

# Crop Post-Harvest Programme

## Regional Strategy for West Africa

2002 – 2005



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>PURPOSE OF REGIONAL STRATEGY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>STRATEGIC SHIFTS IN CPHP</b>	<b>3</b>
	3.1 Regional strategies replace production systems	4
	3.2 Background and rationale for shift to coalition approach	4
	3.3 Growing importance of partnerships	5
	3.4 CPHP review and its findings	5
	3.5 Coalition approach to research and technology promotion	6
	3.6 Implications of adopting the coalition approach	7
<b>4.</b>	<b>STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR CPHP IN WEST AFRICA</b>	<b>10</b>
	4.1 Maximising the value of current research investment	10
	4.2 Maximising the value of past research investment	11
<b>5.</b>	<b>REGIONAL LOGFRAME</b>	<b>13</b>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Crop Post-Harvest Programme (CPHP) is one of ten natural resources research programmes funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under the Renewable Natural Resources Research Strategy (RNRRS) and one of 5 research Programmes managed on behalf of DFID by Natural Resources International Ltd. The RNRRS has a 10-year (1995 to 2005) mandate to produce and disseminate generic science with global relevance.

CPHP focuses on generating research which contributes to improving food security in West, East and Southern Africa and South Asia by resolving constraints and developing opportunities within the post-harvest sector. Now in its seventh year, it plans to focus its activities during the remaining 3 years (2002-2005) on:

- Maximising the value of current research investment (described in section 4.1);
- Maximising the value of past research investment using the coalition approach (described in section 4.2).

## **2. PURPOSE OF THE REGIONAL STRATEGY**

The Regional Strategy will:

- guide CPHP-funded activities in West Africa over the course of the next three years (i.e. 1 April 2002 – 31 March 2005);
- interpret the new central CPHP strategy (for 2002-2005) as set out in the 2002 annual report to DFID in the context of West Africa, making strategic choices and setting boundaries; and,
- communicate these choices to others.

## **3. STRATEGIC SHIFTS IN CPHP**

### **3.1 Regional strategies replace production systems**

Until now, priority-setting has been based on CPHP Country Framework Documents, first produced in 1995 and updated in 2000. These were drawn up in line with national agricultural research and development policy and the results of needs assessments carried out by the Programme.

In line with the DFID RNRRS thinking of the time, Country Framework Documents discussed post-harvest research priorities in terms of production systems and commodities. In fact, the key organising principle for the Programme as a whole was production systems; for example, it was against production systems that progress was reported to DFID. As a result of this structure, the early strategy of the Programme tended to focus on ensuring that a balanced portfolio of strategic and adaptive research projects was commissioned in each production system.

In fact, there are potential weaknesses in using production systems as an organising principle for commissioning poverty-focused projects and monitoring their impact. These include:

- the production systems do not fit any clear geographical unit that would allow poverty reduction to be monitored with national statistics;
- production systems are not necessarily geographically exclusive from each other; and,

- policy research does not fit in the framework of production systems, but rather a regional framework.

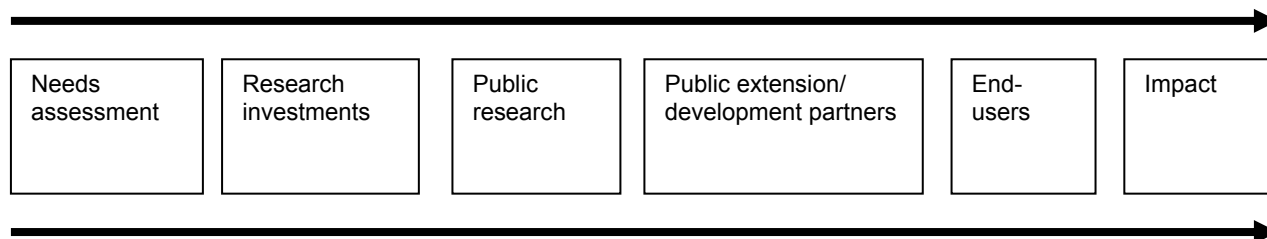
Recognising this, the Programme has decided to move away from the Country Framework Document as the key priority setting resource. In its place, Regional Strategies have been developed as a planning and management tool. While a central vision and project commissioning mechanism will remain UK-based, the regional strategies will shape this to a greater degree than was possible previously.

