2012:32 Sida Decentralised Evaluation

Ian Christoplos
Johanna Bergman Lodin

Evaluation of the International Foundation for Science

Final Report

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Authors: Ian Christoplos and Johanna Bergman Lodin

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SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm
Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64
Postgiro: 1 56 34–9. VAT. No. SE 202100-478901
E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: http://www.sida.se

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAS	African Academy of Sciences
AIMS	Associates for International Management Services
BECA Hub	Biosciences Eastern and Central Africa
BoT	Board of Trustees
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
FORSK	Sida Unit for Research Cooperation
FoSTER	IFS Young Women Competency-Building Programme
GROWTH	IFS Structured Mentorship and Role Modelling Programme
IFS	International Foundation of Science
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MSC	Most Significant Change
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAFOSTED	Vietnam National Foundation for Science and Technology Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
RBM	Results-Based Management
SAC	Scientific Advisory Committee
SAREC	Sida's former research division, now FORSK
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Preface

This evaluation was commissioned through Sida's framework agreement for reviews and evaluations. The assignment was carried out by Indevelop between May and December 2012. The assignment was undertaken by the following team members:

- Dr. Ian Christoplos, Team Leader: In his work at Indevelop Ian Christoplos is the director of the framework for evaluations and reviews. He is also a researcher in Natural Resources and Poverty at the Danish Institute for International Studies and has worked with a broad range of evaluations and research programmes throughout his career.
- Dr. Johanna Bergman Lodin, Junior Evaluator: Johanna Bergman Lodin is a professional consultant and evaluator. She received her doctoral degree in human geography in April 2012 and has worked with various research projects on agricultural intensification processes in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a particular focus on gender relations.

Quality assurance on the report was provided by Dr. Adam Pain, and management of the evaluation process was carried out by Jessica Rothman.

We wish to thank Sida's programme officers who provided valuable input and guidance in the evaluation. We would also like to thank the staff of the IFS secretariat and the many grantees and stakeholders who devoted considerable time to discussing their rich and in-depth reflections on the work of IFS in the perspective of the changing context of international research cooperation.

Executive Summary

This evaluation assesses IFS' (International Foundation of Science) process of developing a new strategy and analyses the emerging role of IFS in a changing context of capacity development for research in developing countries. The evaluative approach was both *descriptive*, to provide Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) with an overview of IFS' work, and *analytical* in terms of drawing conclusions about the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the work of IFS, now and when the new IFS strategy for 2011-2020 is rolled out.

Individual grants to young researchers are at the core of IFS' work and even though the new strategy includes additional activities, there is consensus among stakeholders, shared by the evaluation team that this should continue. Grant management functions are perceived by virtually all those interviewed as supportive and un-bureaucratic. IFS explicitly recognise the needs and capacities of young researchers and responds accordingly. IFS is relatively unique in "nurturing" young researchers and these efforts are perceived to be of high quality. One aspect of this nurturing is through the extensive feedback provided on grant applications and young postdoctoral researchers see this as a way to learn about what constitutes a good research proposal. However, some questions have been raised regarding IFS' added value over national and regional institutions in other nurturing functions, such as arranging training workshops. Overall there appears to be no other organisation that takes such a concerted approach to nurturing and enabling young researchers to pursue their own interests.

There are divergent views regarding *whether or not there is a future role* for IFS in its new programme on collaborative research, which will soon to be piloted. Some feel that IFS lacks capacity to keep teams together and that the pilot places undue faith in IT and social networking to solve profound underlying challenges in interdisciplinary collaboration. Others feel that societal relevance can only be achieved through collaborative research and that IFS can learn from the pilot to identify a manageable role. The evaluation team concurs with the "optimists", while recognising that much of the concerns of the "pessimists" need to be taken into account. Collaborative research can be assumed to have good chances of becoming viable as discrete projects tied to a strong institutional partner that can bear much of the transaction costs. The team doubts that these kinds of projects could or should become an integral part of IFS' core research funding structure.

There are also divergent views about *who should be supported to collaborate and why*. At one end of the spectrum are expectations that this programme should promote broader interdisciplinary research, including the social sciences, as a way of ensuring greater societal relevance. At the other end of the spectrum is the need for researchers from a given discipline to meet one another. Current plans are unclear regarding who should collaborate, which highlights IFS' somewhat ambiguous interdisciplinary ambitions.

The third (as-yet-unplanned) programme in the new strategy is "contributing innovation". There is a high degree of scepticism among IFS stakeholders regarding whether IFS could or should try to engage in overall innovation systems. Some feel that a modest and realistic niche regarding innovation would primarily focus on support to *network links and orientation*.

It is important to note that IFS is considering these new areas of activity during a period when resource flows have been declining. Programmes 2 and 3 are only likely to become sustainable if they increase the credibility of IFS' work and thereby generate additional and more diversified resource flows. If present funders were to shift their existing core funding and support for individual research grant to newer "trendier" topics, this could undermine the cornerstone of IFS' work.

Monitoring and evaluation have received low priority in the past few years due to the focus on developing the new strategy. The new monitoring and evaluation strategy includes creative and innovative ideas, but has an undue focus on impacts, which may provide limited utility regarding how to learn about if and how IFS actually helps young researchers in their careers.

