The CGIAR Collaborative Research Program for CAC

The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), is an international group of donor agencies, eminent agricultural scientists and institutional administrators from developed and developing countries that guide and support its work. The CGIAR receives support from a wide range of country and institutional members worldwide. Since its foundation in 1971, it has brought together many of the world's leading scientists and agricultural researchers in a unique South-North partnership to reduce poverty and hunger.

The mission of the CGIAR is to promote sustainable agriculture to alleviate poverty and hunger and achieve food security in developing countries. The CGIAR conducts strategic and applied research, with its products being international public goods. It focuses its research on problem-solving through interdisciplinary programs implemented by one or more of its international centers, in collaboration with a full range of partners. Such programs concentrate on increasing productivity, protecting the environment, saving biodiversity, improving policies, and contributing to strengthening agricultural research in developing countries.

The collaboration between the CGIAR and CAC Republics predates their independence in 1991. After the Soviet Union collapse, the agricultural production and research systems started to suffer as it was found difficult to sustain them under the prevailing circumstances. The eight Republics, therefore, began to strengthen and revitalize their national agricultural research systems. In doing so, they also realized that they needed to invest more in agricultural research and development to reorganize their respective national programs and forge linkages with other partners in the global agricultural research community.

All CG-Centers met at ICARDA in April 1998 and developed a CGIAR Collaborative Program, based on the needs of the CAC National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) identified in previous workshops and coordination meetings. The program seeks to contribute to achieving the overall goal of food security, economic growth, environmental sustainability, and poverty alleviation in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The key objective of the Program is to assist the CAC countries in achieving sustainable increases in the productivity of crop and livestock systems through the adaptation and transfer of production technologies and natural resource management and conservation strategies, and by strengthening agricultural research and cooperation among the CAC countries and with international research organizations.

The Program has run the first year of its implementation. Significant achievements have been made during this short period of time. The Program participants also identified a number of new issues which could be tackled on a partnership basis. The Second Meeting of the CGIAR Program Steering Committee (23-25 June 1999, Tbilisi, Georgia) was called to review the progress and develop a workplan for the second year of Program implementation.

As the Program enters the second year of activity, its participants have expressed their strong willingness to continue with the planned activities to achieve the targeted objectives and contribute to agricultural development in Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Message

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

In your hands is the first issue of the Quarterly Newsletter for the Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC) region. It is an information tool for linking all the partners involved in implementing the CGIAR Collaborative Research Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development in the CAC region. The agriculture in the region is undergoing rapid transformation giving rise to a number of new technical, socio-economic and institutional problems. The challenge posed can only be met through a holistic approach by multidisciplinary and multi-institutional teams of researchers. The CGIAR Collaborative Research Program has provided an opportunity for the scientists from different International Agricultural Research Centers and their counterparts in the national agricultural systems and institutions in the CAC region to work together, adopting such an approach.

The CAC News will keep you informed about the latest events in Program activities. It will also provide a platform for all of us to express our opinion and share important information. The Newsletter will welcome short articles, notes, comments, letters etc. for publication. The Program Facilitation Unit will very much appreciate your feedback on the coverage provided in the Newsletter.

It is hoped that the Newsletter will contribute to faster sharing of information amongst all the stakeholders of the Program and will catalyze further expansion of research collaboration for a sustainable development of agriculture in the CAC region.

Prof. Dr. Adel El-Beltagy
Director General, ICARDA
The three-day Second Program Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting of the CGIAR Collaborative Research Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC) was inaugurated in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 23 June.

The Meeting, which was organized by the Program Facilitation Unit (PFU) and the Georgian Academy of Agricultural Sciences (GAAS), was attended by 30 participants, including representatives from nine CGIAR Centers, eight CAC NARS, CGIAR, TAC, and the World Bank. In his inaugural address, Georgia's Minister of Agriculture and Food, H.E. Mr Bakur Guliia, highlighted the importance of investment in agricultural research and development and, in this context, referred to Georgia having sought funds from the World Bank and IFAD for bolstering its agricultural research. He hoped that the CGIAR's activities in Georgia would complement that of the World Bank and IFAD. Mr Guliia also drew attention to the agreement that his Ministry had signed with ICARDA for cooperation in agricultural research and capacity building.

The inaugural session, being an open session, was attended by representatives of various ministries in Tbilisi, scientists from different institutes of GAAS and the agricultural university, and representatives of donors and development agencies in Tbilisi.

