OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

August 17, 2015

Frank Rijsberman, PhD
CEO
CGIAR Consortium
1000 Avenue Agropolis,
34394, Montpellier Cedex 5 France
Email: crp-proposals@cgiar.org

Dear Frank,

Pre-Proposal for CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas (RTB)
Phase 2

On behalf of CIP and all our partners for the second phase of the CGIAR Research Program on Roots, Tubers and Bananas, I am pleased to submit the RTB pre-proposal for consideration of the Consortium, ISPC and Fund Council.

As one of the eight Agri-Food System CRPs, RTB brings together four CGIAR centers (Bioversity, CIAT, CIP and IITA) and CIRAD (representing the French organizations IRD, INRA, and Vitropic) along with more than 200 partners for research on banana, cassava, potato, sweetpotato, yam and minor roots and tubers. Termed “vegetatively propagated staple crops”, they are linked by common breeding, seed and postharvest issues, and the frequency by which women are involved in their production and use. In this second phase pre-proposal, livelihood systems work, especially drawing on the CRP Integrated Systems for Humid tropics along with expanded collaborations with Global Integrated CRPs and the other AFS-CRPs have been incorporated. As such, RTB forms a unique and integral role in the new CRP portfolio.

Around 300 million poor people in developing countries depend on RTB value chains for food security and income and many more benefit through their consumption. Innovations in RTB crops have tremendous impact on poverty reduction by increasing farmers’ income through linkages to markets and adding value, enhancing non-agricultural rural employment especially through processing (often predominantly a woman’s activity), creating opportunities for youth employment and lowering food costs to consumers. RTB crops provide one of the cheapest sources of dietary energy. It is estimated that RTB crops provide around 15% of the daily per capita calorie intake for the 763 million people living in the least develop countries.
RTB addresses societal grand challenges of the 21st century, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. The pre-proposal advances all three system-level outcomes in the CGIAR’s Strategy and Results Framework and nine of the 10 Intermediate Development Outcomes (IDO) and nearly two thirds of the sub IDO. The 26 target countries where RTB crops are of greatest importance include 17 of the 20 prioritized for CGIAR site integration and all 6 of those fast-tracked for more intensive integration.

On behalf of all of our partners, we look forward to receiving comments on the RTB Phase 2 pre-proposal in due course. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Barbara H. Wells
Director General