### **3.2 Background and rationale for shift to the 'Coalition Approach'**

Much of agricultural research and development is based on a linear model in which the researcher generates new knowledge/technology and transfers it to intermediaries or "target institutions" (i.e. extension and/or other development actors such as NGOs, CBOs etc.). They, in turn, transfer it to the end-users or "target beneficiaries" (e.g. farmers - see Figure 1), usually involving a period of validation or adaptation. The linear model assumes that new knowledge would automatically find "target institutions" that would transfer it to "target beneficiaries".

Typically, natural resources research is directed at technical problems. This normally results in one of three types of project outcome. In the first, the research project develops a new and possibly useful technology that unfortunately may fail to find widespread diffusion and adoption. In the second, the research project reveals the need for another research project as it has identified more technical constraints that need to be resolved. Frequently, these project outcomes lead to new projects being commissioned, and eventually to the first type of outcome (above).

In the third type, the research project leads to some significant change for the better in the livelihoods of the poor. This is usually attributed to the resolution of the underlying technical constraint. However, more often than not, this is not the key source of success. It is usually a peculiar set of institutional, political and social circumstances which lead to the correct identification of an opportunity, development of the correct solution, and an environment which enables the operationalisation of that knowledge such that it has the desired impact on the problem.

**Figure 1** Diagrammatic representation of the linear model of research and development

Until now, CPHP's activities have been largely directed at addressing technical constraints experienced by rural, and more recently urban poor. Since its inception in 1995, some 45 research and promotion projects have been commissioned to date in West Africa, mainly in Ghana but also in Nigeria and Benin. Since the RNRRS management requirements are underpinned by the linear model<sup>1</sup> it is not surprising that the majority of projects funded by CPHP have been designed along the same lines.

### 3.3 Growing importance of partnerships

While these projects have been generally successful in terms of its technical goals, it has been less successful in having a significant impact on the livelihoods of the poor.

Through no fault of researchers, there are many examples of technical projects that have produced outputs that 'sit on shelves', inaccessible to the range of stakeholders that might in better circumstances have been able to make productive use of them.

In response to this, the Programme, through its projects, has begun to engage in a broader set of partnerships. These included the private sector (a key stakeholder on the post-production sector) as well as NGOs, farmers associations etc. It became clear that partnerships were potentially important as a way of bringing broader agendas in the research process. In part this related to bringing in partners that could help sharpen the client focus of the research – particularly those who could represent the agendas of the poor. It also assisted in the promotion of research findings, not just by making research findings more appropriate, but also by involving organisations that had the agenda, resources, or skills to ensure the promotion of research outputs. For example, these might be the manufactures of a technology developed, or it might be an organisation that will be creating demand for a new product.

### 3.4 CPHP review and its findings

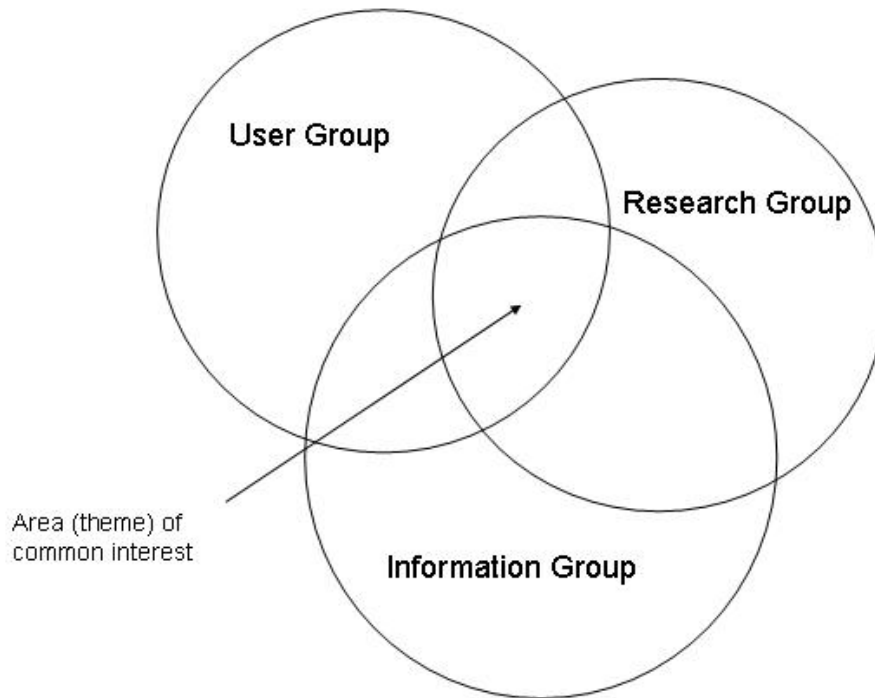
Recognising that partnerships were increasingly important and the need to strengthen this aspect of its approach, the CPHP commissioned a review in August 2001 of partnership arrangements in its commissioned work and the implications of this for the Programme's research management approach. This review made a number of recommendations (Biggs and Underwood, 2001). Two key are summarized:

