

Manual of Training Procedures

International Center for Agricultural Research In the Dry Areas

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INTRODUCTION

The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) considers that training and networking are essential for institutions and individuals to keep pace academically and professionally with the rapid developments in agricultural sciences. ICARDA recognizes that, a well-trained cadre of agricultural technicians, scientists and managers is essential to develop effective and sustainable national agricultural research systems. The Center has responded to this need for human resource development by working closely with NARSs to develop and implement training programs that address their changing needs.

ICARDA's training is an integral part of its research mandate. It forms an effective means for a two-way learning and exchange of knowledge between the Center and NARSs. The Center's approach to training is based on adult-learning methodologies that utilize the participants' past experience, and allow them to adapt learning to their own situation and circumstances. The training courses are highly participatory, and participants are encouraged to share their experience with their colleagues from other programs, thus enriching the overall content of the courses and adding to the knowledge offered by the trainers.

Training has been an integral part of ICARDA's activities since the Center's inception. The first training courses were offered during the 1977/78 cropping season with a modest number of participants. Thereafter, the number of requested courses and the number of training participants have increased steadily. Due to the fact that training demands are changing, policies directing technical and administrative procedures have also evolved to cope with these changing demands for training.

This manual has been prepared to improve the efficiency of ICARDA's training operations. It provides a reference for the organizational structure of training at ICARDA, the categories of training opportunities offered, and the procedures for organizing and administering the training activities. The manual was first released as a working document in 1987 and has since undergone several revisions. Comments and/or suggestions from ICARDA's management and staff members trainees, training instructors, NARSs, donors and others will be used to continually improve the present version. Please direct your comments and/or suggestions to the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU), ICARDA, P.O. Box 5466, Aleppo, Syria.

GOAL AND FOCUS OF TRAINING

ICARDA's training activities strive to improve the skills of National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in implementing independent and collaborative research focussed on the rapidly changing needs of their countries or sub-regions. Training assists NARS researchers in increasing their technical knowledge and skills so they can identify and overcome constraints that limit food and

feed production and farm income in their countries. It also helps them understand the process of technology transfer and the complexity of farmers' decisions in adopting or rejecting new technologies. At the same time, training assists in establishing links between and among NARS scientists and ICARDA which will continue to evolve and to be strengthened in future.

ICARDA focuses its training efforts toward relevant, practical and applicable specialized training courses which will continue to evolve with its research programs, outlined in its medium-term plan (MTP) documents. Courses on general topics and those specific to individual countries are primarily handled by the concerned NARSs themselves.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF TRAINING

The technical aspects and contents of ICARDA's training activities are the responsibility of its research programs and units. Programs and Units provide direction and support implementation of the annual program of training activities. The programs/units designate a staff member to coordinate the development, scheduling, implementation and evaluation of the training activities. Program/unit scientists and technical research staff are responsible for conducting or participating in the training activities and for providing the technical expertise.

The administrative aspects of training activities are centralized in the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU). Under the direction of the Director General or his designate, the Head, Human Resources Development is responsible for coordination of training across the Center's research programs / units and the Regional Programs as well as with agencies and organizations outside ICARDA. HRDU staff members support the Head of Human Resources Development in the administration of the Center-wide training activities. The Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU) conducts the following administrative and supports services:

1. Coordinates all training activities for Programs /Units and the Regional Programs of the Center.
2. Works with programs, units and regional programs to determine NARSs requirements for training and develop appropriate training work plans.
3. Prepares and administers the centralized annual training work plan and budget, based on the separate research program / unit training schedules.
4. Prepares and distributes an annual training activities schedule, training opportunity announcements and brochures.
5. Coordinates communications between the Center and other international agricultural research and training organizations, NARSs, and universities to insure complementarily and effectiveness of training efforts.
6. Coordinates communications between the Center and donors and foundations who contribute to training activities and assists in raising funds for training.
7. Prepares technical and annual reports on ICARDA's training activities for the donor

organizations and ICARDA.

8. Coordinates the processing of applications of candidates for training in collaboration with the research programs, units and regional programs.
9. Coordinates with the support sections of the Center to provide the required logistical support for training activities. These include housing, transportation, travel, personnel, finance, catering, supplies, and visitor's sections.
10. Purchases and distributes training supplies for courses and workshops.
11. Produces and purchases printed and audiovisual training materials.
12. Prepares reports on training to the Director General with recommendations for improvement in training and administrative support to training activities at the Center.
13. Maintains a computer database and an annual directory for training activities and participants.
14. Conducts periodical follow-up studies on ICARDA training activities.

Although activities such as the visiting scientist, post-doctoral fellow and workshops contain elements of training, administration of these activities is directly managed by the concerned research programs and units with assistance from the Visitors Services of HRDU.

The Director General determines the official policy and procedures for all training activities of the Center. A Training Coordination Committee (TCC) is responsible for advising and recommending appropriate actions for training affairs. The TCC consists of programs/units representatives, the Personnel officer and the Head of Human Resources Development who serves as the Chairperson. Members of TCC discuss and recommend appropriate action for the following:

1. Preparation of the Center-wide plan for the training activities.
2. Coordination of the training activities.
3. Proposals for new training activities based on the evolving NARSSs' demands for training.
4. Establishment and improvement of procedures to implement the planned training activities.
5. Development of links between HRDU, research programs and the Communication, documentation and Information Services (CODIS) for training material development.
6. Support for the development of guidelines for production of printed and audiovisual materials.
7. Planning and conducting follow-up studies to improve training at the Center.
8. Evaluation of trainers, training participants and training courses.
9. Assembling information on training offered by other organizations, and seeking collaboration with such organizations, where appropriate.

PLANNING AND BUDGETING

ICARDA's training activities are governed by many factors such as the Center's research agenda, the needs recognized by the countries served by the Center, the scientific and training staff available in the research programs for the delivery of training, courses offered by other institutions, and the funds available.

