent government funding for both education and research has been significant, although not adequate; there have been very substantial donor funding, binational and international loans and donations. In the case of research, 1964 and 1965 mark the initiation of a small but effective Ford Foundation financed private research program at Instituto Superior de Agricultura (ISA), in Santiago, and the large U.S.A.I.D. (contracted by Texas A&M University) financed research program that led to the creation of a national research center at San Cristobal. The first, in Santiago, later evolved, with FAO assistance, into the Secretariat of Agriculture's research center for the northern part of the country (today CENDA) and the second into the principal research center for the south (CESDA). With the rice research center previously alluded to, CEDIA, CESDA and CENDA, the three principal research centers, constitute the basis of the Dominican system. The system, as it exists today, was more or less complete by 1981. Principally concerned with research on the basic food crops of the country, the national system, by then was already interacting rather effectively with part of the international system, CIAT, CIMMYT and CIP. But 1981 also marked the beginning of a profound financial crisis for the Dominican economy and government, which persists to this day, a crisis first felt more severely in the Secretariat of Agriculture, (SEA) more precisely in the Departments of Research and Extension, as operational funding was gradually reduced to meet more immediate demands in other more political departments of the Secretariat of Agriculture, such as Production, Seeds and Mechanization.

The Dominican people and government agree that the nation's

experience with so called autonomous institutions has been all but felicitous. The traumatic change from the autocratic Trujillo regime to democracy in 1961-1962 was accompanied, in public sector institutions by changes in many cases from tight well managed governmental departments to anarchic, chaotic independent autonomous administrations. The results have led to an animadversion to decentralized institutional arrangements. For this reason, as the Dominican agricultural research structure began to mature, the Latin American autonomous institute model was not adopted. The extremist politics of the Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, the university that might be considered the state university, on the other hand, steered the principal donor clear of imposing its land grant model, even though every advisor with a U.S. passport who ever touched Santo Domingo has dreamed the land grant dream.

The precarious manner by which the Dominican research system became inserted or attached or formed part of the Secretariat of Agriculture, as it developed, made the system particularly vulnerable, powerless, as we will see, when the financial crisis began. Why did the 1981 crisis hit the Department of Research and, of course, the Secretariat of Agriculture with such force and why have they not been able to react, to take corrective action. The causes lie in the political history of the country after 1961.

The Dominican political scene has been dominated by two main political parties for the last twenty five years, a moderately rightist Reformist Party led by Joaquín Balaguer and the

moderately leftist populist Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) led by slightly more to the left (of his party, that is) José Francisco Peña Gómez. The Dominican Revolutionary Party was the opposition until 1978, sixteen years fighting from the outside. When the PRD won the elections of 1978, government employment was the reward desired by the many thousands of unemployed loyal party workers. And the government ministry with most "loose" operational funds was the Secretariat of Agriculture. The number of employed in SEA went from 6,000 to 17,000 in three years, that is by 1981; the government increased the Secretariat's budget correspondingly. But, when the crisis hit and government revenues decreased, the Secretariat's budget was cut. How could the PRD government permit its loyal party members' employment cancelled? And it still hasn't.

Operational funds have still not been forthcoming and the Secretariat has become paralyzed, practically non operational. And, in the course of events, it has lost its credibility with donor and lending institutions. Donors don't want to give assistance to Research because they fear that the Secretary will syphon off resources to meet political pressures.

By 1982, when there was a change of government, although of the same party, the situation in the Department of Research, while a political problem, and obviously a management and organizational crisis, prompted a recommendation that outside assistance be sought, in this particular case from the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR). The Department of Research, through the Secretariat of Agriculture, requested assistance from ISNAR in October, 1982,

and in November ISNAR agreed to organize a review, analysis and planning mission early in 1983. For historical reasons already mentioned, ISNAR's recommendations for adoption of the Latin American autonomous institute model were not initially well received and the long process of convincing, of consensus building began. Why was this process successful? What techniques were used by the several Secretaries of Agriculture, once convinced themselves, to overcome deep resistance to any suggestion of institutional autonomy, particularly in the Dominican Congress where, in addition, the Presidency has had particular difficulty in obtaining passage of legislation? Will this methodology be applicable in the future development of the now constituted Instituto Dominicano de Investigaciones Agropecuarias (IDIA, the Dominican Agricultural Research Institute)? How will these techniques be used to maintain the hard earned political support that IDIA has now gained?