Dr Alexander McCalla, Chairman of CGIAR's Finance Committee and Director of Rural Development Department of the World Bank, in his speech on "Food security and the challenge to agriculture in the 21st century" dwelt on three key components of food security: availability, access, nutritional use, and how these challenges could be met by developing sustainable production systems capable of doubling output, and by implementing domestic and international policies favoring agriculture and farmers. Besides, he said, there was a need to invest in public agricultural research and make efforts to remove obstacles to freer agricultural trade.

Dr Ismail Serajeldin, CGIAR Chairman, in his message, highlighted the importance of the CGIAR Program in sustainable agricultural development in CAC and the tasks that lie ahead. The message was read out by the CGIAR's Executive Secretary, Mr Alexander von der Osten.

Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy, Director General of ICARDA, outlined the milestones in the development of the CGIAR's Collaborative Research Program in Central Asia and the Caucasus, presenting the various research themes of the Program and the activities that each theme covers.

A statement from Dr Abdelmajid Slama, Director, Technical Advisory Division, IFAD, was read by Dr S.P.S. Beniwal, Head of Program Facilitation Unit. In his statement, Dr Slama expressed IFAD's commitment to support applied research and capacity building activities in the CAC region to reflect the spirit of true partnership with the CGIAR Program.

The PSC Meeting was co-chaired by Academician Valerian Metyreveli, President of GAAS and Prof. Dr Adel El-Beltagy. Dr S.P.S. Beniwal made a presentation on the activities of the PFU. This was followed by presentations on three projects of the Program by representatives of ISNAR, ICARDA, CIMMYT, IPGRI, ICRISAT, and CIP. Three CG Centers—IFPRI, IWMI, and ILRI—made presentations on the activities initiated in the region following the first PSC Meeting. The continuing interest of CAC countries in collaborative programs; the distribution of thousands of germplasm accessions of different crops in the CAC countries through international nurseries/yield trials; and the various training programs, meetings and workshops organized both within and outside the region were highlighted in these presentations. All Centers expressed their strong intent to develop and strengthen collaboration with the CAC countries.

The Meeting also addressed other key issues such as development of communication facilities in NARS, development of databases on NARS, and fund-raising. It was decided that the Third Meeting of the PSC would be held in Ashgabad, Turkmenistan, in the latter half of May 2000.

Participants in the meeting
News on Collaborative Research Activity
Germplasm Conservation, Adaptation and Enhancement for Diversification and Intensification of Agricultural Production

Regional Workshop on Plant Genetic Resources Documentation and Information Held in Tashkent

IPGRI and ICARDA conducted a Regional Workshop on Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) Documentation and Information in Tashkent 5-7 April. A total of 15 scientists from the eight CAC countries (five from Central Asia and three from the Caucasus), including scientists of IPGRI and ICARDA attended the Workshop.

Steering Committee Meeting of the Central Asia and Transcaucasian Network for Plant Genetic Resources

The Steering Committee Meeting of the Central Asia and Transcaucasia Network for Plant Genetic Resources (CATCN-PGR) was jointly organized by IPGRI and ICARDA in Tashkent, 8-9 April. A total of 16 scientists from eight CAC Republics, IPGRI, ICARDA, Nordic Genebank, ZADIIGR (German Center for Development and Information in Agriculture Information Center for Genetic Resources), and Vavilov Research Institute of Plant Industry attended the Meeting.

Cereal Diseases and Insect-pests Surveyed in Three Countries of Central Asia

Dr Amor Yahyaoui, Senior Cereal Pathologist, and Dr Mustafa Bouhssini, Senior Entomologist, from ICARDA surveyed diseases and insect-pests of cereals in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, 28 May-18 June. A preliminary assessment of the area surveyed showed that diseases and insect-pests represent a major stress to cereal production in these countries. Among diseases, yellow rust reached epidemic levels in many regions in Uzbekistan. Tan spot had high incidence levels in Kyrgyzstan. Septoria nodorum was found as the most prevalent disease in Kazakhstan and its high infection levels were observed in many regions particularly where cereal-cereal or cereal-fallow rotation system were practiced. Powdery mildew was more severe in Kyrgyzstan and to a lesser extent in Kazakhstan. Among insect-pests, Sunn pest and cereal leaf beetle were problems in all the three countries.