Planning of training is a continuous process centered in ICARDA's research programs and units, HRDU, the ICARDA's Regional Programs and NARSs. The TCC members occupy a key role in coordinating program's planning efforts which are directed by the program leaders/unit heads and supported by research scientists and technical staff.

The process for developing ICARDA's training activities is outlined in Figure 1. ICARDA research programs and units, in close cooperation with the regional programs, consult national agricultural research programs for their requirements for staff development, particularly where collaborative projects are involved. This is generally conducted and followed during the Center's planning and coordination meetings with NARSs. Whenever possible, regional integration of training activities is considered. After the NARS express their needs for training, these are evaluated and the concerned program/unit develop a course proposal that details the course's objectives, number of candidates, selection criteria, content and schedule. A list of priority countries for each course is also developed based on their needs for training. Priorities between national institutes within a country are also considered.

Non-headquarter training activities require the active collaboration of the host country institutions, particularly national agricultural research and seed organizations and universities. The involved national institutions together with the concerned Regional Program Coordinator (RPC), a representative of the concerned headquarter programs/units work closely to plan effective and efficient in-country and regional/sub-regional training activities.

Proposals for training resulting from the interactive planning among the Center's programs/units, regional programs, and national and international organizations are forwarded to HRDU which prepares a Center-wide annual training work plan and budget. This is then presented by HRDU to the concerned program/unit for review and to the Finance Section and the Director General's Office for approval.

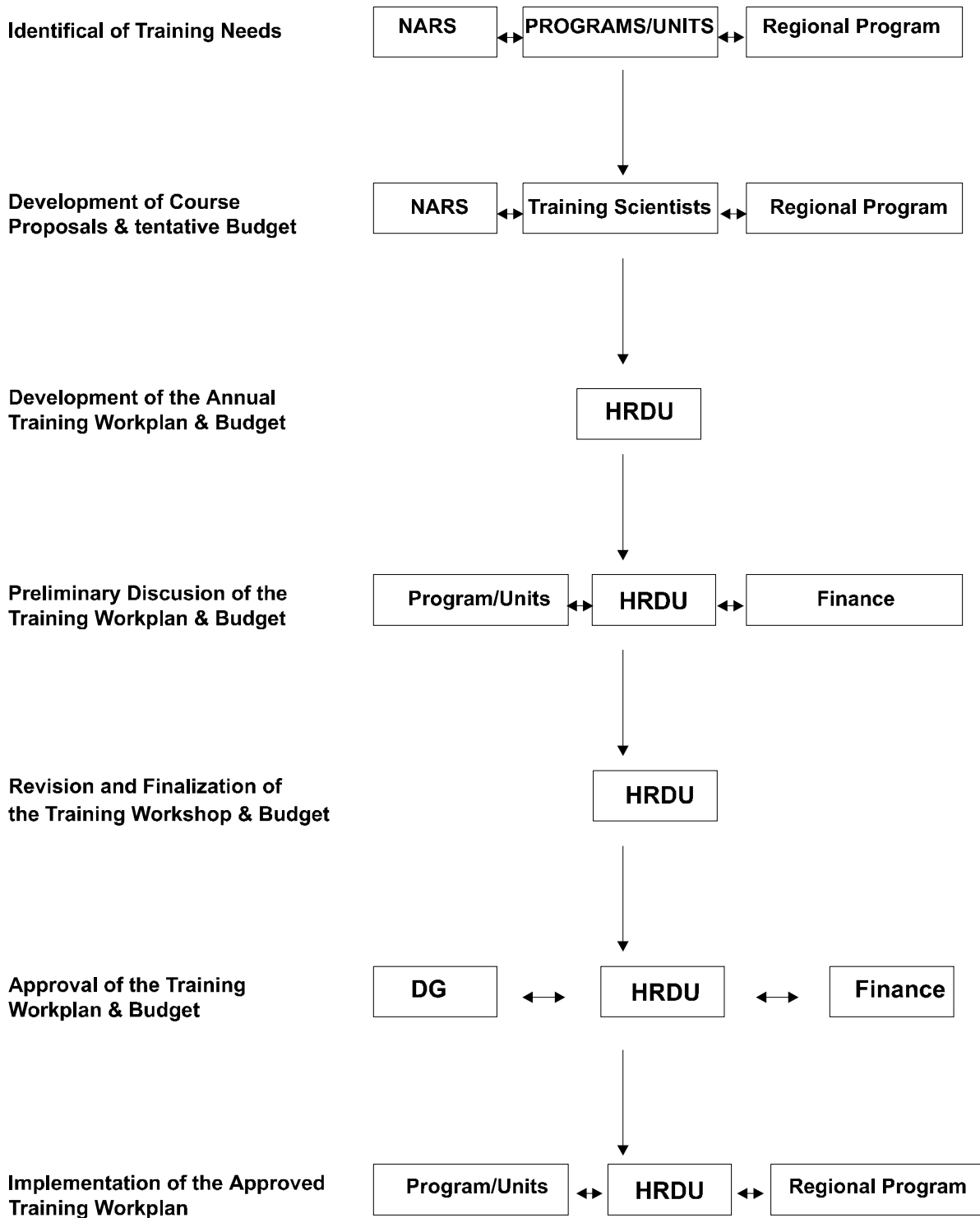
The Human Resources Development Unit is administratively responsible for all financial and administrative arrangements of training activities within the approved annual budget. The basis of budget preparation, and subsequent disbursements, follow the cost schedules established for each type of training activity which are regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with ICARDA's policy. Information on cost of training may be obtained from HRDU.