- Firstly, it was recommended that CPHP should concentrate on establishing thematic projects that should be implemented by coalitions of in-country partners;

<sup>1</sup> Examples are: (1) the A-H pathway for monitoring progress towards impact of science on poverty, (2) the artificial division of the generation and promotion of science into two separate outputs, (3) the absence of social development or institutional outputs or resourcing, (4) the artificial division of science and development by separating the RNRRS from the bilateral development programmes.

- Secondly, emphasis be given to the nature of partnerships involved and the overall project management framework. This was suggested as a way of making agendas of different stakeholders apparent; as a way of managing these agendas; and as a way of ensuring that a poverty reduction agenda does not become lost to other competing agendas.

Figure 2 Diagrammatic representation of the coalition approach to research and development



### 3.5 Coalitions approach to research and technology promotion

The recommendations of the review have been adopted and are being implemented in all of the CPHP's regional programmes starting from April 2002. We have called this the **coalitions approach** to research and technology promotion. This has become the global approach of the CPHP's strategy for 2002-2005, which we have called '**Partnerships for Innovation**'. This coalitions approach has four key elements.

**In-country location.** The coalitions approach is focused on facilitating the establishment and development of in-country partnership groupings – the coalition. There are many good reasons for this emphasis on locally rooted coalitions. Partners bring with them formal and informal networks that can help support a coalition and promote its objectives and outputs. Equally important is that partners bring with them knowledge of research, client and promotion contexts in a particular country setting. By rooting coalitions locally, they can plan and operate in ways that recognise local norms and cultures and respond to emerging opportunities.

**Partnership diversity.** The second element of the coalitions approach is that it seeks to draw in the resources, skills and agendas of wide set of both research and non-research partners from both the public and other sectors – private enterprises, NGO's farmers and consumer associations etc. This is important in helping bring different perspectives into the research process. But it is also important because projects are increasingly finding that to ensure the application and impact of their work it is necessary to blur the distinction between research and development. So while some partners need to be engaged in research activities, other partners will need to be involved with technology promotion, policy advocacy, information dissemination, training etc. The coalition approach seeks to exploit the opportunities for impact that partnership diversity can bring.

**Focus on the nature of partnerships.** The third element of the coalitions approach is its explicit focus on the nature of partnerships in projects. We have seen that in the past not all project partnerships have been successful. The successful partnerships have often occurred because the individual or the organisations involved have been able to establish implicit (and sometimes explicit) ground rules that make these partnerships work. In the coalitions approach we are no longer going to leave to chance the development of these partnering processes that can make or break projects. We are making it mandatory that projects choose their partners carefully and jointly develop management arrangements so that all voices around the table are heard; dominant agendas can be contained; and priorities and progress can be set and monitored by consensus. There will still be a need for a managing partner (i.e. Project leader), but this partner will now be selected by coalition partners and will be accountable to the coalition as a whole.

We recognise that to develop these partnering skills and management frameworks will not be easy and the CPHP is going to devote considerable resources to this task as part of project development and support. There has been a considerable amount of work done around the world on identifying what makes a good partnership (and the Programme has researched this as part of our work – see Almond, 2002): For example, the formulation of joint objectives; the development of mutual trust; the sharing of information and networks; the creation of transparency; the joint evaluation of partnership success; the sharing and joint ownership of project outcomes; developing joint capacities and building on past achievements. These are broad principles. The specific details on how partnerships are managed and sustained will always have to be worked out on a case-by-case basis.