II

Process of Building Consensus for IDIA; the Adaptation of a Methodology

a. The Adoption and Adaptation of the Case Method in Instituto Superior de Agricultura.

The Instituto Superior de Agricultura (ISA, in Santiago) is a prestigious Dominican agricultural educational and research institution, small, underfunded, but staffed with well trained

and highly motivated scientists. Early in its history, founded in 1963 by a group of Santiago businessmen, ISA began to search for a methodology for teaching management to its students. By 1972, with a small Ford Foundation grant, ISA began using the Harvard directed International Teachers Program to familiarize and train professors with and in the case method. Although there was a slow start, by 1980 ISA had developed the capacity, facilities and personnel, with Ford, Kellogg and U.S.A.I.D. assistance, to train agronomists in management and agricultural policy in post graduate courses and seminars, and over time, with cases and materials specifically developed from and on Dominican agriculture.

A break-through came early in 1981 when CIMMYT jointly sponsored with ISA an agricultural policy seminar in the Dominican Republic. This exercise proved the case method as a valuable methodology for the discussion and resolution of policy problems in Dominican agriculture and established ISA as an important source of collaboration for the public sector. Why? What is there about this mode of the case method that makes it effective as a means of communication, information and consensus building?

In principle, I am not referring to what is commonly denominated a case study in agricultural education, the history, that is, of some successful project or program. That kind of case study is what I am presenting today. I am referring, instead, to the exposition of a situation, actually faced by decision makers, "with surrounding facts, opinions and prejudices

upon which..... decision or decisions..... depend. These real and particularized cases are presented..... for considered analysis, open discussion, and final decision as to the type of action that should be taken". (*)

The case method, as described above, and carefully moderated, not dominated by the orchestrator, involves the participants dynamically. They feel they can have their say and fight for their opinion and they do. They accept the weakness (es) of their ideas when exposed and accept the strength(s) of those of their colleagues. They feel they contribute, are considered. The process is a maturing confidence building means of conveying information and arriving at considered agreement. It is a democratic, dignified means of discussion and learning, on equal terms, especially permitting communication among and by people from very different academic levels and backgrounds, social origins and political leanings. It teaches participants to listen. An observation or intervention that indicates lack of attention to a previous intervention can be embarrassing in extreme. In addition, the case method requires very special training for case writing and careful investigation and research. The nearly two hundred cases developed at ISA on Dominican agriculture have led to a broad institutional understanding of problems of technology generation, transfer and diffusion, inputs, prices, marketing, land tenure, the role of women, health, conservation, international trade, food technology, and

(*) Gragg, Charles I.; "Because Wisdom Can't be Told"; Harvard Alumni Bulletin, October 19, 1940. The following paragraph also relies heavily on the paper by Gragg describing the dynamics of the Harvard Business School case method.

import substitution.

The CIMMYT-ISA 1981 Seminar centered on several extremely sensitive policy and controversial public opinion matters. In retrospect, five years later, it is clear that the decisions emanating from that experience were determinant in the resolution of the questions that served as motivations for the choice of the cases, rice, edible oils, pineapple for export. And that seminar served as the initiation of our use of the case method as a methodology for accelerating a decision making process, the resolution of a difficult policy problem. Let me explain. In general, the case method system is used to reproduce situations that have actually occurred, in business as well as in law. At ISA, in Dominican Republic, that is our more generally practiced mode, for teaching purposes, for transmitting experience, information and reinforcing the capacity of analysis and for decision making. But we have also adapted the method extensively to pose a felt problem situation, as yet undecided or unresolved, in the presence of the principal actors, the President of the country, the Secretaries of Agriculture, legislators, important public officials, with the relevant background information to facilitate the process of analysis and decision making.