Training programs for some special funded projects are developed separately during the national and/or regional coordination meetings involving NARSs and ICARDA. Such training programs and particularly the activities involving inputs from the headquarter programs/units are coordinated with the concerned ICARDA's programs/units, regional programs and HRDU. A training budget based on ICARDA training policy and costs is proposed by the RPCs for approval by the national management committee of the special project involved and submitted to its steering committee for approval. HRDU will be kept

informed of the approved training plan of such projects.

ICARDA gives training a high priority and strives to meet NARSs' demands for training. However, these demands may surpass the financial resources available to the Center. Training requesters are therefore encouraged to secure funds from other sources to enable ICARDA to respond favorably to their demands and deliver quality training within its mandated research.

Figure 1. Development of ICARDA's Training Activities.



CATEGORIES OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES

ICARDA offers two main categories of training: headquarters (HQ) and non-headquarters (NHQ) training. In both cases, courses are either offered to a group of researchers sharing common interest for training in certain research area (group courses) or to individuals requiring specific training (individual courses). HQ courses may be short (1-5 weeks) or long (> 5 weeks). NHQ courses are generally short and are either held within a country for participants from that country (in-country courses) or for an audience from different countries (Regional or Sub-regional, and International courses). Although both group and individual training are offered, the emphasis, dictated by general NARS needs, is increasingly on specialized training geared to meet specific client needs. Group courses dealing with general research topics are given lower priority except for in-country courses where NARS, usually, conduct the training with a back-up support from ICARDA.

Figure 2 summarizes these training categories:

Categories of Training

A- Headquarter Training Courses

Short-term Group

Long-term Group

Individual Non-degree

Individual Degree

B- Non-Headquarter Training Courses

In-country

Sub-regional

Regional

International

Individual Degree

A. Headquarter Training Courses

These courses are either organized by ICARDA alone or in collaboration with other organizations. They cover specific areas of research or transfer of technology for which the needed infrastructure and most of the expertise exist at headquarters where the courses are held. All headquarter courses are usually conducted by ICARDA programs/units and are coordinated by HRDU.

Categories of these courses are:

A.1 Short-term Training Courses:

These one to five week courses focus on specific topics of interest to both national programs and ICARDA. Specialized short-term courses change from year to year according to the training demands of national programs and the expertise available at ICARDA. Qualified candidates from outside the WANA region may also be admitted to these courses, but with a lower priority.

Application and Selection Procedures:

- a.** In consultation with the concerned program/unit, the Head of Human Resources Development sends a letter of course announcement to the relevant organizations of the priority countries as determined by the concerned program/unit or regional program, with a copy to the ICARDA relevant Regional Program Coordinator/out-posted staff for follow-up, whenever appropriate.
- b.** Completed application forms, along with the accompanying documents (including health certificate) are sent by the requesting institutions to HRDU.
- c.** The received nominations are screened by a committee appointed by the concerned program/unit to select the specified number of qualifying candidates. Names of accepted candidates are forwarded to HRDU.
- d.** The Head of Human Resources Development sends acceptance responses to the selected candidates through the NARS appropriate communication channels with a copy to the concerned ICARDA Regional Coordinator/out-posted staff members for follow-up, whenever appropriate.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Award:

- a.** Each participant will be provided with a round-trip, economy class air or surface ticket. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin of the training participant, will also be paid

as en-route expenses to each participant.

- b. Local transportation related to training activities is provided on regularly-scheduled ICARDA buses.
- c. Each sponsored participant is assigned a shared room in ICARDA-leased apartments. Facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
- d. Each sponsored participant will be paid a modest per diem (Daily Subsistence Allowance), in Syrian currency as determined by ICARDA policy.
- e. Each participant will be provided with the following insurance coverage:
 - 1) Accidental death/injury group policy.
 - 2) Health insurance. This covers medical costs. Dental and optical coverage is not provided.All trainees must provide a certificate of good health before their travel to ICARDA.
- f. Participants will be allowed a one-day recreational/cultural trip during the course.
- g. Participants will not be permitted to join the course if they arrive one day later than the starting day of the course, except under exceptional circumstances to be determined by the Head of Human Resources Development and the concerned program/unit.

These provisions become effective upon the training participant's registration at the Human Resources Development Unit and terminate at the completion of the course.

Self-or partial self-financed trainees or their sponsors will be responsible for all or part of the training-related expenses, as agreed in writing by ICARDA and the sponsoring agency/trainee.

A.2 Long-term Training Courses:

These are six-to-eighteen-week courses offered at ICARDA's headquarters by research programs and units; they are designed for researchers and technicians working in national agricultural research programs. Course participants should have a college degree in agriculture. Long-term training courses consist of both class and practical training designed to provide participants with technical knowledge and skills in their field of research. The practical training is usually imparted individually to meet the specific needs of each participant.

Application and Selection Procedures:

These are similar to those of the short-term group training courses mentioned above.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Award:

- a. Each participant will be provided a round-trip, economy class air or surface ticket, as appropriate. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin of the training participant, will also be paid as en-route expenses to each participant.
- b. Local transportation related to training activities is provided on regularly-scheduled ICARDA buses.
- c. Each sponsored participant is assigned a shared room in ICARDA-leased apartments. Facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
- d. A modest subsistence allowance, determined by ICARDA policy, will be paid in local currency to sponsored participants. Non-Syrian participants of courses longer than three months will receive part of their last-month allowance in US dollars.
- e. Each sponsored participant is allowed a maximum non-accompanied air freight for up-to ten kg of training material at the time of departure, if recommended by the host program/unit.
- f. Each sponsored participant will be provided with the following insurance coverage:
 - 1) Accidental death/injury (group policy)
 - 2) Health insurance. This covers medical costs with the exception of dental and optical expenses.

All trainees must provide a proof of good health before arrival to ICARDA.

