

Developing a Strategic Plan for the Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR)



Updated Working Document

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Section 1

1.1 What is strategic planning?

Strategic planning is a means of adjusting an organisation's objectives activities and management of resources in response to changes in its external environment and client needs. For agricultural research organisations, strategic planning positions the organisation within the context of national development plans, enables effective and efficient use of scarce resources and identifies structural changes needed for good performance. Strategic planning often serves as the foundation of which other types of agricultural research plans can be developed and implemented, Carlos Valverde, 2001.

Essentially, strategic planning is a process in which a future vision is developed for an organisation, taking into account its political, legal and economic circumstances. To be successful, the planning process requires the full engagement of the staff within the organisation, a belief that the planning outputs will be implemented and commitment of the management to follow through with the outcomes of the planning process. Implementing plans are clearly based on the support of the individuals within the institute and therefore the value of the process is highly correlated with the ability of the organisation's staff to understand the process and to be provided with time and locations to openly discuss ideas across the management scale and also to hold open dialogue with partners in the sector of operation.

The final product of the strategic planning is an institutional strategy, which articulates the organisations "*sense of mission*", a road map for the future directions to be taken, which is achievable within the institutes capacity and resources. The document should therefore show, what the institute is, what it wants to be and the plan to get to this desired state.

There are many approaches to strategic planning and it is important to develop plans that are tailored to the specific needs of the institute. This is particularly the case for a small NARS such as ISAR, which has undergone severe shocks and is currently in a situation of rehabilitation and re-orientation. Strategy development is also a dynamic process and therefore requires regular updating and modification if it is to serve as a useful management tool. Typically, strategic planning requires the establishment of a main committee, which propels the process and preserves a timeframe that enables the institute to maintain momentum. It is important that the process is strongly supported by the highest levels of management as the first beneficiary of the product is the topmost decision maker in the organisation. However, the development of the product should be through a highly transparent process, so that all members of the institution are involved in the information gathering, and discussions such that there are no "surprises", when the document is completed.

For some members of the institution it is likely that the process may appear threatening, may cause shifts in power and may lead to conflict situations. Therefore facilitated opportunities for open debate should be capitalised upon to support open dialogue. Transparency and

rapid information flow will assist in team building during the process of strategic thinking and opportunities need to be developed which enable people to focus on the issues at hand, i.e., the extent of change in the external environment, trends that affect the institute, the level of competition within the sector, priorities and constraints.

Discussing ideas of change will inevitably lead to some blind alleys and false trials, for example, discussions can debate a number of possible models, most of which will be unsuitable on further analysis, but will be useful in highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of taking specific directions. To avoid futile meandering it is vital that the lead agents in the process maintain a focus on the major issue, which is, how the organisation should reposition itself to address new conditions.

1.2 Steps in the planning process

A planning process typically sets out with an analysis of the organisation's current status, an analysis of important changes and trends within the external environment, with the caveat that not every social trend strongly impacts every institute. The analysis then considers the information in terms of the best strategic options within the current environment of opportunities and threats. This analysis is known as SWOT analysis, strengths, weaknesses, (internal environment) and opportunities and threats within the (external environment). Although it is widely used, the SWOT analysis has been questioned recently, as practitioners often:

- Insist on the generation of long lists
- Stop at description, instead of going on to analysis
- Fail to prioritise

Therefore taking into account of these pitfalls, it is advisable to limit the exercise to the four or five most important factors affecting your organisation and focus on thinking about whether these are really threats. Do not agonise on marginal issues, focus on the major areas. Some important questions include:-

- What are we doing ?
- What did we do well / badly ?
- What external factors enabled us to get it right or to fail ?
- What internal factors helped us to get it right or caused problems ?
- Are these factors likely to hold true in the future ?
- What evidence do we have for suspecting this ?