**Coalition capacity development.** The fourth element of the coalitions approach is that by focusing on developing in-country coalitions, the Programme is supporting long-term capacity building. By capacity building we do not refer only to building up stocks of research infrastructure and the development of trained skills in different organisation. We refer also to the capacity that coalition as a whole represents. It is anticipated that the coalition will act as a platform for the development of an evolving programme of research and technology promotion. This capacity will persist after the completion of CPHP projects in March 2005. The coalition will be a contribution to the national capacity to generate innovations that support poverty reduction. The CPHP now views these types of capacity building achievements as an output of equal importance to the conventional technology outputs that the Programme has been associated with in the past (and this is reflected in the logframe indicators – see section 5).

### **3.6 Implications of adopting the coalitions approach**

**Decentralisation.** The adoption of the coalitions approach clearly marks a significant departure from past practice. It has implications for the management of the Programme and particularly for the way that projects are developed and implemented. At the heart of the change has been a shift towards developing and sustaining in-country led initiatives. To manage and support this

new in-country focus has required considerable decentralisation of the Programme. Since its inception in 1995, CPHP has chosen to focus its activities in a limited number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. To establish a presence in those regions, the Programme has in-country based Regional Coordinators with offices in Ghana, Zimbabwe, India and, most recently, in Uganda. Their role has been to add value to CPHP-funded projects (e.g. by facilitating science partnerships, access to literature and links between projects in the region and providing support on proposal-writing). From April 2002, the role of these coordinators has had to change, with much greater decision making responsibility being shifted from the CPHP UK management team to the regional offices. The Regional Coordinators now take direct policy and implementation responsibility for developing regional strategies, establishing theme based coalition projects and supporting them over the next three years. Regional Coordinators have a new role as “marriage brokers” and “marriage counsellors” (to facilitate and support the creation of coalitions) with no involvement in actual project implementation and management.

**Development of projects.** The adoption of the coalitions approach has implications on the way projects are developed, and how/who manages them. In the past, projects have been developed in response to a “call” for proposal issued in the UK and sent to UK and in-country partners. UK partners, familiar with proposal development procedures, have tended to emerge as the project leaders. This has inevitably often led to a degree of inequality in the consequent partnerships. In the coalitions approach, proposals will be developed through a series of discussions and workshops that will focus on prioritised research and technology promotion thematic areas. In other words, the proposal development process will be more consultative, will be more strongly facilitated by the office of the Regional Coordinator and will focus more explicitly on capacity development of in-country partners (see section 4.2). This capacity development will be both in term of skills to develop project proposals, but perhaps more critically development of partnering skills and coalition management/ participation skills.

An implication of developing projects in this way is that there will be a shift away from projects managed by UK partners, with new coalition projects being managed by in-country partners. The role of the UK partners will also shift from that of developing project ideas and implementing them through in-country partners, to a more demand driven role. In other words, the need for UK partners and their role in coalitions will be determined by the nature of the in-country coalition, the thematic area it is addressing and the skills and resources that are required to allow the coalition to achieve its stated aims.

In the past, the majority of project budgets have been put together by UK based project leaders with little consultation of in-country partners. In some cases, this created a lot of suspicion, ill-feeling and mistrust between the in-country partners and the project leaders. This led (in some cases) to difficulties in the relationship between the partners which directly or indirectly affected the research process. In the coalitions approach, it is mandatory that the roles, responsibilities as well as the budget should be negotiated in an open and transparent manner by all the coalition partners. Furthermore, budgets allocated to a particular partner at the onset of the research process can be re-allocated to another partner or new partner (by the coalition partners in consultation with the Regional Coordinator). The circumstance through which this might arise in the research process may in case where a partner is dropped from the coalition because, for instance, it has become apparent that that partner cannot play the role and contribute to the coalition in the way that it was initially anticipated.

The adoption of the coalitions approach has an implication on the project reporting process. In the past, most project reports (i.e. quarterly, annual, Final Technical reports) were mostly written by UK project leaders (with or without inputs from in-country partners). These reports were often sent directly to the Programme management in the UK without copying to the Regional Coordinator. In the coalitions approach, project reports would be a joint output of all the coalition



partners and the regional offices would be the hub for the receipt of these reports. In addition, coalition partners would hold regular quarterly meetings (Regional Coordinators will attend these meetings) to evaluate/ascertain the progress of the research process as well as the roles and responsibilities of the partners.