- g. One or two overnight recreational/cultural trips will be provided depending on the course duration. HRDU will be responsible for organizing these trips.
- h. Participants may be allowed to attend specialized short courses subject to the approval of concerned program leader or unit head and accepted by the course coordinator. Participants will not receive a training certificate for the additional short course(s), but will receive a letter acknowledging participation of the training participant in the course(s) attended, if desired.
- i. Participants will not be permitted to join the course if they arrive two days later than the starting day of the course, except under exceptional circumstances to be determined by the Head of Human Resources Development and the concerned program/unit.

These provisions become effective upon the training participant's registration at HRDU and terminate at the completion of the course.

Self- or partially self-financed trainees or their sponsors will be responsible for the coverage of all or part of the above expenses as agreed in writing between ICARDA and the sponsoring agency.

A.3 Individual Non-degree Training:

This type of training is targeted to either a junior researcher --- here designated as research fellow (RF)-- or a more senior researcher --- designated as senior research fellow (SRF). In either case the duration of training ranges from one week to several months, and the training program is tailored to meet the specific needs of the trainee and his/her nominating institution.

For RF, training generally focuses on specific techniques and skills needed for the implementation of research experiments. This usually requires an educational background at the B.Sc. level.

For SRF, training involves the application of scientific methods in agricultural research including problem diagnosis, experimental design, data analysis and interpretation, and scientific reporting. This usually requires an educational background of M.Sc. degree. More senior scientists (typically Ph.D. holders), able to conduct independent research are generally hosted at ICARDA as visiting scientists and are subjected to different administrative arrangements.

Application and Selection Procedures:

- a. NARSs and other agencies (donors, regional or international organizations) may nominate their affiliated or sponsored staff for specific individual training. Applications should provide adequate information on the candidate's background (education, language proficiency, research descriptive profession and experience, details on topic(s) of the needed training, desired date and duration, source of funding, etc.). A health certificate must also be provided. Requests for training are to be addressed to HRDU or to the concerned research Programs/Units.
- b. If a research program/unit decides to announce individual training opportunities, the Head of Human Resources Development will send out a letter of announcement to the relevant NARSs through the official channels with a copy to the concerned ICARDA Regional Program Coordinator, where appropriate.
- c. Nominees meeting the stated requirements are asked to complete and return an application form to HRDU. When the concerned program/unit accepts a candidate for training, the Head of Human Resources Development sends a letter of acceptance to the selected candidates through the NARS appropriate communication channels with a copy to the concerned regional program coordinator for follow-up.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Award:

- a. The accepted candidate will be provided a round-trip, economy class air or surface ticket, as appropriate. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin of the training participant, will also be paid to him/her as en-route expenses.
- b. Local transportation related to training activities is provided on regularly-scheduled ICARDA buses.
- c. Upon return of the trainee, a maximum of non-accompanied air freight for up to 10 kg of training materials is granted to a SRF (but not to a RF) depending on the training duration and the request of the host program/unit.
- d. A research fellow (RF) will be assigned a shared room in ICARDA-leased apartments. A senior research fellow (SRF) will be accommodated in a single room if available. Accommodation facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
- e. A modest subsistence allowance, determined by ICARDA policy, will be paid in local currency to sponsored participants. Non-Syrian participants in courses longer than three months will receive half of their last-month allowance in US dollars.
- f. Each sponsored participant will be provided with the following insurance coverage:
 - 1) Accidental death/injury (group policy)
 - 2) Health insurance covering all medical costs except dental and optical costs.

All trainees must provide a certificate of good health prior to their travel to ICARDA.

- g. One or two overnight recreational/cultural trips will be provided depending on course duration. HRDU will be responsible for organizing these trips.

These provisions become effective on the trainee's arrival to ICARDA and registration at HRDU and terminate at the completion of the course.

Self- or partially self-financed trainees or their sponsors will be responsible for the coverage of all or part of the above expenses as agreed in writing between ICARDA and the sponsoring agency.

A.4 Individual Degree Training (Graduate Research Training Program):

Students registered at a University for M.Sc. or Ph.D. degrees may apply for a graduate

research training program (GRTP) award. The successful applicant will conduct all or part of the thesis research either at ICARDA research stations in Syria or in collaboration with one of the ICARDA Regional Programs and the course work at the university of his/her registration. The graduate student's research topic will relate to ICARDA's mandated research and must have direct relevance to his/her national program. The student's research work is directed by an ICARDA scientist in the capacity of a co-supervisor and member of the student's advisory committee. GRTP awards are open to students from WANA region and other developing and developed countries.

ICARDA provides financial support to a limited number of students; other students must provide their own funds or be supported by external sponsoring agencies or donors.

Application and Selection Procedures:

- a. Graduate students who apply for a GRTP award must be enrolled in a university where they are to pursue an academic degree. A research proposal, prepared by the student and his/her university supervisor is submitted to ICARDA along with the official nomination. Nominations are accepted from NARSs (research institutes or universities), donor organizations, or national institutions from donor countries. Such nominations may be addressed to HRDU directly or through the relevant ICARDA program/unit.
- b. The Training Coordination Committee (TCC) meets as needed to examine all nominations for eligibility requirements (official nomination, university enrollment, and relevance of thesis research to ICARDA's mandate and balanced allocation of awards among programs/units and among scientists within programs/units) and to select the appropriate candidates.

Acceptable nominations are forwarded to the concerned ICARDA programs/units for final review and confirmation.