Yellow Rust Epidemic in Wheat in Uzbekistan

Visits to wheat plots by wheat scientists from CIMMYT (Dr Alexei Moronov), ICARDA (Dr Amor Yahyaoui) and Australia at stations and in farmers fields in Uzbekistan indicated development of yellow rust of wheat, which in some areas was seen in epidemic proportions e.g., in Tashkent and Sirdariya regions of Uzbekistan. Yellow rust development is also reported this season from Tadjikistan (Dr B. Sanginov, personal communication). Yield reductions in some areas in Uzbekistan may reach up to 30%.

Head Damage Found in Barley

Tashkent Region in Uzbekistan experienced frost damage in April. As a result, head damage was found in early-maturing lines in the Plant Quarantine plots at the Uzbek Research Institute of Plant Industry, Tashkent. ICARDA's barley breeder Dr Victor Shevtsov observed genetic difference in head damage in different lines grown at the institute. This would permit selection of frost-tolerant barley lines.
News on Collaborative Research Activities
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**IPGRI Appoints a Forestry Network Scientist**

For its Forestry Genetic Resources Network in Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC), IPGRI has appointed Dr Muhhabat Turdieva as Forestry Genetic Resources Scientist from Uzbekistan. Dr. Turdieva, who is a native of Uzbekistan and worked at the Uzbekistan Forestry Research Institute, Tashkent, started her duties effective 05 April 1999. Dr Muhabbat is based in the CGIAR Program Facilitation Unit in Tashkent.

**International Nurseries of Food and Feed Legumes Planted**

Planting of International nurseries of food legumes (chickpea, lentil and field pea) and feed legumes (vetches and lathyrus) supplied by ICARDA was completed in all the eight Republics in March/April. These were planted in Northern Kazakhstan in May. These nurseries in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan were visited by ICARDA's Chickpea breeder (Dr Rajinder Malhotra) and Feed Legume breeder (Dr Ali Abd El-Moneim), 28 June-07 July, and plans for further evaluation and selection of lines discussed with the national partners in each of these countries.

**Plant Germplasm Collection in Turkmenistan**

From left to right: Dr Mustapha Bouneime (ICARDA), Dr. Junumurat Kurbanov (Turkmenistan National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna), and Dr. Ken Street (CLIMA, Australia) exploring range biodiversity in Turkmenistan.

From the 9-22 June, Dr Mustapha Bouneime of ICARDA, Dr. Ken Street from CLIMA (Australia), and Prof. Dr Junumurat Kurbanov of the Turkmenistan National Institute of Desert Flora and Fauna (NIDFF) took part in a joint plant collection mission. The objectives of the mission were to survey and collect germplasm of cereal, pasture, forage, food legumes, their wild relatives and progenitors in addition to potentially useful rangeland species from Turkmenistan. The mission also served to make contact and possible linkages with local scientists working in genetic resources, agriculture and environmental sciences in Turkmenistan. The collection covered approximately 950 km and included the Ashkabad, Bakharden and Kara-Kala provinces. In all, 32 sites were collected. Included in the collection sites was the Yaldera nature reserve in the Kara-Kala province. It is protected from grazing and was the most species-rich site. A total of 121 accessions from 44 species were collected. Of the cereals and their wild relatives, *Hordeum spontaneum*,

**A Collection Mission Organized for Vegetables in Uzbekistan**

IPGRI organized a collection mission on vegetable crops in Uzbekistan in collaboration with the Uzbek Research Institute of Plant Industry (URPI), Tashkent. The collection mission was planned in two parts. The first was conducted from 20 May to 03 June 1999. In all, 92 samples of vegetable crops were collected. The second part of the collection mission will be completed in September and its duration will be 30 days.

*Hordeum bulbosum* and *Aegilops kotschyi* were the most widely distributed in the regions covered. *Aegilops cylindrica* was the next most widely distributed but was in an advanced stage of shattering in most regions visited.

Only three accessions of *Aegilops taushii* and one of *Aegilops vavilovi* were collected.

Farmers and researchers from NARS confirmed that local cereal landraces have long since been replaced by modern varieties.