1.3 Trends differentiating the future from the past

There are number of general trends that we should be aware of:

1. **Globalisation** - organisations, of any size, no longer operate only in their own locality. Nor do their competitors. Many organizations start up with the sole intention of operating world-wide; they have been called 'born global'. If global

- sounds too ambitious, it is nonetheless increasingly important not to confine yourself to too limited a locale.
2. **Technological advancement** – particularly in the areas of communication and information transfer. The explosion of the internet in recent years is changing how businesses operate.
 3. **Societal change.** A profound shift has occurred in the West from a manufacturing-based society to the information and knowledge society; organizations are now competing on knowledge and information. Your competitive advantage depends on what you know and how you put your knowledge to use.
 4. **The organization as a collection of stakeholders.** It is now accepted that organizations are much more than a group of employees. Progressive organizations involve their suppliers, customers and shareholders, as well as their employees, in their strategy. These groups are the one who have a ‘stake’ in the organization, hence the term ‘stakeholders’.
 5. **The reliance on innovation for success.** Organisations that do ‘the same old thing’ while the environment around them changes are on course for failure. Innovation, doing new and different things, is what provides an organisation with an advantage over its competitors. Tom Peters has coined the phrase ‘Get innovative or get dead’!
 6. **The nature of competition.** No longer to industry giants have an unchallenged monopoly. Small companies such as Netscape and Amazon Books can now compete directly with the major industry players.
 7. **A more diverse workforce** – including older workers, women and those from ethnic minorities. Diversity both impacts on, and enriches, the working practices and services that organizations can offer.
 8. **Changing organizational structure.** Where organizations use outsourcing, empowerment and communications technologies, they can be more flexible and responsive to market opportunities.
 9. **The need of lifelong learning** – to insure skills change with the requirements of the environment. It has been said that learning is the real key to competitive advantage in the future.
 10. **The increasing speed of change** – and it’s getting quicker.

1.4 Some Do’s and Don’ts

To facilitate the process of strategic planning:-

DO’s

- Create an environment for the exchange of ideas, this means organising meetings that are conducive to thinking, this may be achieved by some informal meetings over a beer or having a retreat to get things moving.

- Getting people involved is a complex task, take time and readjust timetables to meet the needs of the people involved.
- Develop some schemes to get people focussing on the right types of questions
- Get the right focus, this may mean reading some literature on change management
- Thing the change through, does it add up
- Set up a team of stakeholders
- Create a sense of purpose and urgency
- Be prepared for conflict
- Be willing to negotiate
- Build in the capability for learning

Right Questions??

- Who will be included in our client base in the future?
- What are their priorities
- What are our channels for accessing new technologies
- What are our channels of delivering our technologies
- What should we do to better exploit information, develop knowledge and invest in skills development
- What do we do that we could franchise or syndicate to partners
- Can we take new market options in our field of activity

DON'Ts

- Don't terrify your employees with a heavy top down approach
- Don't cover ground too quickly
- Don't retain information that you think is sensitive
- Don't avoid difficult areas because it may lead to conflict (capitalise on conflict)
- Don't think that most people are unable to think as well as the top executives, the undercurrent views of all the people in the institute are important.
- **Don't dwell on the past**

Do not consider the situation that was in the 1970's, things have moved on, **try to focus on:**

- What are the real needs of your clients in today's environment
- In which areas of the agricultural sector do you have the highest change of success
- How are donors, extensionists, NGOs and farmers attitudes changing
- How dynamic is the organisation in taking advantage of new opportunities and defending itself against threats

- What key skills do you need to develop
- Do you have a learning workforce, or an obedient one?

1.5 Strategic Thinking

If strategic analysis is about where you were in the past, how you arrived at the present, the shift to strategic thinking, comes when you consider where you are going to be in the future. Some tips to strategic thinking include:-

- Casting off a risk adverse culture where things that are “not traditional” are dismissed.
- Being able to think about new ideas, brainstorming on possibilities.
- Recognising that the old faces will probably have old ideas, and therefore if you want to know what the market is currently needing, bring in some young blood and listen to what they have to say.
- Nurture some creative thinking, let people have some time and space to consider options, whether they appear fantastic or not.
- Challenging old assumptions and suspending judgement that new ideas don't fit.
- Trying out some new things, this may mean conflict as many people prefer to stay with the way things are.

The key steps in the process of strategic planning are outlined in Figure 1

Figure 1. The basic blocks of the strategic planning process

Analysing context and trends	Defining a future direction	Choosing strategic actions	Preparing for implementation.
Environment Organisation Trends Mandate Strategic issues	Mission Strategic objectives Future vision	SWOT analysis Change matrices Constraints analysis Priority setting Gap analysis	Monitoring and evaluation Responsibilities Resources Structures

This review will collate information on the framework conditions. For a public sector agricultural organisation, national development policies should play a major part of the thinking such that the planning effort is compatible with government policy and trends in the sector. The analysis of the internal environment naturally focuses on the organisation, its current mandate, mission, priorities, achievements and resources within the context of strengths and weaknesses.