IFS' cost efficiency cannot be judged in relation to similar organisations as there appears to be no other organisation that provides similar highly targeted research funding and individual capacity development support. IFS' efficiency should not be judged in relation to its research council functions as it also provides unique capacity development services. It is important to judge efficiency in relation to the full range of results achieved. The evaluation judges that following results have emerged from IFS support:

- Outputs/publications: Given the small size of the grant the evaluation team assessed the number of publications by grantees to be very good.
- Increased credibility in own institutions: Grantees stress that the receipt of the small IFS grant has significant impact on their status within their departments and enables them to argue for the need to pursue their own research interests.
- Increased credibility among other research councils: Grantees mentioned that the receipt of a IFS grant increases their chances of leveraging additional funds, particularly from national research councils that are more ready to support a more junior researcher if they have received the "stamp of approval" from IFS.
- Increased self-confidence: Feedback provided by IFS advisors and the secretariat fosters grantees' self-confidence to develop their own research plans.
- Increased knowledge of how to manage a research project: IFS grants enable young researchers to learn how to manage a research grant on their own.
- Advancing on the career ladder: Grantees feel that their IFS grant creates additional credibility and experience which enables them to start their post-doctoral career as a researcher, without getting locked into a career path focused entirely on lecturing.
- Development of new applied technologies and products: Several grantees saw their IFS grant as part of a process that has led to the development of new technologies that are being put into use, either through supporting farmers or through collaboration with private investors.

Despite its many years of operation and seemingly solid track record, IFS remains a fragile institution. This is partly related to its dependence on a small funding base and one

major donor. Progress has been limited in diversifying resource flows. This fragility is also due to its reliance on a network of committed individuals who provide their support on a voluntary basis. IFS will only survive if it is able to continue to leverage support from this network. As such, IFS should recognise that it must maintain the *vibrancy* of its network as a core priority.

The major fundamental change in the new strategy is a commitment to put research into use. The IFS secretariat and key stakeholders are aware that such a commitment involves a shift of strategic direction towards interdisciplinarity and some changes in how grantees are supported to collaborate with each other and with actors in the innovation systems where they live. There is little consensus regarding how far IFS should or could go in these directions. IFS will need to determine what is possible and what is desirable in this regard. It will also need a proactive approach to identifying new sources of funding to pay for these new activities. The very open and constructive discourse within the IFS network, and the high degree of personal commitment bode well for eventually finding a consensus on how to proceed, but the process ahead will be contentious and the financial implications are uncertain.

Recommendations to IFS

- IFS should expeditiously "finalise" the new strategy, in the sense of being able to present a sufficiently clear future direction when pursuing new funding sources.
- Plans for pilots to learn about how to proceed with the new programmes need to focus on what needs to be learnt for future replication or scaling up.
- Intentions and ambitions regarding how (and how far) to pursue interdisciplinarity in the new programmes need to be made more transparent.
- IFS should pursue innovation system engagements with considerable caution. Modest activities related to networking and orientation regarding important themes in innovation systems should be the main priorities.
- Fundraising efforts, particularly with regard to potential major institutional partners such as the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research), should build on a clearer presentation of results related to capacity development of young researchers.
- IFS should have a clear and explicit strategy to gradually reduce its level of dependence on Sida.
- IFS should continue to pursue its plans to identify how to better utilise its alumni.
- The website should be developed more as a tool for online tutorials and dialogue with the IFS community.
- IFS should pursue its efforts to strengthen links with Swedish institutions in a more focused manner.
- Instead of establishing field offices, IFS should consider how to to build better local partnerships.
- The prioritisation and partnerships for training workshops should be reassessed to ensure that they contribute to broader, locally anchored learning processes.
- IFS should only consider moving offices if it is convinced that the institutional benefits and/or financial savings would outweigh the costs and disruptions incurred.

- IFS has an emerging role as a trusted "neutral" global partner in politically delicate South-South relations between middle- and low-income countries. IFS should pay close and careful attention to this, as it could be both important and sensitive.
- IFS should explore further opportunities to leverage engagement and support from non-traditional donors.
- IFS should rethink its monitoring and evaluation strategy based on a need to focus on what it needs to learn about career outcomes of young researchers.

Recommendations to Sida (and perhaps other donors)

- Sida should continue support to IFS and ensure that, to the extent possible, IFS has a clearer and more long-term planning horizon once IFS first presents a clear and long-term development strategy.
- Sida should inform other donors and potential donors to explain its views on future financing and to discuss how income streams could be diversified.
- It is appropriate that the new programmes are largely initiated through pilot projects funded by (other) donors. Sida should not divert its existing core support to these projects, but should be proactive in learning from these initiatives.
- Sida should closely monitor the efficiency of IFS by assessing costs in relation to a range of results related not only to grant expenditure, but also capacity development among an important and otherwise insufficiently served target group.
- Sida should recognise that expenditure related to networking actually generates a high degree of "in-kind" support to grantees, which has a major impact on the cost-benefit ratio in IFS' work.

Recommendations for Sida and IFS

- Sida, the IFS secretariat and the IFS Board of Trustees should discuss the findings of this evaluation and the communications issues that need to be addressed.
- Together with the IFS secretariat, Sida should make clear its views about the new strategy to the wider IFS community.
- Sida should, as far as possible, set clear temporal and quantitative targets for reducing its relative share of IFS funding, and in so doing encourage IFS to develop a strategy to reduce its dependence on Sida.
- IFS should explore opportunities to raise awareness of grantees' relevant and applicable research findings among embassies and Sida programme officers.
- IFS' new foray into providing technical advice for a national research council may be replicable and could perhaps be utilised elsewhere in FORSK (Sida Unit for Research Cooperation) programming.

1 Introduction

In the inception report for this evaluation (Annex Two) the purpose of the evaluation was interpreted as being to primarily analyse two aspects of the work of IFS. The first was to describe the process of developing a new strategy for the work of the organisation. The second was to analyse the emerging role of IFS in a changing context of capacity development for research in developing countries. The evaluative approach was thus intended to be both *descriptive*, since Sida does not feel it currently has a sufficient overview of IFS' work, and *analytical* in terms of drawing conclusions (primarily) about the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the work of IFS, now and when the new IFS strategy for 2011-2020 is rolled out.

This evaluation therefore looks at where IFS currently stands in what it an uncertain period between the former and future structures and strategies. Results, relevance and efficiency are assessed in relation to their implications for the future and how IFS could best implement the new strategy and where IFS should focus its support. This has created evaluative challenges, in that the new logical framework and overall strategy are not yet in place, but also opportunities for greater utility in that the structures are still malleable and as there is considerable leeway for using the evaluation to support IFS and Sida to consider a way forward and a partnership that reflects the IFS of the future.