After the CIMMYT-ISA seminar early in 1981, the Secretariat of Agriculture and the Agrarian Reform Institute have repeatedly asked ISA to conduct seminars on specific agricultural policy issues, a relationship and service by ISA continuing to this date. In 1982, the Secretariat of Planning, specifically the Department of Science and Technology, requested ISA to conduct a seminar on technological policies as tools for agricultural

development. This seminar was an important milestone in the process of building a consensus on the difficulties suffered by the agricultural sector and prepared the road to the request invitation extended to ISNAR to assist the Department of Research of the Secretariat of Agriculture late in 1982.

b. The IDIA Institutionalization Process and ISNAR's Assistance (1982-1986).

What did ISNAR's presence in the Dominican Republic's agricultural scene accomplish? What did ISNAR recommend? Why has the process taken so long - three years to obtain the recommended institutional legitimization? What else has been achieved and what can be expected?

The principal elements of ISNAR's diagnosis of the Dominican agricultural research situation were of conflicting nature: positive, such as good physical infrastructure, trained human resources, decentralization, a balanced coverage of subsistence and export crops reflecting the country's problems; and negative, such as a weak connection or relationship with and in the Secretariat of Agriculture, lack of adequate and stable funding, a low productivity image, lack of personnel policy, planning, follow up and evaluation mechanisms. (*)

These shortcomings have effectively prevented the Department of Research (DIA) from fulfilling other functions incumbent upon the central unit of the system. Without control over the

(*) ISNAR's report to the Dominican Republic "The Agricultural Research System of the Dominican Republic: Analysis, Evaluation and Proposal for its Strengthening"; ISNAR, August, 1983.

essential management instruments, personnel policy and management of resources, it has lacked the basis for coordinating the activities of the system and establishing channels of communication with the political leaders, and with the current and potential clients of research. Furthermore, its position in a third-level hierarchy within the Ministry has placed it on the sidelines in crucial decision processes, such as those concerned with resource allocations. (*)

Given the decentralized nature of the system and the high degree of operational independence allowed to the centers, full control over personnel and resource management, and the planning and coordinating functions are essential for the efficient operation of the system. The non-fulfilment of these functions is the main reason for the low productivity image, and for the fact that the country is not receiving the benefits which should accrue from the Dominican agricultural research system.

"In such circumstances, the strengthening strategy emphasized structural change in the institutional environment, to obtain a more efficient and effective research process. The key element in this strategy was the recommendation to transfer research responsibilities from the Secretariat of Agriculture to a new research institute, the "Instituto Dominicano de

(*) This paragraph and the following 3 pages draw heavily on, and many paragraphs are direct quotations and are so indicated, from, ISNAR's Country Progress Report No. R14/PI, "Working to Develop Support at the Political Level for National Agriculture Research: the Case of the Dominican Republic," by Eduardo Trigo; ISNAR, June, 1985; pp. 7, 8, 9 & 10.

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Investigaciones Agropecuarias" (IDIA). The expectation was that a new organization, administratively independent from SEA, would be able to control and link key management processes, such as personnel policy and administration, planning programming, evaluation and fund administration, and thereby create conditions conducive to effective research. The necessary increase in funding support would come, in the long-term, from the increased capacity to sell research at the national level; with better results, it is easier to make a strong case for research. In the short-term, an autonomous institution will be better positioned to attract and make more effective use of international assistance opportunities."

"At the implementation level, the strategy required legislative action to ensure decentralization of the administration. Operationally, first there was the need to develop a proposal for the new Institute, satisfactory to all parties involved; second, it was necessary to prompt the Dominican congress to approve the law needed to create IDIA, and to secure the additional resources needed to implement the new structures and programs."