Analysis of the external environment is an excellent next step in considering changes in the sector, which can be used to guide the ideas on changes for the institute undergoing the strategy planning process. Here it is important to consider to roles and responsibilities of other players in the sector. A sound analysis of the capacity and linkage opportunities with collaborators or competitors is vital in the development of new plans and developing more efficient ways of working. Any problems and inconsistencies between members should be discussed and resolved.

At this stage ideas for ISAR to consider are the relative merits of basic, strategic and applied research, the needs of the client, and the urgency of “technology” development versus “technology” delivery.

Discussions with other organisations provides information on how other organisations have adapted to the new environment, how changes have led to advantages within the sector, how competitor or partner institutions have made changes which led to increased investment and also the decisions that were made by other organisations and complementary efforts being made by privates and public partners. Capacity analysis is also useful in terms of reviewing the ability of other organisations to support new initiatives or to cause drag.

1.6 Critical challenges

The analysis of this information should lead to identifying central strategic issues that the organisation needs to address for effective change.

Point. One must know where one is going and the barrier to that path or the bridges to accelerate progress.

These issues often referred to as “critical challenges” are those that the organisation will respond to in compliance to the desires of higher authorities, clients, partners and stakeholder interests. Issues are only STRATEGIC, i.e., of real importance, if there are important consequences for not addressing them. Therefore, extracting the “critical challenges” from the discussions that will be held during the planning process are the vital. It is around these critical issues that the potential actions (i.e., strategies) can be developed. Looking at the challenges and “Doing nothing” is a decision and should not be considered as a safety net. The world is becoming more competitive, there are more options and increasing numbers of effective players in the sector, particularly agricultural research and development and therefore defining your role within the market place is important for growth if not survival.

Avoiding difficult questions, entirely defeats the object of the strategic planning process and this highlights the need for a strong committee and a careful selection of facilitators who can hold open debate on difficult ideas and decisions. The facilitator needs to work with the groups involved, towards rational and practical consensus.

1.7 Strategic planning Why do it??

Research organisations engage in strategic planning for different reasons. For the Institut des Sciences Agronomique du Rwanda (ISAR), the process was prompted by several, almost overwhelming causes,

- (i) the effects of the genocide, which led to almost the complete loss of staff and facilities,
- (ii) a major breakdown in the capacity and capability of the extension services in Rwanda causing the need for new uptake pathways to be secured,
- (iii) loss in funding due to a breakdown in communication with long standing partners and the need to establish new links with donor agencies and

- (iv) a certain lack of understanding from the Government departments particularly the Ministry of Finance, on the merits of having a well staffed, fully resourced and effective research organisation which can provide vital technologies to the farmers, within an economy which is almost entirely agrarian.
- (v) a desire to link with a number of partners for sustainable funding of a manageable organisation, which is contributing towards economic growth and food security.

1.7.1 Who are the beneficiaries of the process

The target clients for agricultural research organisations such as ISAR are the farmers, farmer associations, extension, NGOs, input suppliers, the Minister of agriculture and government agencies. To be universally accepted, the strategic planning process needs to hold open debate with these partners to take on board their views.

1.8 Visions and Missions

As part of the early stages in the process, the organisation needs to define its goal. This is typically achieved by developing a vision and mission which are precise statements of its reason d’etre. These statements should manifest the products, priority clients, objectives and activities.

The challenge of the top management is to articulate how the institute can best contribute to the national development. This highest order statement is typically referred to as a **Vision**, which reflects the highest level of potential achievement, a state of future capacity, a Nirvana.

A **mission** statement, is a concise description of how the institute will achieve its objectives and work towards its Vision.

Slogans, are a more recent innovation, which provides a snappy, “sound bite” which promotes the institute. Although this may appear trite, it does help to imprint the institutional drive on the employees and also serves as a means of imprinting the institute in the minds of the clients.

1.9 Preparing for Change

The reason for comparing the current versus the future state is to compare the state of affairs with the preferred situation. Developing change matrices on critical issues can assist in focusing on the issues and making suggestions for change. As with the SWOT analysis, focus on real issues and do not consider the exercise as a listing making endeavour.