This is particularly important due to the fact that the new strategy is ambitious in terms of both institutional and financial demands. This is in a period when IFS has experienced declining income flows. It is hoped that this evaluation can be a tool for reflection over how to prioritise use of limited resources and also provide a basis for taking a more proactive and strategic approach to identifying potential new sources of income.

The timeframe under review was principally, but not exclusively, the period since the last evaluation, which was presented in 2010.[1] The current evaluation does not replicate nor duplicate the analysis of the 2010 evaluation, but instead focuses on the current situation of IFS within its on-going strategic reform process.

[1] Muraguri-Mwololo, Rosa, Roland Schertenleib and Arne Svensson. 2010. External Evaluation of the International Foundation for Science (IFS). Professional Management. Final report 2010-01-14.

2 Methods and Limitations

The evaluation was initiated with a very brief inception phase that consisted of initial review of documentation and meetings held with Sida FORSK and IFS during June 26-27, 2012. The inception report (Annex Two) was used to propose an approach that would clarify the focus of the evaluation and suggest methods. A revised set of questions based on those in the ToRs (Annex One) was proposed and approved.

The methodology consisted of four evaluative approaches:

The evaluation team reviewed IFS documentation focusing on the strategic planning process and monitoring and evaluation efforts. The team also scanned available evaluations and analysis of similar organisations and networks as a basis for identifying comparable indicators of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. It became quickly apparent that IFS is a relatively unique organisation due to its role of fostering development of the capacities of young researchers. It is both a research council and also works toward individual capacity development. The evaluation team recognised that most research councils have dissimilar aims and that comparisons could therefore lead to misleading assumptions.

Strategic stakeholders, including members of the Board of Trustees (BoT), Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) members, advisors, staff of collaborating organisations and others deemed relevant were interviewed in an in-depth manner, during field visits and by skype. The majority of these interviews were with current or former SAC members. Twenty-six grantees were selectively interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. Some were interviewed in Kenya, Thailand and Vietnam during field visits. Other grantees were interviewed by Skype. The team strove to ensure that the sample adequately reflected the diversity of stakeholders, including grantees. Email invitations were sent to all BoT members and most of the SAC members, and then interviews were scheduled with those who wished to participate. Therefore the sample is likely to have been biased toward those with a strong level of engagement with IFS.

The stakeholders came from a variety of disciplines, with an obvious emphasis on the natural sciences given the predominance of IFS grants in these areas. This may be one reason for the ambivalence regarding if and how to include a greater social science focus noted in the evaluation. Also, these different stakeholders had differing levels of engagement and interest in wider innovation systems and international development efforts, which has also led to the disputed perspectives on the key strategic issues facing IFS. A total of 29 SAC strategic stakeholders were interviewed. A stratified random sample of grantees from the years 2009 – 2011 was made based on targeting countries that receive aid from Sida, especially the Sida Programmes Countries, but also its Post-Conflict Countries and the countries where Sida is currently phasing out.

When interviewing stakeholders with a close relationship with the organisation the evaluation team gathered information on how these stakeholders perceive the implicit theories of change/action regarding IFS' work, both in terms of current structures and regarding the new proposed strategies. With younger researchers the team attempted to adapt and apply elements of the Most Significant Change method[2] that IFS intends to use in its future monitoring system.[3] The intention was to focus on finding out what the "first rung on the career ladder" actually means for these researchers. Most Significant Change was found not to be appropriate due to it being a method that is best suited for harvesting outcomes that are unpredictable and highly varied. As the career path of young researchers, largely in academic institutions, is relatively linear, such an open-ended approach was not needed. Therefore this interview format was modified to being more of a semi-structured approach. It still focused on what the IFS grant meant for their career development, but was more oriented toward teasing out how the IFS support has fit into the broader array of factors (and funders) contributing to career development.

IFS has a new logical framework that is not yet fully apparent as a structure for planning and monitoring (due to the transitional phase that the organisation is in). Therefore the evaluation made limited attempt to assess performance based on the indicators in that logical framework. Discussions with Sida have indicated that even the new logical framework may require further adjustments if it is to prove sufficient for future Sida funding decisions.

The evaluation team has documented results of IFS' work (section 5.5 below), but given that this was the primary focus of the evaluation conducted in 2010, and there was no reason to believe that major changes have occurred in the interim, this has not been emphasised in this evaluation. This was agreed upon during the inception phase of the evaluation (Annex Two).

In August a workshop was held in Stockholm with the IFS secretariat and Sida where the team leader presented the emerging findings and both IFS and Sida staff were encouraged to reflect upon their possibly contrasting perspectives on the strategic change process that is underway and the implications of these perspectives and priorities for their future partnership. In this workshop it was notably recognised that the question of IFS' "efficiency" needed to be assessed in recognition of the dual research council/capacity development roles of the organisation, and not just as a research council per se.

In November a final presentation was made of the evaluation to Sida FORSK and the final draft reflects feedback that was received at the presentation and afterwards.

In understanding individual capacity development processes it should furthermore be noted that there are huge variations in the capacity and needs of IFS' institutional partners

[2]Davis, Rick & Jess Dart 2005. "The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique. A Guide to Its Use".
[3]The IFS use of MSC is intended to measure *impacts* of IFS research, whereas this evaluation focused on the *outcomes* of IFS support on researchers' careers.

where these young researchers are based, and therefore the needs for IFS support vary as well. As such, some of the generalisations in this report should be seen in this context.

The primary overall challenge in relation to the scope of the evaluation has been the fact that the details of the IFS strategy have not yet been fully formulated, much less rolled out. IFS still effectively operates based on the earlier strategy and some functions (most notably monitoring and evaluation functions) have been largely suspended in recent years in order to focus on the participatory strategic development process that has been underway. Since 2010 IFS has been actively and inclusively interacting with its stakeholders to develop the new strategy, and that process is not yet complete. Therefore it has not been possible to *evaluate* all aspects of the strategy in that it is not yet in place and has not yet begun to be implemented. Instead the team has combined an evaluative approach with *assessment* of the strategy in relation to the chosen criteria.