"In regard to the first step, the intention was to obtain agreement from the different interest groups over the draft law, and for the Secretary of Agriculture to forward it for approval to the President" who would, in turn, present the proposal for law to Congress. "Three areas of action were involved in achieving this objective. First, acceptance of the idea had to be gained within SEA and within the research system itself.,

Second, because of high politicization, the top echelons of the research system had a rapid turnover rate. Consequently, there was a need to brief new appointees on the role and importance of the proposed Institute and to obtain their commitment. Third, as the discussion progressed, new partners came into the picture (universities, extension, donor agencies), and they had to be briefed, and specific adjustments had to be made to ensure their support. Activities in this initial phase concentrated around the improvement for the proposal and the discussion of its implications. The responsibility for action lay with a special task force, which was to provide leadership and continuity of action."

"Two methods were used to work with the legislators. Initially, the task force and other officials under the Secretary of Agriculture contacted some key law-makers, on an individual basis, to brief them on the nature and objectives of the proposal for a new research institute. Once all parties involved had agreed on the draft law, a national workshop was organized to discuss the pros and cons. This event centered on the agricultural committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and included the participation of the present and several past Secretaries of Agriculture, the present and past heads of research and extension, and other influential people connected with the agricultural sector."

"The areas covered in the workshop agenda ranged from discussions on the role of research and technology in development, to the consideration of the proposal to create IDIA.

Also[^] debated were the priority areas for technological development, and some examples of how research could be used to increase production. The workshop methodology relied heavily on" the case method, the cases being "constructed so as to highlight the problems of the present structure of agricultural research within the SEA, and the reasons why it was expected that the proposed organizational change would provide a basis for more effective research." ISNAR participated in the workshop, as members of the original mission participated as resource persons.

"The workshop proved highly successful, as the cases presented provided a good basis for discussion of the main issues involved, and gave the opportunity to all interested parties to express their views. The result of the event was the open support of the agricultural committees of both the House and the Senate, and an agreement to the modifications that should be made in the proposal sent by the President to Congress." (*) Final and unanimous approval of the law (No. 289-85) by Congress took place on July 23, 1985 and became law with the president's signature on August 14, 1985 and on March 17, 1986 the President appointed the first Board of Trustees of the Dominican Agricultural Research Institute.

What was ISNAR's role? Is an autonomous institution an accomplishment? What's so great about that? Three years of work to change a structure? What does that represent?

(*) The previous paragraphs marked by quotation marks are quoted literally from Trigo's report, cited on page 12 of this paper.

1

ISNAR developed a recognition for and provided an understanding of the research process and the structure and requirements for a successful productive self sustaining technological institution. The Dominican system had never questioned its organization nor the sources of its weaknesses. ISNAR assisted in bringing about an understanding of the need for mobilization of political support. This was a lesson learned which will never be forgotten. The Dominican agricultural establishment, over last these three years, has arrived at a consensus regards the national research system and is committed to a continued supportive role which, I am convinced, will assure a rapid increase in the productivity of IDIA. That supportive role involves political support, follow up on organizational and technological development and evaluation. It involves relationships with the universities and the private sector.

Permit me to ask you look at the ISNAR's contribution to the IDIA process from another perspective. From a paper presented by ISNAR Management to the ISNAR Board Committees at their recent March meetings, "Introduction of the Project Approach as a Tool for the Management of ISNAR Activities", it is apparent to me that, after six years of effort and experience, an ISNAR paradigm, although not precisely the objective of the exercise, is emerging. The paper outlines ISNAR's mode of managing its activities with national agricultural research systems, and suggests such activities will in all probability, follow an initial mission of review, analysis and planning. The follow up activities, which would be classed as projects, include: advice

in specialized areas such as manpower training and development, programming and Budgeting; priority setting; assistance in preparation of national research strategies and plans; project preparation; and others, according to the needs of the system.