No cultivated chickpeas were observed in the areas surveyed. In a few market places chickpeas were on offer which were supposedly locally grown. A number of accessions were obtained from local farmers who said they grew chickpea. Potential fodder species were common in irrigated or moist environments. Vetch and Lathyrus and Pisum and Medicago species were collected with *Vicia sativa* subsp. *nigra* being the most widespread. The majority of accessions collected had potential for rangeland rehabilitation and included Astragalus, Cohortae, Dactylis, Melica, Stipa and Plantago species. *Artemisia*, *Haloxylon*, *Salsola*, *Atriplex* species were common but it was not the appropriate time to collect seeds.

Seeds of the accessions collected were divided in half: one half was left at the Turkmenistan National Institute of Deserts, Flora and Fauna and the other taken to ICARDA for multiplication and germplasm conservation.

Given the tendency for overgrazing in much of the region there is a real danger of genetic material unique to
On-Farm Soil and Water Management for Sustainable Agricultural Systems

Turkmenistan being lost forever.

Workshop on "On-Farm Soil and Water Management in Central Asia"

A workshop on "On-farm soil and water management in Central Asia" was organized in Tashkent, 17 to 19 May 1999, by ICARDA in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources (MAWR) of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and the Scientific Information Center of the Interstate Coordination Water Commission (SIC-ICWC). The PFU provided logistical support in its organization. The Workshop was attended by more than 40 participants. These included: key specialists on water issues from five Central Asian States - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan; Water Research Group from ICARDA; two representatives from IWM; Director General of SIC-ICWC; Deputy Minister of MAWR; representatives of EPIC/USAID program; TACIS, and the US Embassy in Uzbekistan. The objective of the workshop was to introduce ICARDA's on-farm water and soil management research activities in the region and to get feedback from local specialists on overall situation and priority research areas on soil and water resources, management and constrains as well as socioeconomic and policy aspects affecting on-farm water management issues in Central Asia. The workshop proceedings are being developed by Dr Fawzi Karajeh, Marginal-quality Water Specialist of ICARDA, Aleppo, Syria (e-mail: F.Karajeh@CGIAR.ORG).

Irrigation and Water Resources System

A mission from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), consisting of Dr S. Prathapar, Regional Director of IWMI-Pakistan and Mr T. Bangaragoda from IWMI Headquarters, visited Uzbekistan, 16-22 April, to visit relevant institutions. Plans to organize a one-day meeting in Tashkent were finalized to discuss major issues relating to irrigation and water resources system in Central Asia.

A Meeting on River Basin Issues in Central Asia was organized by the IWMI in the afternoon of 19 May following the "On-farm soil and water workshop". Dr S. Prathapar, IWMI representative for CAC made a presentation on IWMI activities and their relevance to the Central Asia situation. Thereafter, another presentation was made by Dr W. Bastaassen, IWMI Consultant. The Meeting was successful in terms of getting NARS' feedback on both institutional and river basin level issues.

Collaborative Research Activities on On-farm Water Management Initiated in Kazakhstan

ICARDA initiated two collaborative research activities on on-farm water management with the Kazak Research Institute of Water Management in March 1999. These include:

- Irrigation technology and desalinization of irrigated lands in the area of the Arys-Turkestan Channel, and
- Utilization of purified waste waters from Almaty city for fodder crops production.
News on Collaborative Research Activities

Livestock Production Systems

Consultations with CAC-NARS for Preparing a Project Proposal on Livestock Development

Activities to prepare a project proposal under the CGIAR Collaborative Agricultural Research Program on livestock development in CAC countries were intensified by ILRI in collaboration with ICARDA. Dr Emilio Laca of the University of California, Davis, U.S.A. was appointed as the consultant to lead the team to prepare the project proposal. Several team members were assigned responsibilities in different countries to study the current situation of livestock production in the region. These included: Dr Emilio Laca—Turkmenistan; Dr Mohammed Saleem (ILRI)—Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan; Dr Euan Thomson (Consultant)—Kyrgyzstan and Tadjikistan; and Dr. Luis Iniguez and Dr Mekhlis Suleimenov (ICARDA)—Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia.

A Consultation Meeting for developing the project proposal was organized in Tashkent from 31 May to 02 June. It was organized by ILRI in cooperation with ICARDA and the Uzbek Scientific Production Center of Agriculture (USPCA). The PFU provided logistic support for the meeting. The meeting was attended by livestock scientists from Central Asia and the Caucasus, and scientists from ILRI, ICARDA and ICIMOD. The participants discussed relevant issues for livestock development, and developed a draft of a project proposal on livestock development in CAC.