In retrospect the evaluation methodology, taking its departure in the collected and often diverse views of the grantees and key stakeholders, has proven valid. IFS is an organisation that is much more than its secretariat. Even if the stakeholders often disagree, those involved with IFS have strong views and ownership, and IFS is dependent on maintaining this level of engagement. The findings of this evaluation therefore should be seen (and made use of) as part of this on-going dialogue. It would be ill-advised to make any decisions on the future of the organisation that are not anchored in IFS' own process of discussing how to proceed in the future.

Nonetheless it should be stressed that the evaluation has been limited in that it is largely based on an analysis of perceptions that could not be independently verified regarding, especially, results. Where monitoring data was available this has been used, but this has been limited. Some of the individuals referred to here as "strategic stakeholders" are no longer direct stakeholders and are therefore viewed by the evaluation team as providing a relatively independent perception of the work of IFS, but as noted, these are perceptions rather than findings reflecting quantitative data.

3 Background

3.1 HISTORY OF IFS

IFS was founded in 1972 to enhance research capacity in developing countries by extending support to promising young scientists; a group that faces particular challenges in initiating their research careers. Through its mandate, IFS also aimed at reducing the brain drain many of these countries were experiencing. One aspect of this was (and is) to provide small (USD12,000) grants whereby young researchers returning from post graduate programmes abroad are able to re-establish themselves at their home institutions.

Since its inception, IFS has awarded more than 7,000 small grants to young researchers in 100 countries and around 17,500 researchers have benefitted from other forms of capacity building support, including thematic workshops. The thematic focus has throughout been on research in a broad spectrum of biological and water resources. A limited number of social science research projects have also received support (a total number of 163 grants have been given to 155 grantees since the social science research area was established in 2002. Thirty-six grants have also been awarded within two special initiatives in the social sciences over these years).

In 2010 IFS initiated a strategic reform process, which has yet to be completed. The organisation has undertaken a large participatory "envisioning" exercise aiming at contemplating its future direction and incorporating recommendations that have materialised from earlier external evaluations and the mission statement. As part of this envisioning exercise, IFS has revised its mission. The new mission is: *'To contribute towards strengthening the capability of young men and women scientists in developing countries to conduct relevant and high quality research and their individual agency to put it into use'.*

This revised mission differs from the previous approach by including a commitment to developing *individual agency to put it [research] into use*. In order to undertake this expanded mission, IFS intends to go beyond its original focus on grants and capability enhancing support to individual young researchers from least developed countries to add two additional programmes. The first of which is grants and capability enhancing support for collaborative research; and the second being support to contribute innovation and to put research into use. While the first programme is much in line with their old agenda, the second and third programmes are new, reflecting a recognition of, on one hand, the ever more complex development challenges that face humanity and that often demand concerted research efforts across scientific disciplines and geographic regions to be addressed in a satisfactory way, and, on the other, the need to help bridge the divide between science and policy and practice.

While the general aspects of the new strategy have been mapped out, the details are yet to be formulated. Furthermore, it is still unclear how and when additional and diversified income will be found to roll out the new strategy. It appears likely that roll-out of the strategy will be phased and gradual. Revisions to the eligibility criteria for individual grants are specified in the strategy (notably restriction of individual grants to low income countries and a forty year age limit for first time female applicants in all three programmes). These

changes are still the main subject of debate among IFS stakeholders and have in some respects overshadowed more strategic issues facing the organisation.

3.2 SIDA AND OTHER FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO IFS[4]

In 2011 IFS received SEK 25 million from Sida, out of total core support of approximately SEK 31 million. The proportion of reliance on Sida funding increased by 20% in 2011 due largely to a lack of core support from Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), which was in turn related to reorganisation at Norad. At this time it is not clear whether Norad will return to providing core support in the future. DFID (Department for International Development) also did not provide core funding in 2011, but their contributions have varied from year to year. In sum, it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding funding trends from 2011, but there appears to be a general decline in core funding over the past five years. Restricted contributions are also declining, having varied from over SEK 26 million in 2009 to over SEK 8 million in 2011.

Expenditure on research grants is also declining. There was a sharp drop in 2010 to just under SEK 10 million due to uncertainties about how much funds would be received. In 2011 support bounced back to over SEK 16 million, but this is less than the averages of SEK 20 million in preceding four years.

Secretariat expenditure on salaries and other costs has also shown a declining trend along with the decline in income, from a high of just over SEK 15 million out of a total expenditure of SEK 56 million in 2008, to over SEK 12 million out of SEK 39 million in 2011. This has primarily been achieved through reduction in staffing.

In sum, the financial situation of IFS is of concern, and raises questions about the organisation's capacity to embark on two new programming areas. There is an intention that these new areas will be financed, for the time being, through additional earmarked project support. If some donors choose to shift core support to these new areas of activity and the new funding is not additional, this could create significant difficulties.

There is widespread recognition among the stakeholders who follow financial issues (primarily the BoT) that income streams must be diversified, but also that IFS will inevitably be dependent on Sweden as the main donor for the foreseeable future. Interviewees have suggested a few possible ways to reduce dependency on Sida. One is to more closely align IFS with Swedish institutions and use this to leverage core support from other Swedish government departments.

The other is to establish strategic partnerships with major international institutions (e.g., the World Bank African Centres of Excellence or CGIAR, which is increasingly being pressured to focus more on capacity development of national agricultural research institutions). This evaluation cannot judge the potential for entering into either of these types of

[4] The data analysed in this section is included in Annex 7.

partnerships nor the likelihood that they would generate significant new income flows. IFS has a very solid track record, which would seem to suggest that there may be opportunities to leverage this for new types of partnerships. However, either approach would entail significant transaction costs to explore prospects and any such investment would therefore represent a risk.