I feel that an unarticulated contribution of ISNAR has been overlooked and the phenomenon should be further studied. In the case of the Dominican Agricultural Research System, it is my conviction that ISNAR served as a pacing device or pressure mechanism. More, I would like to advance the hypothesis that not much more than pressure mechanisms or pacing devices are necessary for significant improvement of national agricultural research systems, and these could be organized as projects. Again, in the Dominican case, as in Serendip, perhaps, ISNAR contributed to the consolidation of a local group as an additional pressure mechanism (referred to in preceding paragraphs). What do I mean by a pressure mechanism, a pacing or inducing device? Let me refer to Hirschman * who, in a recent review of his thinking on development over the years, refers to a suggestion he made as early as 1954 that "underdeveloped countries need special 'pressure mechanisms' or 'pacing devices' to bring forth their potential." He goes on to refer to Herbert Simon's work on "satisficing" as opposed to "maximizing", Richard Cyert and James March's work on "organizational slack". Nathan

Meier and Sears; Pioneers in Development; "A Dissenter's Confession", chapter by Albert O. Hirschman; The World Bank, 1984; pp 94 and 95.

Rosenberg's "inducement mechanism" (special events such as strikes or wars), and Leibenstein's "X-efficiency theory on the notion that slack is ubiquitous and effort sporadic and unreliable, again in the absence of special pressure situations". Hirschman recognized in his recent paper that his 1954 insight had been preceded in management thinking, and not only for cultures of developing countries. An example of a pacing mechanism: the World Bank publishes yearly world development reports (and, periodically, country reports). These are carefully studied by and influence Central Bank authorities, economists of financial ministries and other institutions in developing nations; the World Bank reports serve as pressure mechanisms and convert local groups and institutions into pacing devices, inducing slack institutions to corrective action, to make important policy decisions. The ISNAR report became in the Dominican Republic an inducement mechanism. The periodic visits of ISNAR officials constituted another form for pacing progress.

I believe that ISNAR or/and The World Bank, FAO, and other donor institutions could do our institutions benefit researching, discussing and devising inducing mechanisms that are or might be used to inform and coax policy makers of the developing world to move ahead with the improvement of their technology generating, adapting, adopting and transferring structures. I believe that developed societies and their institutions have many built-in, formal and informal, inducing mechanisms. I do not believe there is any essential or inherent incapacity of developing

country institutions to perform, given the necessary resources. What we and our societies lack are pressures to keep the institutions and their leaders on track, particularly the public institutions. We do not have sufficient pacing or inducing mechanisms to keep our leaders striving to meet responsibilities and goals.

I could visualize ISNAR's on-going efforts to construct a data base as the genesis of an inducement mechanism for national agricultural research systems. If widespread and effective communication with policy makers in regard to ISNAR's data on NARS is achieved, then, I believe we are in the presence of the beginning of one such device. We need many more.

The separation of the Department of Research from the Secretariat of Agriculture is an accomplishment without precedent in Dominican political history. That this dismemberment should have been initiated and accomplished from within by an almost paralyzed system is a tribute to an excellent exercise in analysis and evaluation of a national research system, ISNAR's mission to the Dominican Republic, and to the three years of patient follow up.

III

IDIA and the Future

In the past development of the research structure of the Dominican Republic there has been concentration on expanding and improving research programs through investments in infrastructure, equipment and human resources. The singular contribution of ISNAR was an objective scrutiny and analysis of

the structure as part of an effort to determine why the system was infunctional and improductive and to make recommendations as to what might be needed to overcome the deficiencies identified. This ISNAR project is almost completed. IDIA exists as an independent, decentralized agency of the Dominican government. IDIA is beginning the most crucial period of the history of agricultural research in the country. IDIA's institutional culture (*) and personality will, could we say, crystallize, be shaped, over the next year or two. It is crucial that all of the elements of a well management research structure be put in place, initiated, projected, implemented at the soonest.

What are these elements of the IDIA group culture that must be inculcated? As Mr. Hertford inferred in his words on the Panama system, this morning, autonomy alone does not assure good management nor a solution of resource constraints. The other important aspects are: consensus on the core mission, strategy, goals, means to accomplish goals, criteria to measure progress and to correct errors, internal integration, training, power relationships with government, executive and legislature, private sector and international.