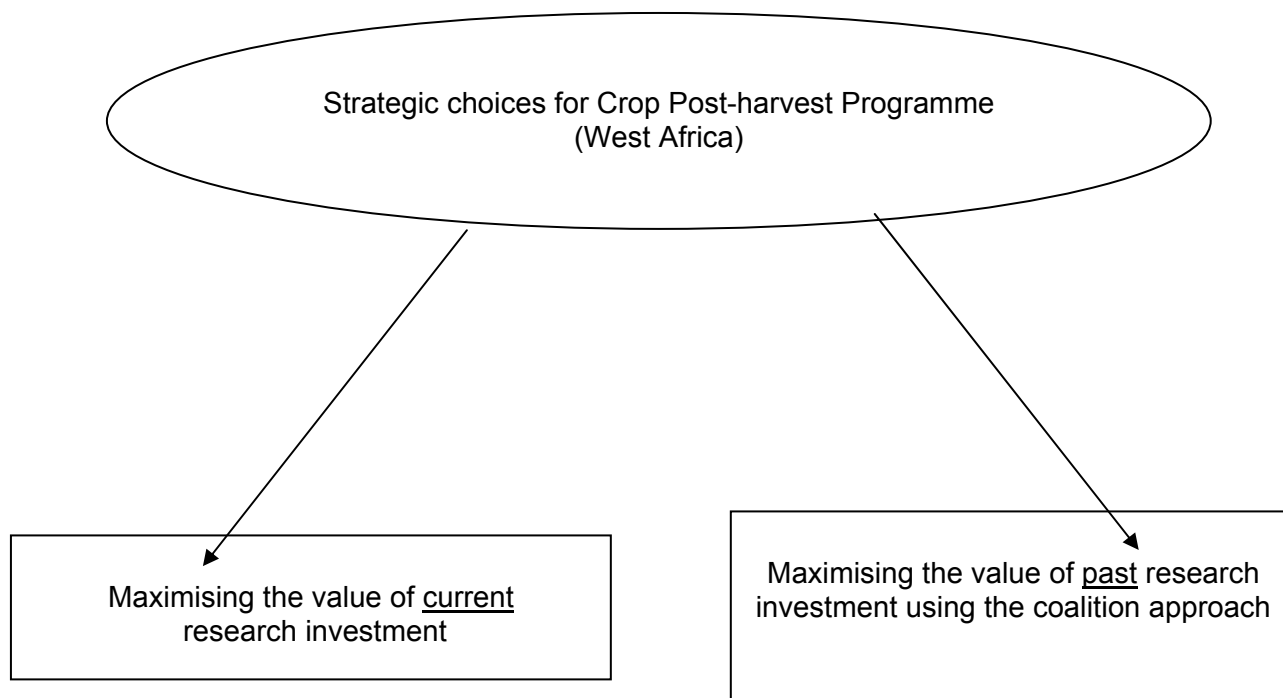
**Project approval process.** The project approval process in the past has been through the screening of projects by a UK based Programme Advisory Committee (PAC). This procedure will remain as it is a DFID stipulation to ensure Programme transparency. However, the regional offices will establish their own Regional Advisory Committee (RACs) to ensure relevance, accountability to national/regional priorities and opportunities, in transparent fashion. Members of the RAC will be recognised authorities in technical fields of specialisation of relevance to the post-harvest sector in the region. They will act in their independent professional capacity to advise the Regional Coordinators on the screening and development of coalition projects. They will review pre-concept notes, concept notes and project memorandum before they are submitted by the Regional Coordinator to the PAC. Clearly, with the coalitions approach to developing projects in prioritised thematic areas, the role of the RAC and the PAC will be twofold: one of a technical advisory role to assist in the development of robust project proposal, and of a strategic nature to ensure CPHP projects are relevant in global and regional contexts. The role of these advisory committees remains important as a way of ensuring that themes and projects are identified and promoted in a transparent and competitive fashion.

**Nature of the research process.** The final implication of the adoption of the coalitions approach concerns the nature of the research process itself. In the past, the way the project cycle has operated, the objective of projects and the partners involved in the project were determined before the beginning of the project and remained fixed throughout the project life. Evaluation and changes in direction only taking place at the end of the project cycle. In the coalitions approach, because project implementation and management is much more consensual, there is scope for both the priorities and objectives of the project to change as well as for the partners to change.