Some interviewees from the BoT also noted that the discussion on opportunities for diversification of funding would benefit considerably from a proactive engagement by Sida. It was even suggested that Sida convene different donors and potential donors to discuss the issue. Sida does not concur that this is an appropriate role, but recognises that information about Sida intentions may support fundraising efforts.

In discussions with the secretariat and BoT the evaluation team found that there was awareness of the existence of opportunities such as those noted above. Contacts exist with, for example, the CGIAR system. However, the uncertainties associated with the incomplete strategic planning process and Sida intentions appear to have led to a hesitation in embarking on a concerted and structured effort to identify new funding sources and systems. The support that has been approved for the programme 2 pilot from the Carnegie Foundation[5] has emerged out of an iterative process, which is appropriate for designing a modest project with a donor with which a collegial relationship already exists, but may not be sufficient for establishing the programmatic and comprehensive support structures that would be likely to be needed to work with the CGIAR or World Bank structures noted above.

Finally, the financial relationship between Sida and IFS is long and complex. It is outside the scope of this evaluation to explore the period before 2010 and thereby to ascertain a full overview of the reasons behind the current situation of continued very heavy continued dependence on Sida. The evaluation therefore seeks only to present the recent views of existing stakeholders and other informants and the implications of these findings for the future.

[5] IFS. 2011. Proposal: Developing and Retaining the Next Generation of Scientists at Universities in West, Eastern and Southern African Countries. 7th July, 2010 revised 26th July 2011.

4 Processes Underway Since 2010

4.1 "ENVISIONING" AND THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Starting in 2010 IFS has been undertaking an "envisioning" process consisting primarily of regional stakeholder consultations, a questionnaire sent to 7000 individuals with some affiliation with IFS and discussions in the BoT. Interviews made clear that the process was inclusive and extensive in terms of stakeholders. The level of engagement varied widely, as would be expected. Grantees were mostly unaware of the envisioning process, but did not feel excluded as their comments indicated that they generally perceived themselves more as "beneficiaries" than as "stakeholders" in IFS. Those key stakeholders who have participated in the regional workshops (primarily SAC members and advisors) are generally very pleased with the level of engagement in the envisioning process, whereas others who did not are sometimes critical about the lack of feedback from the secretariat when they have provided input. Some recognise that given the workload on the secretariat staff this is inevitable and acceptable. In general those interviewed in this evaluation do not have a very clear understanding about exactly what decisions have been made and how. Some have expressed anxieties about Sida not having engaged in the process, since they are uncertain about whether or not the main donor will accept the outcomes.

There was some criticism raised about whether the method applied was appropriate in terms of generating interest in the process outside of the "stakeholders", i.e., in bringing in outsiders' perspectives and new ideas. The evaluation team shares this perception, while recognising that the methods chosen for the envisioning process would inevitably lead to a focus on "stakeholders". Different methods and a proactive outreach to engage with "non-stakeholders" would have been necessary to obtain this type of feedback since "non-stakeholders" would, almost by definition, not be interested in replying to questionnaires or attending meetings. In particular it can be noted that an engagement with "non-stakeholders" would have been useful in terms of obtaining input from organisations through which new funding streams might be found.

A few interviewees perceive (and here again, the evaluation team concurs) that this "stakeholder" focus is indicative of a somewhat "cosy" approach to policy development wherein those who are highly dedicated to IFS are those who are most engaged in thinking about the future of the organisation. This is a problem inherent in network development (and indeed, the IFS constituency can be seen as a network given the high level of engagement and dedication that exists, as will be discussed elsewhere in this evaluation)

where the vibrancy of a network relates to its ability to engage a wider constituency attracting new and fresh ideas.[6] A network that is too "cosy" may fail to bring in new perspectives and thereby fail to engage constituencies that would need to become involved in the network in order to retain relevance and engagement.

The evaluation team interprets the consensus (or lack thereof) from the various workshops[7] held in the envisioning process as consisting the following:

- There is a need to streamline application procedures and better utilise electronic systems.
- There is a need to reassess and more narrowly focus research themes (a proposal from a dedicated task force has been put forward[8]).
- It is difficult to obtain a consensus on the exact changes to be made in grant applicant criteria regarding age, gender and countries.
- There is a recognition that a shift toward greater interdisciplinarity is needed to retain relevance, but no consensus on what kinds of interdisciplinary collaboration should be promoted, what the ambition level should be in terms of how extensive interdisciplinary collaboration should become, and no clear approach underway to move toward such a consensus.
- Interdisciplinarity is specifically recognised as a precondition for greater engagement in innovation systems and to put research into use, but here again, clarity has yet to be achieved in relation to IFS' level of ambition in this regard.

Regarding the last two points, the need to move towards more interdisciplinary perspectives has been driven by a desire to ensure that IFS supports scientific work that is socially relevant. This has been particularly encouraged and driven by one BoT member together with the secretariat, and earmarked Norad funding has been used to finance discussions on the issue.[9] These discussions are said to have been highly controversial at first. The evaluation team's overall perception is that a commitment to social relevance is now widely accepted as being necessary and requiring greater emphasis on interdisciplinarity. The remaining controversy lies in making decisions regarding how far and how fast IFS could or should move in this direction. Some see this as involving the inclusion of greater social science perspectives, whereas others see this as bringing together different technical fields in order to produce a given technology.

[6] Innovations for Scaling Impact and Keystone Accountability 2010 New Generation Network Evaluation
[7] IFS 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Latin America. Merida, Mexico February 7-8, 2011; IFS 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Africa. Nairobi, Kenya March 16-17, 2011; IFS 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Asia. Bangkok, Thailand March 18-19, 2011; IFS 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Reports from IFS ad hoc consultations 2010 & 2011.
[8] IFS 2012. The Areas of Research Funded by the International Foundation For Science. September 2012.
[9] Barth Eide, Ghezae and Kvil. 2011. Science for Science and or for Social Relevance?