- c. Nominations are individually examined by the relevant Programs/Units. In particular, the potential ICARDA supervisor will review and comment on or amend the research proposal and indicate his/her consent and availability to be a co-supervisor. An ICARDA scientist may accumulate up to five graduate students simultaneously under his/her supervision.
- d. Criteria for selecting graduate students generally include:
 - Outstanding undergraduate academic performance;
 - Established link between ICARDA scientist and university/ NARS staff;
 - Relevance of thesis research to national agricultural research program priority needs;
 - Compatibility of thesis research proposal with ICARDA's research interests and capabilities;

- Fluency in English;
 - Preference accorded to universities with ICARDA collaborative program agreements;
 - Funds availability. Self- or partially self-financed students as well as those supported from external funds are given priority.
- e.** For each accepted candidate, the Head of Human Resources Development in consultation with the concerned program/unit, prepares an official contract delineating the terms and conditions of the award. The contract will be reviewed by the Personnel Office and submitted to the Director General for approval and signature. Where applicable, a contract for the visit of the student's university supervisor will be also prepared, based on the provisions made in the student's contract.

Terms and Conditions of the GRTP Award:

These are detailed in the individual contract of each student. In general, the thesis research may be partly or fully conducted at ICARDA. When the student is at ICARDA's site, he/she will require some or all of the support outlined below depending on the details outlined in his/her contract:

- a.** Non-Syrian students will be provided a prepaid economy-class air or surface ticket depending on the country of origin. Syrian students will be reimbursed for the actual costs of their surface travel or will use the ICARDA's shuttle service if available. Also, a fixed amount based on the country of origin will be paid as en-route expenses to the training participant, for the allowed number of visits.
- b.** ICARDA-sponsored students from outside Aleppo will be assigned a shared room in ICARDA-leased apartments. Housing facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided. No reimbursement for housing will be made to students who choose to live outside ICARDA-leased apartments. Self-financed students may choose different housing arrangements.
- c.** Local transportation for training is provided on regularly-scheduled ICARDA buses.
- d.** If ICARDA provides per diem to the student, this will be paid in local currency and for up to 18 months for M.Sc. and 24 months for Ph.D. thesis, although the student may stay at ICARDA for a longer period, if required. The amount of the per diem will be determined by the prevailing ICARDA policy and procedures.
- e.** Insurance will be provided as follows:
 - 1)** Accidental death/injury (group policy)

- 2) Health insurance to cover medical costs. Dental and optical costs are not covered.

All students must provide a certificate of good health prior to their travel to ICARDA.

- f. ICARDA's research Programs/Units will make available to the student the relevant research facilities.
- g. If applicable, expenses of thesis preparation will be covered up to a maximum of USD 500 and 1000 for M.Sc. and Ph.D. dissertations, respectively, or the equivalent in Syrian currency for thesis completed in Syria. Settlement of cost against actual receipts will be made after the student submits two approved copies of the thesis manuscript to HRDU. ICARDA's technical assistance and financial support (where applicable) must be acknowledged in the thesis.
- h. If applicable, ICARDA will cover the costs of one 1-2 short visits of the university major supervisor to ICARDA as detailed in his/her contract. In the case of Aleppo University, ICARDA will provide transportation only.
- i. Students from outside the host country are allowed a maximum of non-accompanied air freight for up to 10 kg of training materials at the time of their final departure.

These provisions become effective upon the student's registration at HRDU and terminate at the completion of his/her training at ICARDA.

Self- or partially self-financed students or their sponsors will be responsible for the coverage of all or part of the above expenses as specified in their contracts.

B. Non-headquarter Training Activities

These courses are organized outside the ICARDA headquarters .Non-headquarter (NHQ) courses are usually agreed upon during the national and or regional coordination meetings between ICARDA and NARSs. Unless the training course is initiated by the headquarters, planing, organization and announcement/invitation of NHQ courses are the responsibility of the regional coordinator in consultation with NARS, ICARDA concerned program/unit and HRDU. Contact and consultation with other international and regional organizations may also lead to joint courses conducted outside ICARDA's headquarters. In such cases, planning and preparation of these courses are made at the ICARDA's headquarters in cooperation with the collaborating institution(s) and HRDU. The following is a description of the different categories of NHQ training activities along with the corresponding administrative procedures.

B.1 In-country Training Courses:

These are group courses held in a given country at the request of NARSs and for participants from that country. Topics of the course vary but are such that the training is intensive (one-three weeks) and are related to the conditions and research problems of the involved country.

Resource Provisions:

These courses are usually requested and planned at the joint ICARDA-NARS coordination meetings or through direct contact with the ICARDA program/unit concerned and HRDU. Although NARS bear the major responsibility for implementing these courses, ICARDA assists by providing some of the instruction and training materials. Cost of trainees and national instructors including local travel, accommodation, per diem, etc., are covered by the concerned NARS. Cost of ICARDA' scientists will be generally covered by ICARDA. Financial support may be provided through special project funds when available for the country.

Course Announcement, Application and Selection Procedures:

Concerned NARSs in cooperation with the involved RPC and HQ program(s)/unit(s) take the responsibility for the preparation of course program, course announcement, selection of training participants, etc. The language medium may be different from English for part or all of the course depending on the preference of the host country and the available resources at ICARDA.

Terms and Conditions of the Award:

Since national regulations vary between countries, the support provisions are prepared separately for each course. NARSs set the terms and conditions of trainees' admission to the course. In general, all costs for training participants are covered by NARSs and national regulations are applied. ICARDA will provide the required technical assistance and training material whenever requested and within the available resources.

B.2 Sub-regional and Regional Training Courses:

Sub-regional and regional non-headquarter courses are group courses offered to researchers from WANA countries. They are held outside ICARDA's headquarters because of comparative advantages at other sites such as availability of suitable infrastructure, additional resources from the host country or a donor, headquarters of a collaborating regional or international organization, etc. Regional courses are generally offered to participants from WANA countries or from countries of a specific region of the ICARDA's six regional programs. Sub-regional courses are targeted for a selected number of countries in one of the ICARDA's sub-regions and they focus on topics of common interest to the countries involved. Both these categories of courses are generally coordinated by HRDU and the concerned

programs/units and ICARDA Regional Programs/out-posted scientists.