Change analyses matrix

Current status	Preferred status	What is needed to get there?
Appraisal is based on publication of results in	Performance is reviewed on issues related to the	Establish a clear set of guidelines which can

and international journal	objective of the position	<p>appraise action against the needs of the job</p> <p>Develop clear terms of reference for the position</p> <p>Work with the employee to design a fair scheme of appraisal focussing on the specific task being set</p>
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1.10 Implementing Change

The key aspects related to implementing change include:-

- Governance
- Leadership
- Planning, monitoring and Evaluation
- Management of information, financial, human resource and physical resources
- Technology development, dissemination and transfer
- Support services including accounting, purchasing, maintenance, travel, computer services and logistics.

Having dealt with framework ideas, the strategy should logically move onto more detailed analysis of how the desired changes can practically be made. The results of this more functional analysis and definitions of the programmatic research areas will allow for projections to be made of the financial investment required over the strategic planning period and the institutional changes that are required to implement the plan.

1.10.1 From Strategy document to Planning

Typically a strategic planning process leads from the development of a strategy document to a functional planning process in which action plans are designed. This stage is often referred to as developing a mid term plan. The length of the plan depends on the ability of the organisation to see into the future, short, medium and long term being 0-2 years, 3-5 years and up to 10 years. It is very unlikely that a plan will stand for more than 2 years as the environment changes too rapidly but having a long term vision often helps in working towards more difficult change areas.

1.10.2 Relevance for agricultural research

Strategic planning is often initiated at the request from donor organisations rather than Government, as donors require that funding, particularly repeat funding, is clearly linked with performance and that this can be measured against realistic indicators. The process of donor funding also aims to transform institutes such as ISAR into a new mode of operation

which is more able to design, and deliver efficient and effective products and services to their clients. The strategic planning process therefore services a number of functions including:-

- Orienting the organisation with regard to the environment and its desired functional state.
- Evaluating the organisations strengths and weaknesses
- Determining goals and how to reach them
- Orienting the organisation towards clients needs and demands
- Addressing ideas related to major social changes such as market reform, sustainability and being able to withstand shocks.
- Establishing various elements of direction and management in particular the vision, mission, objectives and structure and translating strategies into action plans
- Determining necessary changes and adjustments within the organisation, including policy, administration, management and good governance.
- Incorporating experiences gained through a continual process of review, ensuring that the strategic plan reflects lessons learned and environmental changes.

The final point being that most research managers need to find ways of using and distributing their scarce resources more efficiently in order to contribute more effectively to agricultural development in their countries. For this reason, strategic thinking is likely to play a more important role in the evolution of agricultural organisations in the future.

1.11 Why change fails

The way it was introduced may cause a sense of threat and fear of the unknown. Problems in the implementation may lie in the upper levels of the organisation or in other linked organisations and these are generally captures in the following pitfalls:-

- Lack of understanding of what the business is about in operational terms
- Lack of direction
- Lack of vision
- Resource shortcomings are overlooked
- Goals are too distant
- Performance guides are ignored
- Training is overlooked
- Management is unable to sell change to higher authorities
- Lack of trust in the organisation hinders agreed upon shifts
- Basic or fundamental lack of understanding of the process
- Lack of competitive nature within the organisation

For New Timetable for the ISAR strategic planning process see page 123

Section 2 Background to the ISAR Strategic Planning Process

2.1 Introduction

In 1995, following the catastrophic events of the genocide, the Government of Rwanda reopened the operations of the Institut des Sciences Agronomique du Rwanda (ISAR). The priorities were to establish a new cadre of scientists for the institute and work towards rebuilding the human, physical and research capacity. In 1998, the Government of Rwanda, took steps to accelerate this rehabilitation process with assistance from local and regional partners. Through a series of consultative meetings between the GOR, USAID-Rwanda, the Association for Strengthening the Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), a project was developed entitled “Agricultural Technology Development and Transfer Project for Increased Income and Sustainable Food Security in Rwanda” (ATDT). The ATDT project has a budget of \$3 million for a 3 year lifespan. This project was developed in response to the urgent need of ISAR and the NGOs to rapidly access and disseminate agricultural technologies for the Rwandan agricultural sector.