4.2 ONGOING WORK UNDER THE FORMER STRATEGY

The evaluation team finds no reason to doubt that IFS has been effective in maintaining the same quality standards that existed before the last evaluation. The grantees interviewed report that their applications have been managed well, apart from some delays when the workload of the secretariat spiked due to an exponential increase in the number of applicants and when the secretariat had to delay decisions due to uncertainty about funding levels.

However, it is notable that the internal monitoring and evaluation system has largely been "put on hold" due to the additional workload of the envisioning process and the uncertainties around the future of the organisation. It seems that the feedback being generated by the envisioning process itself has temporarily replaced the process of obtaining feedback through monitoring activities. This has also been a matter of prioritising use of resources. The evaluation team is concerned that this prioritisation has been inappropriate since the need for monitoring does not stop during a strategic planning process.

5 Description and Analysis of Strategy[10] and Functions

5.1 STRATEGIC PROGRAMME 1: INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH

Strategic programme 1 has always been, and is likely to remain, as the core of IFS's work. IFS stakeholders have made clear that they do not wish to deviate from this primary focus.[11]

Grant management functions, by the secretariat, are perceived by virtually all those interviewed as efficient, unbureaucratic and helpful. Some concerns have been raised about responsiveness, apparently in conjunction with the above-mentioned spike in applications that temporarily overloaded the secretariat. Interviewees particularly stress the unbureaucratic procedures (often seen as particularly favourable in comparison with alternative funding sources such as national and regional research councils) and what is noted as almost surprisingly helpful support in connection with queries. Interviewees were clear in their assessment that IFS explicitly recognises the needs and capacities of young researchers and responds accordingly. Some pointed out that the seemingly mundane feature that the IFS secretariat replies consistently and promptly to all enquiries makes IFS unique among research councils.

Interviews showed mixed views on the grant evaluation process. Positive aspects were that the SAC members are highly qualified and put in a considerable amount of time (without payment) discussing openly the pros and cons of the proposals. Some feel the evaluation criteria were sufficient and appropriate, stating that it was unique that proposals were judged on their own merit, as opposed to links to senior researchers. Others were more critical, with some concerns about quality and even one comment about political correctness sometimes taking precedence over scientific rigour. Some reviewers were seen as biased toward specific applicants. It is widely recognised that procedures can and should be streamlined by, for example, a scoring system and much better filtering.

A major proportion of IFS individual research grants are used for purchasing equipment, establishing laboratories and purchasing consumables for these labs. Researchers have a choice between doing procurement themselves or asking IFS to manage this. Some grantees note that some other potential financiers do not fund such purchases and that a laptop and establishment of a laboratory are preconditions for starting a career as a re-

[10] Within IFS the term "strategy" appears to refer to the extent to which programming (a) focuses on individuals, (b) is targeted toward different countries/men and women/young researchers, (c) is interdisciplinary, and (d) is focused on application and use.
[11] IFS. 2011. IFS Strategy Implementation Workshop Report

searcher. They also identified the opportunity to have IFS do the procurements on their behalf as unique.

Regarding "nurturing" functions in association with grant management, IFS is relatively unique in seeing this as a direct responsibility of the organisation. Interviewees and other key stakeholders feel that most research councils perceive this to be beyond their mandates.

Nurturing consists largely of four types of support, including both feedback on proposals and specific "Capability Enhancement Support"[12]:

1. Feedback on research proposals to enable and encourage researchers to resubmit if they fail the first time, support which is described as unique to IFS.
2. Training workshops on themes such as proposal writing.
3. Support for visits to laboratories to access equipment unavailable at home institutions and also to promote networking.
4. Opportunities to attend conferences to present papers and (above all) for networking.

The amount of "nurturing" that is needed and desired by grantees varies enormously. Most expressed particular appreciation for feedback on their proposals. Most were only vaguely aware of the other functions. The sample interviewed is not necessarily representative in this respect. The evaluation team did not encounter a sufficient sample of those who participated in the other functions to draw verifiable conclusions.

From the demand for training workshops there is a clear need for this service, though it may be questioned whether or not IFS is the most obvious institution to take on this role (discussed further below). Furthermore, several interviewees noted that a single, short, stand-alone workshop is unlikely to have significant impact, which in turn suggests that these inputs are currently not nested in broader processes in the regions including regional research networks, regional efforts to put research into use, etc.. Some noted that a more strategic selection of research topics was needed, for example, the more technical grantees (i.e., the majority) could be provided with support to help them understand how to take societal relevance into account.

Regarding laboratory visits and conference attendance, these functions seem vitally important, as verified by those who received this support and the key stakeholders who found this to be a chance to meet the grantees and help them to meet potential future colleagues from other research institutions. This is especially important in regions where there are no other opportunities for this kind of activity (e.g., more important in Africa than in Asia, where access to networking resources is sometimes available locally).

[12]This evaluation addresses "nurturing" as encompassing both aspects, feedback and Capability Enhancing Support as both contribute together to the ultimate outcomes.

5.2 STRATEGIC PROGRAMME 2: COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

As noted above, this strategic programme has not yet begun to be implemented and, as such, the feedback received in the course of this evaluation is speculative. Most of those interviewed were either unaware that IFS was launching this new strategy or were only vaguely aware of what was being planned. Very few knew what was included in the pilot collaborative research project to be supported by Carnegie Foundation[13].

The pilot project is based on collaboration between IFS and Biodiversity International to support a group of young researchers in a number of African countries to undertake research into agricultural biodiversity and underutilised crops. The exact scope of the pilot is still not clear. The evaluation team finds this to be a highly appropriate way to test new modalities to undertake thematically focused collaborative research together with a strong international partner in a given geographical area.