Resource Provisions:

These courses are generally conducted in response to NARSS' needs as expressed at the regional/national coordination meetings or through the Programs/Units concerned. Such courses may require instructors from one or more of the following:

- The country where the course is conducted
- Other national programs in the region/sub-region
- Outside the region
- ICARDA

Instructors from the host national program may be provided with local travel, accommodation, and modest per diem. The amount of per diem to be paid to national instructors will be decided by the concerned RPC in consultation with ICARDA's Head of Human Resources Development and the course coordinator, but should not exceed USD 50 per day, or the local per diem, whichever is lower. Other instructors will be provided international and local travel, accommodation and modest per diem as applicable to ICARDA staff at the location of the course. Details will be specified in contracts to be developed for each instructor.

Course-related costs are either fully borne by ICARDA (through core or special project funds) or shared with co-organizing institutions (NARS of the host country, other regional or international organizations, etc.). ICARDA's contribution will be covered through HRDU budget, with the exception of instructors from ICARDA where their costs are covered by the concerned program/unit.

Course Announcement, Application and Selection Procedures:

- a. The course program and brochure are prepared by the leading scientist(s) of the organizing institutions. HRDU will assist in the production of the brochure and application forms with the concerned research Programs/Units and collaborating institution(s).
- b. The announcement letters are usually sent out by one co-organizer on behalf of the others but may be jointly signed by all co-organizers. Where ICARDA is the leading co-organizer, announcement letters are sent out either by the Head of Human Resources Development or the concerned RPC to NARSS in the target countries with a copy to other concerned collaborators.
- c. Completed and authorized application forms are returned by the applicants or their sponsors to the organizers as indicated in the announcement letter.
- d. Received nominations are screened by a selection committee involving the concerned

Programs/Units and representative(s) of other co-organizers, where appropriate. Acceptance or rejection responses are sent to nominating institutions by the Head of Human Resources Development or the concerned RPC. When another institution is the leading co-organizer, that institution announces the course and sends out acceptance or rejection responses with copies to ICARDA.

Terms and Conditions of the Training Award:

- a. Each participant will be provided a round-trip economy class air or surface ticket. A fixed amount, based on the country of origin, will also be paid as en-route expenses to each participant.
- b. Each participant will be paid a modest daily subsistence allowance in US dollars wherever local regulations allow; if not, it will be paid in local currency.
- c. Each participant is assigned a shared or single room, as available. Facilities for spouses and/or children are not provided.
- d. Local transportation required for the training activities will be provided by the organizer(s) or the host country as appropriate.
- e. Each training participant will be provided the following insurance coverage:
 - 1) Accidental death/injury (group policy)
 - 2) Health insurance. This covers medical costs but not dental and optical expenses.

All trainees must provide a certificate of good health before they travel to the course venue.

The insurance will be purchased either by HRDU, the concerned RPC's Office, or the other co-organizer(s).

- f. The ICARDA component of the course budget will be developed and administered by HRDU in cooperation with the concerned Programs/Units and Regional Programs.

These provisions become effective upon the trainee's registration at the course venue and terminate at the completion of the course.

Self- or partially self-financed trainees or their sponsors will be responsible for the coverage of all or part of the above expenses as agreed in writing between ICARDA and the sponsoring agency.

B.3 International Training Courses:

These courses are jointly organized by ICARDA and other organizations having a wider audience and/or a complementary mandate (e.g. FAO, UNDP, CIHEAM, ACSAD, and others), where the topics of training fall fully or partly within ICARDA's research and training domain.

ICARDA and the other co-organizer(s) share the course costs on an agreed basis. For

ICARDA, these generally relate to provision of instruction and associated training materials and partial or full sponsorship of a fixed number of participants from WANA.

The procedures for course announcement, application, selection, and terms and conditions of training awards are similar to those of the regional and sub-regional courses.

B.4 Individual Degree Training (Graduate Research Training Program):

GRTP awards may be granted to researchers from collaborating NARSs on the same principles and guidelines as those for HQ students but the thesis research is fully conducted at NARS's research sites in the student's home country. ICARDA provides technical supervision through its HQ or outreach scientists. Also some minor research supplies may be provided if planned for within the framework of the collaboration between the concerned NARS and ICARDA's program or unit. Details of the award will be specified in the student's contract.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. Needs Assessment:

The whole medium-term training needs for each collaborating country, with a particular emphasis on WANA, are assessed through continuous dialogue and exchange of information with NARS. These needs are normally formulated through specific requests by NARSs during the ICARDA-NARS planning/coordination meetings held annually in the ICARDA region.

2. Course Announcement:

Based on the perceived NARS requests and on the resources available, ICARDA's HRDU and the concerned Programs/Units, in collaboration with NARS counterparts prepare a course program and budget. Brochures are produced for major group courses. Letters of announcement along with application forms, course-related information and brochures where appropriate, are sent by HRDU to respective NARSs several months before the course commence. Information on announced courses and other training opportunities can be obtained from HRDU. ICARDA offices located outside Syria (Appendix 1) may also be contacted.

3. Application and Selection Procedures:

Applicants are expected to read all the provided information related to the course requirements, trainee's qualifications, terms and conditions of training, and must sign and date the supplied application forms. They may also provide additional information on their specific situation and needs, Particularly for individual training, this additional information is

essential. Applications to the ICARDA-announced courses should be sent to: Human Resources Development Unit, ICARDA, P.O. Box 5466, Aleppo, Syria (fax 963-21-2213490; 963-21-2225105).

Applications are reviewed by a selection committee and the decisions taken as to acceptance, postponement or rejection are based on the match between course requirements and applicant's profile, date of application, the number of positions available in the course, and the available resources. Self-financed applications are encouraged and may receive high priority.

Decisions on the applicants acceptance or rejection will be communicated by HRDU directly to the NARS's nominating institutions or through the concerned Regional Program Coordinators if possible. Accepted candidates will receive information on travel arrangements and on climate and general living conditions at the course venue.