This project has succeeded in meeting some of the more urgent technology needs and has also initiated the process of recreating ISAR’s institutional strength. As part of the rebuilding process, the Director General of ISAR realised that for the institute to develop in a strong and sustainable manner, that a more structure planning effort was required to redesign the institute within the new social and economic environment of the country. This plan was also necessary to capture the changes in stakeholder expectations of ISAR, make ISAR more responsive to the most pressing needs of agricultural sector and make impact on the overall goal of economic growth.

Therefore ISAR requested that a consortium of partners*, that had initiated the ATDT project provide support to a strategic planning exercise. On this basis a strategic planning support team was created to assist ISAR in this exercise. This team was composed as follows:-

* The design team

Muhinda Mugunga –	Director General - ISAR
Elie Rene Gasore –	ISAR Sorghum breeder
John Mullenax	USAID / REDSO Agricultural Advisor
Bantiyahu Gelaw –	Agricultural Consultant, Washington D.C.
Adiel Mbabu –	ASARECA Planning office
Vas Aggarwal –	ATDT Project Co-ordinator IITA
Shaun Ferris -	Foodnet co-ordinator IITA
Seyfu Ketema –	Director General, Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organisation

The strategic planning exercise was scheduled to be completed during the first phase of the ATDT project, ending December 2002. The team initiated work during the week of October 1-6, 2000, with a plan for completion within 1 year. The first week was devoted to stakeholder consultations including, ISAR personnel, the Minister of Agriculture, the Secretary General for Agriculture, heads of the technical services of the Ministry, representatives of the NGO and donor community, private farmers, processors and exporters.

The first draft of this document (draft 00) provided an initial framework for the strategic plan. It provided an overview of the Rwandan agricultural sector and a description of ISAR's current status and capacity.

This description was then juxtaposed to stakeholders expectations. Out of this juxtaposition came an initial understanding of the changes that are being sought which in effect provides the basis and content for the strategic plan and future operations of the institute. This draft (draft 01) is the next stage in the process and includes greater input from ISAR staff and the management.

2.2 Purpose of this mission

The purpose of initiating this work is to develop a New strategic plan for the Institut des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR), taking into account:-

- ◆ The food security needs of the country,
- ◆ The potential for economic growth through the agricultural sector
- ◆ The Government policy for Agriculture
- ◆ The various needs of the stakeholders working in the agricultural sector
- ◆ The needs of the beneficiaries.

Given that strategic planning is a somewhat conceptual process, the first challenge was to find an approach, which did not disenfranchise the stakeholders. The process adopted aims to be practical, simple in terms of interaction and is seeking to find ways of real consensus building, which will help to shape the future of ISAR, which is supported by the cadre of ISAR.

2.3 Reasons for ISAR to undertake a strategic planning process

The challenge for ISAR

Despite the fragile state of the institute, ISAR is expected to make a significant contribution towards the growth of the agricultural sector in Rwanda. To be more effective in this role, ISAR requires a new management strategy to implement this role successfully.

Regional Partners

To assist in taking on these challenges, there are a many new technologies being generated by agricultural research systems in the region and these should be utilised to the best advantage of ISAR. These organisations include, International Agricultural Research Centres, sub-regional forums, NARS, private sector agents, NGOs and CBOs. Developing a robust strategic plan will enable ISAR to have a better opportunity of harnessing the outputs from these agencies to meet the needs of the various clients in the Rwanda agricultural sector.

State of Flux

Although, the partners involved in agricultural research and development can be identified, most of these agencies are also going through a process of change. This compounds the need for ISAR to be well prepared in terms of its strategies, priorities, goals and objectives, so that ISAR can more easily find vantage points for linkage with these re-designed institutions.

Future Partnerships

To fully benefit from future partnerships

- (a) ISAR needs to have a clear understanding of the emerging character of its partners
- (b) The capacity of these partners and their willingness to change to accommodate ISAR
- (c) An understanding and commitment from ISAR to delegate, franchise and syndicate its activities such that technologies are of better quality and delivered to the client base more effectively, in terms of speed, cost and appropriateness.