For example, different partners may be needed to address different objectives, partners may need to play different roles as the project progresses, or it may become apparent that partners cannot play the role and contribute to the coalition in the way that it was initially anticipated. New partners can be invited to join the coalition during the research process. To accommodate this potentially evolving agenda, the coalition projects are adopting an **action research framework**. This means that much more emphasis is placed on regularly reflecting on progress of the project and the performance of partnerships involved. These activities become the focus of project monitoring, with monitoring evolving from an accountability task alone, to include a learning (by the coalition) task to support project management. This also provides the opportunity to respond to new opportunities that are encountered as well as to drop dead-ends. The CPHP recognises that administratively an action research project can be difficult to manage, not least because there is a need to set some limits to the scope and cost of work to be undertaken. The CPHP believes that it can establish flexible approaches that will allow this action research framework to be exploited for the benefit of the coalitions approach.

#### 4. STRATEGIC CHOICES FOR CPHP IN WEST AFRICA

This section details how the strategic choices will guide the activities of the CPHP in West Africa (see section 5 - Regional LogFrame) and will be implemented. The figure below gives a diagrammatic representation of the two strategic choices for CPHP in West Africa.



##### 4.1 Maximising the value of current research investment

Current projects (a total of 8 which all end by March 2003) may not have paid as much attention to uptake, promotion and dissemination issues at the design stage (and therefore in the budget) as on technological innovation, and the team may not include specific expertise in this area. It is therefore appropriate for CPHP to engage with project leaders and teams to help them develop an appropriate focus on uptake. There are, of course, costs which will not be insignificant. Project budgets are tight and it will be difficult to divert resources which are already committed (often in binding contractual terms) to specific inputs and activities, to new activities designed to enhance uptake. CPHP expectations and requirements of existing projects should therefore be realistic and sensitive to these constraints. Management should be willing to entertain requests for supplementary funding where justified.

Since contracts for the current projects have already been signed (hence not much can be done), the following are specific ways to enhance or maximise the value of current research investments.

**Clarity of users or clients of research outputs.** In the case of current or on-going projects, project leaders will be encouraged to **show clarity of users or clients of research outputs** and the leaders will be encouraged to **get the clients involved in the research process** (if that has not been done) rather than only undertaking the research. Right at the very end of the project the clients of the research outputs will be brought in or given the research output (even if this still reflects the old style linear model).

**Mid-term workshops.** Project leaders will be encouraged to organise a workshop for research partners and stakeholders with the objective of identifying opportunities for the promotion and dissemination of project outputs (funds for these workshop should be funded within projects' existing activities and budgets for workshops).

At these workshop project teams, in consultation with research users (as identified above) will be encouraged to identify the most effective dissemination pathways for the clients of research outputs (if that has not been done).

**Final stages of existing projects.** During the last six months of existing project, project leaders would be encouraged to:

- focus on communication, promotion and dissemination;
- produce effective or suitable dissemination/promotional materials of research outputs (for the research clients identified above).

#### **4.2 Maximising the value of past research investment using the coalition approach**

To maximise the value of past research investments, the following will be undertaken.

**Preparation of dissemination materials.** Based on the following, dissemination materials will be prepared for dissemination:

- identify which of the completed projects has outputs with potential for impact or require further validation and/or promotion.;
- identify which projects or groups of project outputs can be packaged and disseminated together (e.g. Cassava projects in Ghana, LGB, plant materials and inert dust project);
- identify clearly the clients of the research outputs;
- identify the most effective dissemination pathways (e.g. Website, workshops, Media etc) and produce dissemination materials.

**Operationalisation of coalitions approach.** Since 1995 to date, the CPHP has funded 45 projects in West Africa. CPHP(WA) has decided to maximise the value of past investment in research using the coalitions approach. Based on our past portfolio, the following **7 thematic areas** were identified for priority setting workshop:

- Expanded markets for cassava (10 projects);
- Minimising the use of synthetic insecticides (12 projects);
- Improving processing and exploring opportunities for value addition (Rice & bambara) (4 projects);
- Access to market opportunities (9 projects);
- Value addition in vegetable farming and marketing systems (5 projects);
- Food Safety (1 project);
- Quality management for export (Yam) (2 and 8 projects have been commissioned by CPHP and CPP respectively).

From the 7 thematic areas, the following 3 final priority thematic areas were selected at a stakeholders priority setting workshop held in March 2002 (see [cphp-wa.org](http://cphp-wa.org)):

- Improving processing and exploring opportunities for value addition
- Expanded markets for cassava
- Minimising the use of synthetic insecticides.