Stakeholders/Steering Committee Meeting of a New IFAD-funded Project on Integrated Livestock/Feed Development for Central Asia

A new project on "Integrated feed and livestock production in the steppes of Central Asia" has been approved for funding by IFAD. Therefore, a meeting of the Stakeholders/Steering Committee was held in Aleppo, 6-8 June. The Meeting was attended by the Heads of the NARS at Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan and their national Coordinators for livestock research, representatives of GL-CRSP, IFAD, ILRI, IFPRI, and ICARDA. The meeting took decisions on the formation and functions of the Steering Committee, and decided on an agenda to initiate the implementation of the project. The National Technical Planning and Coordination Meetings (NTPCM) will be organized in four countries to define research sites, assess the research needs, identify important areas of training and regional activities, and prepare a tentative budget. These will be followed by a Regional Technical Planning and Coordination Meeting (RTPCM) and the Steering Committee Meeting. It was also agreed to study the present production situation, achievements, and constraints as well as research needs of each country in six important areas relating to animal production prior to the NTPCM.

Training Courses/Travelling Workshops

A series of training courses/travelling workshops were organized for Central Asia and the Caucasus either in the region or at CG Centers. The PFU actively facilitated organization of these activities. A brief description is given below:

- A training course on "Breeding for Stress Tolerance", 5-15 April, Aleppo (Syria). Nine participants from CAC countries participated in the course, three in food legumes (Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan); two in forages (Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan) and four in barley (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Georgia). One barley scientist from Krasnodar (Russia) also participated in the course.

(Center: ICARDA)
Training Courses/Travelling Workshops

- A Barley Travelling Workshop was organized by ICARDA from 15-26 May in Aleppo (Syria), Ankara (Turkey), and Krasnodar (Russia). The objective was to introduce the participants to winter/facultative barley improvement programs of ICARDA, Aleppo, and the national programs of Turkey and Krasnodar. Four barley breeders from CAC countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan) participated in the workshop along with barley breeders from Turkey, Russia, and ICARDA. The scientists compared the breeding methods and did joint selection of promising germplasm lines.

(Center: ICARDA)

- A Winter/Facultative Wheat Travelling Workshop was organized in Turkey by the Turkey/CIMMYT/ICARDA International Winter Wheat Improvement Program (IWWIP), 13-19 June, 1999. The workshop was attended by 30 wheat scientists from Central Asia and the Caucasus, Iran, Morocco, Pakistan, Turkey, CIMMYT, and ICARDA. The participants visited wheat research plots of the IWWIP at Chumra (near Konya), and of the Turkish national program at Ankara, Eskisehir and Konya and selected lines for their national programs. The workshop ended with a discussion session in which issues relating to the wheat improvement in CAC were discussed.

(Centers :CIMMYT, ICARDA)

Study Visits to CG Centers

Mr Bitore Dzumakhanov, cereal germplasm scientist from the Uzbek Research Institute of Plant Industry, went on a 3-month study visit program to Genetic Resources Unit of ICARDA. He will also spend some time with ICARDA barley program, looking at the utilization of barley landraces and Hordeum spontaneum in barley improvement.

(Center: ICARDA)

Three food legume scientists from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan visited Germplasm Program of ICARDA on a study visit program on food legumes, 8-15 May 1999. They worked with their counterpart scientists at ICARDA in the evaluation of breeding material of lentil and chickpea and studying methods for screening for resistance to various biotic and abiotic stresses.

(Center: ICARDA)

CG Center Visitors/Collaborators to the CAC Region

The following scientists from the CG Centers visited the CAC countries in connection with the Program activities during April-June 1999:

5-9 April: Dr G. Ayad, IPGRI/CWANA; Dr J. Valkoun and Dr J. Konopka, ICARDA, Aleppo; Dr S. Harrer, ZADUGR (Germany); Dr M. Hulden, Nordic Genebank (Sweden); and Dr A. Omelnchenko and Dr S. Alesksanian. Vavilov Research Institute of Plant Industry (Russia) visited Uzbekistan to participate in PGRCATN Meeting and the PGR Workshop in Tashkent.

16-22 April: Dr S. Prathapar, IWM-Pakistan, and Mr T. Bandaragora, IWM-Colombo visited Uzbekistan.

22-30 April: Dr M. Saleem of ILRI, Addis Ababa visited Uzbekistan to study the livestock situation in the country.

22-30 April: Dr M. Saleem of ILRI, Addis Ababa visited Uzbekistan to study the livestock situation in the country.