4. Travel Arrangements:

4.1 Headquarter Courses

The Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU) makes all travel arrangements for HQ courses. Prepaid air tickets (PTA's), where appropriate, are sent to accepted candidates from outside Syria who are expected to arrive Damascus or Aleppo airports directly before the course starts. Trainees will be met at either of the two airports and transported to ICARDA's headquarters in Aleppo. Training participants from neighboring countries such as Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan are not entitled to separate surface transportation by ICARDA. They are expected to make their travel arrangements to reach either Aleppo or Damascus and ICARDA will reimburse each participant for the actual cost of the most economic and direct public transportation (bus, train, shared taxi) upon his/her arrival to Aleppo. Contact addresses (Appendix 1) will be communicated to trainees before their travel. Arrangements for participants' return travel to their home countries are also made by HRDU.

Entry visa to Syria must be obtained by the training participants from the Syrian Embassy in their countries. When there is no Syrian Embassy in the participant's home country, trainee should send his/her passport details (including names of father and mother) to HRDU, who will arrange for a visa at the Aleppo or Damascus airports.

Late arrival of training participants for a maximum of two days for the long-term group or individual training courses and for a maximum of one day for the short specialized training courses may result in cancellation of the training award.

4.2. Non-Headquarter Courses:

Travel arrangements for regional, sub-regional, or international courses conducted in

WANA are generally made by HRDU in close cooperation with the concerned Regional Program Coordinators. For courses conducted outside WANA region, HRDU makes these arrangements in collaboration with the other course co-organizer(s).

Travel arrangements for in-country courses are usually made by the concerned NARS.

5. Per diem (Daily Subsistence Allowance):

The training award usually includes provision to the accepted trainee of a daily subsistence allowance (per diem) delivered to him/her as a single payment in the short-term courses, or on a monthly basis in the long-term courses. While this may be covered by ICARDA or another sponsors, all trainees attending the same course and administered by ICARDA will be treated equally irrespective of the financing source. The per diem paid to trainees will be adequate to support their basic needs (food, drinks) but not for extra spending or savings. Trainees' employers or sponsors may wish to directly supplement this per diem with any amount they consider suitable, but not through ICARDA. Payments to all training participants in the ICARDA headquarter training courses will be made in Syrian currency, except for non-Syrian training participants in courses longer than three months where part of their last month's allowance will be paid in US dollars. Payments for trainees participating in non-headquarter courses will be paid in US dollars or local currency as determined by HRDU and the concerned Regional Program Coordinators and the host NARS.

6. Technical Program:

One or more ICARDA scientist (s) will be designated to impart the training onto one individual or a group of trainees and/or provide guidance and supervision of the concerned trainees throughout the duration of the course. The program of training will be based on the training outline and schedule for short group courses and on a plan of work for other training. Although the trainee will work under the supervision of a senior scientist, he/she will be integrated in a research team composed of research staff working in the relevant area of research and under the supervision of the concerned senior scientist. To draw maximum benefit from the training, the participant must be able to communicate well with others and to work within a team. Except for the short group courses, each trainee will have to submit to his/her supervisor or training scientist a report summarizing the activities undertaken, the results achieved, the new ideas acquired, the methods and skills learned along with his/her suggestions for improvements of future courses.

7. Language:

English is the medium of instruction for ICARDA training activities. Proficiency in oral and written English language is a prerequisite for the selection of participants in all training categories except for in-country and non-headquarter sub-regional and regional courses where language requirements are set accordingly. For advanced or highly specialized training courses, fluency in English language is also prerequisite for application.

8. Evaluation:

8.1 Course Evaluation:

At the end of the course, trainees are requested to fill out a questionnaire for evaluating the various components of the training program. This includes the logistical as well as technical aspects. Technical evaluation of the course includes evaluation by trainees of all trainers and in particular those who have contributed to a substantial extent to the training program (e.g. three or more lectures/sessions in a group course, supervisor of a long-term trainee). Evaluation questionnaires are made simple and short, but provision is made for the integration of personal comments and suggestions for improvement by the trainees. Examples are shown in (Appendix 2).

The main objective of the logistic and technical evaluations is to get trainees' impressions and feed-back that would guide ICARDA in further improving the quality of its training both in terms of the facilities provided and the training delivered.

8.2 Performance Appraisal:

Pre-and post-course tests are usually conducted for group courses. These are usually written tests but may also be oral or manual, depending on the course. Results of the tests, normally discussed with trainees, give an overall assessment of the course as well as a specific evaluation of the trainees for particular aspects of the training subject. Performance of individual trainees is assessed by the supervising scientist, usually by direct observation of the trainee's work. Trainees who successfully complete an assigned training program are each given a training certificate at the end of the course. A special certificate may be given to a participant in a long-term course who has shown an outstanding performance. An overall performance report may be sent through the RPC's Office to NARS upon their request. Graduate students are evaluated by their respective ICARDA and the university supervisors and graduate committee.

8.3 Code of Behavior:

Training participants are expected to follow the training schedule, and participate in all assigned training activities. Absence for personal reasons from a regularly scheduled training session requires prior approval of the training/research scientist. Trainees are to adhere to the ICARDA's rules and regulations in particular those relating to safety, performance and ICARDA's property. They are also expected to observe and comply with the rules and regulations of the host country. Details on these are given to trainees upon their arrival.

Poor observance of the above regulations or misbehavior may result in sanctions against the concerned trainee, including cancellation of the training award and communication of such behavior to the nominating institution.