Meeting new Demands

To meet the demands set out in point 4, ISAR needs to re-invent itself such that it is

- (a) Attractive to potential partners
- (b) Has the capacity to manage new partnerships
- (c) Can deliver on the work it is pursuing

Gathering information

Ministries, Institutions of higher learning, research and dissemination partners are all critical in the success of ISAR, and therefore ISAR is initiating a process of gathering information on what the partners expect from ISAR and what they would envisage would be important in shaping the new role of ISAR. The points being debated include:

- (a) The most desirable future characteristics of the Institute
- (b) Possible areas / modalities of collaboration / partnerships between the institutions

Section 3 Feedback from the key stakeholders

As part of the first round of discussions, interviews were held with key stakeholder groups to evaluate the external environment. The following section provides some of the feedback which needs to be considered within the SWOT analysis.

3.1 Summary points from the Minister of Agriculture

ISAR is Government Property

Limited resources will continue

Production needs to intensify

Production needs to commercialise, ISAR needs to be market driven

TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS ISAR NEEDS TO:-

- ◆ Focus
- ◆ Improve the calibre of the scientific staff at ISAR
- ◆ Adopt a sense of urgency
- ◆ Acquire improved technology
- ◆ Assist in the process of modernisation

- ◆ Train scientists in key areas
- ◆ Review the Board (Should be in character with your stakeholders and partners)
- ◆ Review the role of Stations
- ◆ Increase the role of the private sector particularly in the area of extension
- ◆ Provide innovative options e.g. GMO's

3.2 Ideas on the future direction of ISAR from the Secretary General and Technical Directors from the Ministry of Agriculture

Vision:

ISAR an organisation that is vibrant and responsive to the agricultural development needs of Rwanda enhancing food security by transforming agriculture through the development of appropriate technologies and policy guidelines

Mission

Development appropriate technologies and provide policy guidelines to:-

- ◆ Transform agriculture through changing subsistence farming to commercial agriculture.
- ◆ Making agriculture more profitable and competitive.
- ◆ Making agriculture more sustainable
- ◆ Increase agricultural productivity
- ◆ Promote the broad needs of food security.

ISAR will contribute towards the growth in the agricultural sector by transforming agriculture through the development of appropriate technologies and assisting in the development of more effective policy guidelines.

3.3 Summary of views from the NGO and private sector partners

1. Much more partnering with people needs to be done in the field to identify problems and develop appropriate solutions
2. More economic analysis is required
3. More market orientation is required, i.e. it needs to be commercial driven
4. ISAR needs to focus on getting information out. Old information is still valid.
5. The potential partners need a formal framework for co-operation.
6. Processing is important but is not apparent on the ISAR agenda.
7. ISAR needs to work on value adding, and quality of production
8. ISAR should consider working on other crops such as Oil crops, fruit or even cotton?
9. Seed production and dissemination is an important role
10. Sustainability and environmental issues need to be considered
11. Drought crops needs to be included and some form of early warning system / monitoring system developed.
12. On-farm work needs more partners
13. ISAR needs to draw on existing information

3.4 Summary of a first meeting with Donors

The donor community is putting in place technical assistance and structures, which are covering policy, research, food aid, monetisation programmes, training, marketing and processing within the agricultural sector. A key problem is that there are many partners in this field many of which are working in isolation. There is a need to build stronger linkages between aspects such as research and policy formulation and find better ways of linking the outputs from these structures to the beneficiaries.

At present most of the resources to the agricultural sector are going to NGOs. This is building only one side of the partnership. If linkages between ISAR and the other major actors in the agricultural sector remain weak then ISAR will not be able to play a leadership role either in technology development or policy formulation.

A major part of the strategic planning process must therefore be focussed on partnerships and finding ways of making stronger linkages with the NGO sector, other public services, private sector agents and the policy makers. Currently, ISAR is viewed as a weak, isolated organisation, which does not really merit either partnerships or investment. This is a serious problem for Rwanda, as ISAR is the national arm of agricultural research, with the mandate to source, develop and deliver new and improved agricultural technologies to the Rwandan agricultural sector.

The group's view was that ISAR needs to be reinforced so that it can become the focal point for agricultural development. ISAR should lead in developing the long-term vision of the agricultural research but should work with the various partners, in Rwanda and the region. The point to emphasise is that for ISAR to succeed in the current environment, it must inculcate an open door policy. ISAR is currently too closed and needs to change from being inward looking to a more dynamic, responsive organisation that is meeting the needs of the farming community. To be successful in this role, ISAR needs to draw upon the capacity of the partners in Rwanda and this does mean that ISAR will have to find means of partnering with all the actors working in the agricultural sector.