The final three priority thematic areas will be the basis for a series of thematic workshops to explore priority areas in details, identify an appropriate partnership group for coalition, explore the process of identifying overlapping interests and develop pre-concept note. Stakeholders who have been involved in past CPHP work, and those who may have an interest in promoting past technologies will be invited to the thematic workshops. At the outset, no partner is excluded from this process. The main means by which CPHP(WA) will communicate the developments within each coalition will be via the website – [www.cphp-wa.org](http://www.cphp-wa.org).

A regional Advisory Committee will be set up to advise on pre-concept notes and concept notes before they are submitted to the PAC. Deadlines for submission to CPHP(WA) will be 10 June ([nrintl@tnsgh.org](mailto:nrintl@tnsgh.org)).

Concept notes supported by the PAC will receive project development assistance to develop project memorandum (PM) to be submitted to the RAC for review and advice before submission by the Regional Coordinator to the PAC meeting scheduled for the 4 and 5 December 2002. The Regional Coordinator now manages programme development funds for West Africa and will identify support requirements for coalitions. Consultants from both the UK and the Region can be commissioned to assist with skills based workshop or advice to proposal development, as required. By January 2003, we expect to commission the first of our final round of projects, intended primarily to take forward the outputs of past investment. Subject to the availability of funds, it may be possible to develop further proposals by coalitions after this date.

The Regional Programme plans to extend activities into Nigeria during 2002-2005 within the constraints of available resources. We will concentrate our efforts on identifying potential clients of existing outputs and disseminating them in appropriate formats.

After 2002, the Regional Coordinator will play an advisory role to our West Africa projects, and will also identify programme level activities to enhance the potential impact of our work. An important aspect of this will be to identify collaboration with other national, regional and international programmes in order to maximise the sustainability of DFID's investment in CPHP.

## 5. REGIONAL LOGFRAME

SUPER GOAL	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS
Poverty eliminated in poorer countries through sustainable development			
<b>GOAL</b>			
Livelihoods of poor people improved through sustainably enhanced production and productivity of RNR systems.			
<b>PURPOSE</b>			
National and regional crop-post harvest innovation systems respond more effectively to the needs of the poor.	By 2005, an evolving range of different institutional arrangements that improve access to post-harvest knowledge and/or stimulate post-harvest innovation to benefit the poor have emerged in West Africa.	Project evaluation reports.  Regional Coordinator's Reports.  CPHP Annual Reports.  CPHP Review 2005.  Partners' reports.	National and regional crop-post harvest innovation systems have the capacity to develop and promote innovations to poor people during and after programme completion.  Livelihood analysis provides accurate identification of researchable opportunities that lead to poverty reduction.
<b>OUTPUTS</b>			
1. Strategies are developed, which improve food and livelihood security of poor households through increased availability and improved quality of food crops and better access to markets.  2. Strategies to improve security of poor households are effectively promoted.	1.1. By end 2002/2003, nationally located coalitions are established (including management structures, priority areas, monitoring procedures and workplans) in three focus research and promotion thematic areas.  1.2. By end 2003/2004, coalitions have implemented research and/or promotion workplans.  1.3. Through 2002/2003 – 2004/2005 institutional assumptions, priorities, and coalition composition is reviewed and research and/or promotion workplans are informed by this.  1.4. By end of 2005, for each coalition at least one technical and associated institutional innovation that sustainably improves food security and/or the livelihood of poor people is developed, adapted and/or promoted.  2.1. By end of 2005, for the West Africa region research has identified and promoted strategies and policies in which post-harvest interventions can be developed and applied by national/ regional post-harvest innovation systems that interface with the poor.	Annual Research programme reports.  External refereeing.  External Output-to-Purpose reviews.  Partners' reports.	Enabling environment exists or can be created that allows coalition partners to develop, adapt and or promote innovations relevant to the poor.  Coalitions partners develop skills and institutional/organizational characteristics that lead to the development, adaptation and or promotion of innovations after programme implementation
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>			
2002/2003. CPHP West Africa organizes priority setting, thematic/coalition building workshops and partnership skill development workshops conducted in the following identified research and technology promotion thematic areas: 1. Improving processing and exploring opportunities for value addition 2. Expanded markets for cassava 3. Minimising the use of synthetic pesticides.  Promotion of research outputs.  2002/2003 Activities identified by the coalitions commissioned by the West Africa programme.  2003/2004 – 2004/2005 Programme supports and facilitates on-going coalition development and promotion of cross coalition learning.  2002/2003 – 2004/2005 Programme identifies and synthesise key institutional lessons and promotes them.			