FOLLOW-UP

The follow-up on training activities is designed to: (1) evaluate the performance of former training participants, (2) retain them as active collaborators in ICARDA's research network, (3) insure that they are kept abreast of the latest research developments, and (4) assess future training needs of NARSs. Follow-up activities cover all training categories described in this manual and is a continuous process involving all ICARDA's Programs and Units, Regional Programs, and is coordinated by the Human Resources Development Unit (HRDU). Follow-up consists of the following two components:

1. Follow-up Assessment:

In consultation with the Research Programs and Units, HRDU conducts periodically studies to: 1) evaluate impact of training on the achievements of training participants and their national programs; 2) obtain information about training needs; and 3) obtain feedback which can be used to improve training strategies and methods. Follow-up assessment comprises:

- Questionnaire studies;
- Visits to countries in the region by Head of Human Resources Development and scientists;
- In-depth studies of job performance and training needs of participants in selected priority countries or sub-regions;
- Feedback from visitors to ICARDA, including NARSs' scientists and managers, as well as donor representatives.
- Feedback from ICARDA's Regional Programs and outreach staff members.

2. Follow-up Communication:

Follow-up communication is a continuous process whereby exchange of information and support is provided to the training participants by ICARDA's Programs and HRDU. Follow-up communication involves the following activities:

- HRDU maintains a computerized database of training participants. The record contains bio-data and technical information about training received at ICARDA and elsewhere. This data base is periodically updated.
- ICARDA's scientists and the Head of Human Resources Development visit countries in the region to contact training participants and their supervisors.
- ICARDA regularly provides the following to training alumni:
 - a) ICARDA publications, newsletters and training materials
 - b) Up-to-date information on major research developments, and opportunities for training and conferences or workshops at ICARDA and elsewhere.
 - c) International nurseries and germplasm on request.

Some of the follow-up activities are time-and-money consuming and therefore can be

undertaken only if funds are available.

TRAINING MATERIAL

Strategy:

ICARDA considers that distribution of quality training materials to trainees and training organizations is as important as the delivery of training itself. Training materials can be essential tools for easy and effective teaching and learning, and may also serve as a quick technical reference on specific topics for researchers. Their usefulness is further enhanced through regular updating.

ICARDA strives to produce these materials that contain information related to its own research programs. Such information is relevant to agricultural conditions in WANA. This approach avoids duplication of standard manuals or books that can be more easily obtained from specialized publishing institutions. The Center therefore focuses its efforts to producing materials that are not available elsewhere and for the production of which it has a comparative advantage.

Development of Training Materials:

This starts with identification of priority needs (research topics) and the availability of corresponding information and data within ICARDA that can be built into a manual or an audiovisual material. This is usually identified by Program leaders or scientists. Scientists may possess complementary data and information which can be assembled into one manual or audiovisual training module. A first draft of the proposed material is submitted to the program leader, then to HRDU. When approved, both HRDU and CODIS will take the necessary action, to produce the final version. Approval of the final version of the training material is the responsibility of the authors, and the concerned program leader or unit head.

Authorship:

A byline will be given by the training material's principal scientific author. Additional credits will be given to those individuals who make significant contribution toward the production of the training materials. This may include the training materials, editor, photographer, graphic artist, and typesetter.

Inventory and Distribution:

All training materials produced by the Center will be centrally stored at the Human Resources Development Unit and recommended for distribution as appropriate by the concerned Programs/Units through HRDU. Requests for training material from outside ICARDA are to be addressed to HRDU.

Training materials such as guidebooks and manuals may be distributed to trainees free of charge.

Other training materials such as audiovisuals will be sold at cost to requesting individuals. ICARDA's audiovisual units are used in training courses at headquarters and in the region. Free copies will be given to limited NARS in the region (1 copy/NARS). More copies may be distributed by HRDU at nominal cost to other NARS institutions, and at regular prices to other organizations.

Revised: January 4, 1999
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Head, Human Resources Development

Appendix 1 (a)
Example of an evaluation questionnaire for
a short-term group course

Please rate each of the following line items by tick marking the appropriate cell. Do not write in your name.

Activity/Rating	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Classroom					
Training Materials					
Application (field/lab)					
Discussion					
Duration of the course					
Administrative support					

Additional Comments

Appendix 1 (b)

**Example of an evaluation questionnaire
for a long-term group course**

Please rate each of the following line items by tickmarking the appropriate case using the 1-5 scale where 1 indicates the lowest grading (poor) and 5 the highest (excellent). Do not write in your name.

1. Classroom sessions: 1 2 3 4 5

Length per session.....

Number of sessions.....

Content.....

New knowledge.....

Comments:

2. Laboratory sessions: 1 2 3 4 5

Frequency.....

Usefulness.....

Acquisition of new skills.....

Comments:

3. Field activities : 1 2 3 4 5

Frequency
Usefulness
Acquisition of new skills
Comments :

4. Training material: 1 2 3 4 5

Lecture handouts
Manuals/books
Photocopies of articles
Comments :

5. Staff support and administration: 1 2 3 4 5

Administrative arrangements &
 facilities.....
Availability and assistance of
 administrative staff.....
Availability and assistance of
 research staff.....
Comments :

Appendix 1 (c)
Example of an evaluation questionnaire
(with instructor's name)

Title of Session:.....

Instructor:

Date:.....

Training Session Evaluation:

Instructions to participant: You have just completed a training activity and I would like you to tell me about your feelings on what has just been presented. This "feedback" is valuable in preparing future training sessions; hopefully, to enable the instructor become more effective and helpful to you.

On each item, circle a number on the scale to the right that reflects your honest response to the item: No. 1 is "best" and No. 5 is "worst". Where item is open-ended, write-in your comments.

Thank you.

	Very clear & Relevant	Unclear or irrelevant
1. Session's objectives	1 2 3	4 5
	Too advanced	Too elementary
2. Level of instruction	1 2 3	4 5
	Excellent	Poor
3. Ability to explain clearly	1 2 3	4 5
	Ample time/very useful	Insufficient
4. Discussion	1 2 3	4 5
	Excellent	Poor