In addition to improving linkages with the transfer agents such as the NGOs, ISAR also needs to initiate new partnerships with the business sector. The business sector can pay for services, where necessary, but probably more importantly it is with the business sector that ISAR is most likely to show impact in terms of economic growth and garner support for its mission.

- ◆ USAID will develop a new Agri-business centre.
- ◆ USAID is working with the world council of Credit Unions and the Bank Populaire. This is an opportunity to strengthen the credit wing to the rural areas.
- ◆ Training, USAID is working towards (i) Improving the quality of teaching at the UNR, (ii) Providing opportunities for Masters training (iii) Developing outreach centres to support the research / extension effort and ISAR should capitalise on these efforts to find new and innovative ways of solving some of the problems of the farming community in strong partnership with the NGOs.

Section 4 Planning Information from ISAR

4.1 Brief introduction to the Country

Rwanda is a land locked country located in the eastern part of central Africa. The country has a population of 8.5 million people living on a land area of 26,368 sq.km, making Rwanda one of the most densely populated countries in Africa with a population density of 322 per km² as opposed to an average of 26 per km² for Sub-Saharan Africa. At current growth rate of 2.9% per annum, the population is expected to reach 11.4 million by the year 2010. The urban population is expected to double by 2010 and the rural population is expected to reach 9.8 million in 2010. The country is already finding it challenging to meet the food needs of its current 8.5 million people and more than 40% of the food is imported.

Agriculture accounts for 91.1% of the employment for the active population and remains the main source of economic growth. The Agricultural sector contributes 36.6% to the GDP. The main agricultural export item is coffee, which in 1997 contributed to 52% of the national foreign earning while at the same period tea as the second most important export commodity item contributed 24% of the foreign currency earning, **Table 1.**

Table 1 : Comparison of socio-economic indicators of Rwanda and average of Sub-Saharan Africa : Basic data (1997).

Indicator	Rwanda	Sub-Saharan Africa
Pop. Size	7.7 million	596 million
Pop. density	303 per km ²	26 per km ² .
Active population :		
- Agricultural sector	91.1 %	70.0 %
- Industry sector	1.7 %	7.5 %
- Services sector	7.2 %	22.5 %
DGP per capital	US\$ 240	US\$ 490
Daily calorie supply % requirements	64	64

4.2 Introduction to ISAR

Legislation for establishing ISAR and its historical perspective

The Institute des Sciences Agronomiques du Rwanda (ISAR), was established on June 22-1962 through legislation following proclamation N° R/118/52. It replaced the former Institute National pour l'Etude Agronomique au Congo (INEAC), which had mandate of research in Congo, Burundi and Rwanda during the colonial period. ISAR mandate was

established to promote the scientific and technical development of agriculture and livestock in Rwanda.

4.3 Current Status of ISAR

Governance

ISAR is governed through its board members, which is chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry Livestock and Forestry of Education. It is accountable to the Ministry of Agriculture and has semi autonomous status.

Board members

ISAR has the following board members:

1. Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Chairperson;
2. Director of Agriculture in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry, Vice-Chairperson;
3. Director of Planning from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning .
4. Director of Scientific and Technological Research at the Ministry of Education;
5. Director of the Institute of Scientific and Technology Research, member;
6. Dean Faculty of Agriculture in the National University of Rwanda, member;
7. Director of Livestock from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry member;
8. Two members appointed by the President of the Republic and nominated by the Minister in Charge of Scientific Research, members.

Mandates of the Board

The board of ISAR has the following mandates:

1. Propose the organizational Structure and Management of ISAR;
2. Endorse laws and legislations;
3. Appoint or propose nomination of personnel;
4. Approve research programs;
5. Approve budget to be submitted to the Cabinet and approve the management of the allocated budget;
6. Administration of property of the Institute;
7. Approve the annual planning and research reports;
8. Approve donations, grants, etc.

Mandates of ISAR

ISAR is a national agricultural research Institute whose mandates and role include:

- Promotion and development of scientific techniques in agriculture;
- Development and training of researchers in specialized domains of agriculture, publication and dissemination of research results in collaboration with extension services;
- Proper and effective supervision and management of research centers and experimental stations;
- Participation in drafting and implementing of the national agricultural policy and strategies at national Level.

4.4 Organisation and management

The organisation chart of ISAR