However, the evaluation team also finds that the proposal[14] does not make clear the focus of this project, and is therefore probably a poor tool to enable learning about what this project implies for the future of programme 2. It is understood that this project has developed through an iterative dialogue with Carnegie Foundation, which is positive, but as a *pilot* it is as yet not structured for the kind of institutional learning that is needed if IFS is to replicate such activities in the future, i.e., there is no clear link to the theory of changes that are expected in IFS' relations with different stakeholders in expanding into the field of collaborative research. Also, of considerable concern, the proposal fails to sufficiently clarify if, how and to what extent the project aims to foster different types of interdisciplinarity.

Apart from the uncertainties regarding the pilot, there are also strong and often divergent views regarding *whether or not there is a future role* for IFS in collaborative research, and with this the potentially catalytic role that IFS might play in bringing researchers together for joint initiatives. Some feel that this is donor driven and beyond the capacity of the organisation, particularly during a period of financial uncertainty, and that a global organisation such as IFS has no capacity to manage the transaction costs of keeping teams together. Some feel that the pilot, for example, places undue faith in IT and social networking being able to solve more profound underlying intellectual challenges related to interdisciplinary collaboration. Some also feel that collaborative research is beyond the capacity of young researchers.

Others feel that societal relevance can only be achieved through collaborative research and that IFS can learn from the pilot to identify a realistic supportive role that does not re-

[13] IFS. 2011. Proposal: Developing and Retaining the Next Generation of Scientists at Universities in West, Eastern and Southern African Countries. 7th July, 2010 revised 26th July 2011.
[14] IFS. 2011. Developing and Retaining the Next Generation of Scientists at Universities in West, Eastern and Southern African Countries

quire the secretariat to be drawn into bringing together the groups for collaboration (i.e., how to ensure that programme 2 is entirely demand driven). Those who were optimistic highlighted the importance of starting narrowly and expanding based on lessons learnt and the availability of additional resources that would not conflict with the need to maintain the main focus of the organisation on programme 1.

A core issue raised by many key stakeholders is the question of whether or not IFS could/should bear the considerable transaction costs required to broker interdisciplinary research. When some of those who were positive about collaborative research were asked about this they suggested that IFS should avoid a broker role but could assume a supportive and facilitative role for groups that were brokered by others or came together of their own accord.

The evaluation team concurs regarding these concerns and interprets these findings as suggesting the need to define a very focused and narrow niche in interdisciplinary research. The evaluation team generally concurs with the "optimists", while recognising that much of the concerns of the "pessimists" need to be taken into account. Collaborative research can be assumed to have good chances of becoming viable as discrete projects tied to a strong institutional partner that can bear much of the transaction costs and a committed donor. The team doubts that this structure could or should become a part of IFS' core research funding structure.

There are also widely divergent views about *who should be supported to collaborate and why*.

At one end of the spectrum are expectations that this strategic programme should be used to promote broader interdisciplinary research including the social sciences as a way of ensuring greater societal relevance. As noted above, Norad has financed bringing stakeholders together to discuss how to proceed in this regard.[15] At this end of the spectrum these forms of collaborative research might effectively merge with the third strategic programme and an understanding of the socioeconomic dimensions of research findings is considered a precondition for effective engagement in innovation systems.

Only a few of those interviewed perceived such broad interdisciplinarity to be a priority, though the interviewees who expressed hope for greater engagement of social science researchers had strong views on the importance of this. Some of those interviewed, who were sceptical of this programme, expressed views that this was a way that donors were pushing for inappropriate interdisciplinary research that was beyond the capacities of younger researchers.

At the other end of the spectrum of interdisciplinary ambitions is the need for researchers from a given discipline to meet one another, particularly where (primarily in Africa) they have little contact with other researchers from their own discipline in their own countries, much less in their regions or internationally.

[15]Barth Eide, Ghezae and Kvil. 2011. Science for Science and or for Social Relevance?

In-between there are those who feel a need for collaboration among related natural science and technological disciplines who would need to work together to ensure that a given product, technology or finding would prove relevant and could be developed to the extent that it would be taken up by private investors or farmers.

A positive potential aspect of support to collaborative research noted by some interviewees was that it could, if appropriately designed, could be a way to link younger researchers with mid-career researchers/former grantees for capacity development. This was seen as a way to build in-country networks and avoid the current situation where mid-career researchers lose their connection with IFS.

Some of those interviewed were quite sceptical about a role for IFS in promoting collaboration through use of social networking tools. Some feel that young researchers already had satisfactory social networks within their regions and doubted whether an institution working in three continents based in Stockholm had a unique supportive role in this regard. This may, however, not be the case in the specific thematic pilot that is planned. It does, however, draw attention to the fact that the IFS secretariat does not currently have the capacity to enter into this new area of work, and may lack appropriate capacities (either in relation to new networking tools or in interdisciplinary cooperation) to bring together interdisciplinary groups. If these initiatives are managed as separate projects, as is the case in the planned pilot, this can presumably be managed without overburdening the current staff or drawing on human resources that are already thinly stretched. Future expansion into this area may need to follow similar project modalities where many of these new tasks are co-managed with a strong institutional partner.

Finally, it is important to mention that the evaluation uncovered many examples where IFS individual grants are already contributing to collaborative research as grantees share their funds with MSc and BSc students or join with teams of researchers who have accessed other financial resources. This suggests that IFS may have a basis for better learning from and building on the collaborative research that has already been initiated by its grantees themselves.

5.3 STRATEGIC PROGRAMME 3: CONTRIBUTING INNOVATION

Compared with strategic programme 2, Contributing Innovation is even less defined and even more controversial. Given the current dearth of written plans for this programme the comments below refer largely to the question of whether or not IFS should take a more proactive stance regarding innovation systems in general, rather than any specific approach. There are basically two directions that IFS could take if it was to proceed in this area. The first would be to take steps to better equip, encourage and facilitate young researchers to better engage with the private sector, agricultural extension or other actors in the innovation system. The second alternative would be to take steps to actually support multistakeholder initiatives bringing together actors in innovation systems, value chains, etc.

