

**GENDER AND DIVERSITY STAFFING AT CIAT
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

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In the past two years CIAT has made slow but steady progress in sensitizing staff to gender and diversity issues in staffing and the work environment and laying the foundation for concrete actions in the future. This is being accomplished through a series of actions from dissemination of information to team-building training, the organization of staff associations and policy development. There is strong commitment from CIAT's Management Team. Through policy development, the mechanism has been set in place to implement change and monitor results in the future. Key recent achievements are the following:

Information Dissemination

- In 1996 the Director General appointed a Gender Staffing Focal Person to serve as a liaison with the CGIAR Gender Staffing Program and distribute information materials to managers, scientists and human resource staff in the Center. These materials are also indexed in the CIAT Library database.

Training

- *Women's Leadership and Management Training.* CIAT sent six senior staff women to the first course in Mexico in March 1996 and one senior staff woman to the January 1998 course in Nairobi.
- *Team-Building Workshops.* The Ford Support Program in Organizational Change, in conjunction with trainers from Training Resources Group, Inc., facilitated four team-building workshops to help CIAT with the transition to project-based research administration. Two of these events were pilot training with the soils and genetic resources project teams.

Policy/Procedures Development

- *Policy on Harassment and Discrimination.* In December 1996, the CIAT Board approved the policy that was developed by a working group made up of staff from all levels of the organization. The policy includes a complete grievance procedure.

- *Policy Paper on Gender Staffing and Diversity.* In February 1997 the Director General convened a working group made up of staff from all levels of the organization to develop a paper for the Board on gender and diversity staffing. A detailed, comparative analysis of the issues with sample policies and procedures appended was presented to the Management Team in July 1997. The CGIAR Gender Staffing Program provided support in information gathering from other Centers and drafting background sections of the report.
- *Policy on Diversity of Staffing (Policy 2.12).* This policy was crafted from the background paper and approved by the CIAT Board in December 1997. The policy covers general principles, recruitment and appointment, spouse employment, marriage between staff members, definition of authorized dependants, family services to dependents, promotion and career development, gender integration in programming and mechanisms for monitoring diversity of staffing.
- *Performance Evaluation.* An external consultant has been working with CIAT for the past year to completely revise the performance evaluation system. The process has been participatory and staff input has been taken into account in the design.

Recruitment

- *Equal Opportunity Statement.* In 1997 CIAT adopted an equal opportunity statement for all international recruitment vacancy announcements that encourages the application of women and developing country nationals.
- *Recruiting Network.* In 1997 CIAT began sending all vacancy announcements for international positions to the CGIAR Gender Staffing Program for re-broadcasting to subject-specialized networks. Vacancy announcements are also posted on the CIAT and CGIAR home page.

Monitoring Progress

- *Working Group on Diversity in Staffing.* The new *Policy on Diversity in Staffing* calls for the establishment of a permanent working group to focus on gender and diversity-related issues in staffing the workplace, to provide continuity for the gender and diversity policies and to ensure that changes and best practices are implemented and progress is monitored. The Working Group will be convened in May 1998.
- *Management Information System.* The new Policy also directs that gender disaggregated management and program data will be collected for Board review in order to monitor change, assess and reward progress, identify effective practices and ensure accountability. Data will be gathered on staffing and retention, recruitment, composition of committees and working groups, career opportunities, spouse employment, trainees, composition of project teams and CIAT Board membership and management.

Staff Associations

- As part of a strategy to improve communications, broaden participation in decision-making and promote transparency in CIAT, the Director General invited the creation of staff associations to periodically inform the Management Team of staff concerns. The Principal Staff Association is primarily concerned with workplace environment issues. Many of the concerns recently presented by this group to the Management Team are directly related to gender and diversity staffing, and include such issues as recruitment procedures, grievance procedures, performance appraisal, merit recognition and creation of a CIAT daycare center. The national Professional Staff Association also has issues such as performance appraisal and promotion in its agenda. The recent organization and active involvement of these groups is a positive development since it mainstreams many of the concerns that were initially being raised as gender issues and gives added emphasis for positive change.

Future Challenges

Several issues surfaced as a result of the "Taking Stock of Center Gender Staffing Issues" exercise that was conducted in preparation for this meeting. Although there has not been a joint discussion or consensus on these issues yet, the following areas appear to concern a cross-section of staff from directors and project managers to staff scientists and human resource managers and will require follow-up. Work is being done in some of the areas.

- Spouse employment for dual career couples; impacts recruitment, retention, and career development to management positions.
- Sensitizing the Board of Trustees to diversity issues; Board has approved two key gender/diversity policies in the past 14 months, but requires a more intense information campaign.
- The move to a project environment and fixed term contracts (2-3 years) challenges (conflicts with) both hiring and retention of key core competency (staff with 5-10 years experience) and career development.
- Strengthening and standardization of procedures for recruitment and retention.
- Strengthening formal systems, policies and procedures for performance assessment, promotion and position classification that minimize potential for bias.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Terms of Reference

The objective of the Gender and Diversity Committee is to enhance equity and organizational effectiveness by helping to develop work cultures, practices and systems that are hospitable and supportive to both men and women and to members of diverse identity groups, stimulate their fullest productivity and job satisfaction, and recognize and harness their diverse skills, experiences, perspectives, and approaches. It is also the objective to strengthen the recruitment and retention of high quality staff from the pool of women and other diverse identity groups.

1. The main areas of responsibility of this Committee are to:
 - a) Identify key gender and/or diversity related issues which affect the institutional effectiveness and productivity, internally and externally, and define clear objectives to guide future action;
 - b) Interact with other staff to raise awareness, elicit concerns regarding issue definition, seek feedback and support, and communicate progress in this area;
 - c) Develop and prioritize specific proposals and action plans for investigating and addressing gender and diversity related issues such as institutional culture, norms and systems, recruitment and retention of high quality staff from the most diverse pools, career advancement, spouse employment, etc., which affect productivity, morale, and institutional effectiveness;
 - d) Seek the assistance of external consultants to conduct more in-depth research on those matters where in-house resources are lacking;
 - e) Present recommendations to the management committee on feasible courses of action to improve the center's performance in these areas;
 - f) Recommend a strategy for ongoing monitoring and reporting of implemented and proposed activities.
2. The Committee shall meet monthly and report to the management committee at least once every four months.
3. The Committee will be composed of male and female staff representing different identity groups and drawn from different levels of the organization. Sub-committees may be formed to focus on specific issues and may include other staff resource persons or outside consultants, as necessary.
4. The Committee's mandate is to generate constructive recommendations on courses of action regarding institutional gender and/or diversity concerns and policies, not to serve as a grievance committee nor as a forum for airing personal cases.