Is the Dominican research structure complete with the creation of IDIA? How will the universities and the private sector relate to IDIA? How will IDIA respond to the urgent needs of the country for technologies that have not been part of its research agenda, for import substitutions such as oil crops and

(*) Schein, E.; The Role of the Founder in Creating Organizational Culture; American Management Association, 1983.

animal feeds and fish, and for new export crops, such as fruits and vegetables and flowers? How will IDIA respond to these needs rapidly when its culture is one of research on basic food crops?

How can a small country, with an agricultural system as complex as Brazil's, support a research system that should cover almost every possible ecological situation and could include almost all crops? Impossible. The country cannot afford that luxury. Priorities? Then, how can it mobilize all of the national institutions, including the private sector, so that all participate and accept responsibilities for research in or on the different areas of interest and needs of the country.

Obviously, then, system-wide planning is a first step. Can IDIA carry out this complex exercise alone? If the private sector is to become involved with and take on public research responsibilities, how is this innovative role to be planned and carried out? This is a long term process; it requires continuity into the future. As part of, and a result of, the planning process, financing, its negotiation, programming, coordination, use, and reporting, constitutes a most difficult and important need to be built into the on going responsibilities and activities of IDIA's Board of Trustees and Management.

In addition to short and long term planning and financial strategies there are a series of activities and capacities which must be initiated and/or developed in the first months of IDIA's new institutional life, and include:

- a) Manpower Training and Development Plan
- b) National Research Strategy

- c) Project Preparation Capacity
- d) Scientific Relations, National and International
- e) Programming
- f) Review and Evaluation
- g) Political Relations

Under the strain of reorganization or, better said, organization, in an environment characterized as highly politicized and suffering serious financial constraints, can IDIA's inexperienced Board of Trustees, inexperienced as a group, be expected to make the dramatic transformation into an effective research organization without considerable expert assistance, management and financial?

A first step has been completed. IDIA exists. A second phase is under way. In anticipation of the policy decisions that the new IDIA Board would confront, ISNAR designed a series of studies that would facilitate an accelerated decision making process. U.S.A.I.D. provided funding for the foreign technical expertise and a local coordinator. It is expected that the studies will also serve as a basis for discussions with donors or lending institutions.

The international community created ISNAR with the purpose or mandate of assisting national research systems in management and organization. Members of that same international community have greatly assisted the Dominican government and Dominican universities in the formation of their physical and human infrastructures. Particularly prominent have been U.S.A.I.D. and the Interamerican Development Bank. Ford and Kellogg Foundations, Federal Republic of Germany, FAO and UNDP have also

given invaluable assistance at crucial periods in the past. What does an IDIA do to mobilize itself and organize its relations with international donors and financial institutions? A condition for their positive response will be that they be assured of good governance, management, and organization in the use of their funds. Where does ISNAR's responsibility end? What is implementation in ISNAR's organizational culture? What remains to be done in DIA is much; most of this has to do with the reasons for ISNAR's existence.

CONCLUSIONS

While describing a process of initiation of institutionalization of a national research system, I have emphasized the need for finding means of positive political communication, of winning political support for agricultural research in developing democracies where the power structures are biased in favor of the urban population. I have tried to explain the mechanism we used, adapted for our use, in Dominican Republic. The Harvard Business School case method, as we have modified it for communication between political decision makers, the academic world and farmers, is, I believe, conceptually not distant from farming systems research and on farm research, much closer than might be initially apparent. I believe the lessons we learned are as applicable to other countries agricultural research systems as are farming systems research and on farm research techniques. The cost in time, a long gestation period, has been more than justified in the consolidation of a powerful group of IDIA supporters who will be able to assist the institution to move forward rapidly once financing has been obtained. This group will open the doors to financing.

I have also in this paper challenged ISNAR, USAID and other important donors to our system. Within the national group supporting IDIA in Dominican Republic there is full realization that ISNAR, USAID and others are partners in this soul searching institutional building experience. IDIA and ISNAR and USAID, BID, and others, have no other alternative except making IDIA an ultimate success.

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