25-29 April: Dr V. Shevtsov, ICARDA, Aleppo, visited Uzbekistan to evaluate barley international nurseries/yield trials with national scientists.

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26-30 April: Drs G. Gintzburger & L. Imiguez, ICARDA-Aleppo to follow up on the rangelands/livestock activities in Uzbekistan (26-29 April) and Kazakhstan (29-30 April).

6-10 May: Dr Colin Wellings, Wheat Pathologist from Cobbity, Sydney (Australia), and Dr Alexei Morgounov, CIMMYT Winter Wheat Breeder, to visit wheat research stations in Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

15-21 May: Drs Fawzy Karajeh, Theib Oweis, Chris Studer, on-farm water specialists, and Dr. Eddy de-Pauw, Agroclimatologist from ICARDA, visited Uzbekistan. In addition, Dr Karajeh visited Kazakhstan, 10-15 May, to see collaborative project sites near Almaty and Taraz.

17-22 May: Dr S. Prathapar, IWMI's Director in Pakistan, and Dr W. Bastiaansen, IWMI's Consultant from Netherlands, visited Uzbekistan for discussions with NARS to participate in the on-farm soil and water workshop, and to organize a meeting to discuss issues relating to river basin water use.

24-31 May: Dr Amor Yahyaoui, Senior Cereal Pathologist, and Dr Mustafou Bouhssini, Senior Entomologist from ICARDA, visited wheat research stations in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

28-31 May: Drs Emilio Laca, Range Specialist from US-Davis and Consultant to ILRI for developing a livestock project for the CGIAR Program, Dr Mohammed Saleem, ILRI's Head of Highlands Program, and Mr. Pradeep Tulachan from ICIMOD to attend the Livestock Consultation Meeting, Tashkent, 31 May-02 June.

31 May-2 June: Dr Emilio Laca, University of California, Davis, USA, and Consultant to ILRI, Dr. Mohamed Saleem, ILRI; Dr Euan Thomson, Independent Consultant from UK to ILRI; Dr. Pradeep Tulachand, ICIMOD, to attend the Livestock Consultation Meeting in Tashkent.

14-18 June: Dr A. Sarker, Lentil Breeder, ICARDA to visit lentil trials and nurseries and discuss further program of work in Uzbekistan.

26-29 June: Dr S. Babu, Head of Training, IFPRI to discuss and finalize arrangements for the policy workshop to be held in Tashkent, 19-21 July.

27-30 June: Dr N.P. Saxena, Sr. Chickpea Breeder, ICRISAT, to see chickpea trials and to discuss possibilities for collaboration on groundnut in Uzbekistan and in the region.

27 June-7 July: Dr. Rajinder Malhotra, Chickpea Breeder, and Dr. Ali Abd El-Moneim, Feed Legume Breeder, ICARDA, to visit trials and nurseries and discuss further program of work in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.

Other Meetings

Workshop on "Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Policy Research Setting the Priorities", Tashkent, 19-21 July 1999

By IFPRI

By IPGRI

Donor Relations

Ms Berty H. Kos, Agricultural Attaché for the CAC Republics at the Netherlands Embassy in Moscow visited the PFU on 27 April on an invitation from the Head of PFU, Dr Beniwal, who briefed her about the CGIAR Collaborative Research Program. He drew her attention to the importance of mountainous agriculture in the region and requested her to consider supporting a project proposal on the "Mountainous Initiative for Central Asia and the Caucasus". Background information on this project was given to Ms. Kos.

Note from the Editors

This is the first issue of the Quarterly Newsletter for the CGIAR Program for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus (CAC). The Newsletter has been named "CAC News." It contains information on different activities of the Program carried out by the nine participating CGIAR Centers in collaboration with the eight NARS of the CAC, April-June 1999.

The Editorial Committee consists of Dr. S.P.S. Beniwal, Chief Editor; Dr. Zakir Khalikalov Editor, and Ms Elena Solodennikova, Technical Editor. Other members may be co-opted in the near future based on needs. Dr Surendra Verma, Head of Communication, Documentation and Information Services, ICARDA, provided technical assistance in producing this newsletter.

The Editorial Committee is grateful to Prof. Dr Adel El-Bethag, Director General, and Dr Mahmoud Solh, ADG (International Cooperation) of ICARDA for their interest and encouragement in this activity.