Innovation system involvement is controversial due to the fact that the topic is perceived in the research community as being donor driven. This may be combined with a certain degree of disinterest toward agricultural extension and the private sector. The con-

cerns about this being a donor driven agenda may also be related to the increasing pressures on the CGIAR system and the GCARD process to look beyond research per se to focus more on capacity development within innovation systems. These are trends that are not greeted warmly throughout the research institutions dependent on donor funding. It can be furthermore noted that even a modest engagement in such a popular (among non-research actors especially) topic as innovation systems could lead to greater expectations and pressures to undertake activities that are clearly beyond IFS' capacity and comparative advantage. Some interviewees noted what they perceive of as the massive waste of resources invested in engaging the CGIAR system in agricultural research for development, and warned that IFS should learn from this and stay clear of such fads.

Another criticism raised regarding IFS intentions to work more from an innovation systems perspective is that young researchers are too inexperienced to start putting their research into practice. The interviews with grantees revealed, by contrast, an extraordinary level of will and practical engagement with the private sector, agricultural extension and farmers. Several could point out specific examples of technologies that they had developed that were already either being used or being prepared for commercial use. Some interviewees commented that they were the only ones who actually meet anyone outside of academia as their more senior colleagues have no time or interest in doing so. It is seen as being outside of the "comfort zone" of senior researchers, whereas young researchers are ready to "try anything".

Some key stakeholders feel that, regardless of the actual capacities of young researchers, it was imperative that they learn about the role of science in society by engaging in innovation systems. They were concerned that many young researchers had not been given sufficient encouragement to think this through. A failure to link with innovation systems would signal a failure by IFS to live up to its mission.

Some feel that a modest and realistic niche regarding innovation could be found that would be primarily focused on support to *network links and orientation*. For network links it was recognised that IFS could arrange annual meetings in individual countries to advise Sida and other donors of their relevant research. It was also suggested that a focus could be on supporting contacts with FAO and CGIAR institutions, where it would be hoped that these other organisations would then lead on actual activities. Regarding orientation, IFS could prepare online tutorials or other information to help young researchers understand, for example, how agricultural extension systems function, key issues concerning intellectual property rights and other relevant themes.

Despite the high level of engagement of young researchers in their own national innovation systems, it is important to note that any engagement from IFS in innovation systems would effectively need to "start from scratch" at the secretariat level. This would constitute an entirely new area of activity for IFS and would presumably require additional and different staff.

An area of great importance but also enormous complexity is that of intellectual property rights. This is a major concern of researchers getting involved in innovation systems, but IFS has very little capacity to support them and it is unlikely that the secretariat would be able to mobilise such capacity. It was noted that IFS might be able to prepare a modest online tutorial to provide researchers with some initial orientation on the topic, but that grander ambitions would be unrealistic.

In sum, the evaluation team judges that a modest focus on support to network links and orientation in programme 3 is a realistic and manageable way to start engagements in innovation systems and could also be a way of building much needed ownership among IFS stakeholders before moving toward more ambitious undertakings.

5.4 COMPARISON WITH OTHER YOUNG RESEARCHER GRANT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The evaluation team queried informants about other global or regional institutions with similar mandates and the almost universal response was that there are perceived to be none that (a) focus effectively on young researchers, and (b) act as responsive and unbureaucratic funding structures. Some grantees also noted more specific advantages of IFS over other funding sources, such as flexibility in the use of funds for laboratory equipment or other items that are not covered by many research councils.

In terms of nurturing functions, there are some organisations that provide travel grants to attend conferences (The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, TWAS) but these are perceived to be highly bureaucratic. Otherwise, there was a strong view that there are effectively no other organisations that combine research grants with significant nurturing functions, and that IFS thereby has a unique niche.

The evaluation team asked throughout the evaluation process about specific institutions that might be comparable to IFS. Virtually none of the respondents could name any examples. It was noted that national research councils are in some countries starting to take on similar (but not identical) roles. The same was noted in relation to a few regional organisations like ASARECA, RUFORUM, VICRES, and WIOMSA. But there were generally very high levels of scepticism regarding regional alternatives. A few informants expressed strong views that regional institutions are not providing added value over national and global structures and are supported primarily by donors.

The findings of the evaluation team in attempting to compare IFS with other organisations are included in Annex 4. None of these organisations was found to have a role that was similar to that of IFS. More specifically, the team considered TWAS and The Organisation for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) in more depth, which nevertheless deviate from IFS in considerable ways, including that:

- TWAS and OWSD mainly focus on fellowships and prizes rather than providing research grants;
- OWSD only targets women researchers and is quite limited in its coverage;
- TWAS only supports the basic sciences (as opposed to applied sciences); and
- TWAS only grants support to those who already have a PhD degree.

5.5 RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT AT IFS

Interviews with key stakeholders revealed a considerable level of dissatisfaction with the existing monitoring and evaluation system due to the preceding system having been dis-

continued in 2010 whilst the new system has yet to be launched. IFS has generally been seen to have become rather complacent in the regard. The evaluation team concurs.

The IFS secretariat appears committed to reassessing its results-based management efforts. It has utilised support from AIMS in reworking its logical framework. Actual collection of data on socioeconomic impacts will eventually be undertaken using the Most Significant Change methodology.[16] Since this new system is not yet in place, the appropriateness of this approach cannot yet be judged. It may be questioned how much an understanding of impacts, wherein the contribution of small IFS grants is likely to be limited, will be useful for IFS, apart from providing some "success stories" for inspiration and fund raising. Furthermore, these impacts are only likely to be realised some years after the grant has been received, further complicating plausible attribution to a small grant given the range of factors that are likely to arise in the interim. It is of course important to find ways of documenting such impacts, but it may be misplaced to focus primarily at this level. Thus, the evaluation team questions whether the proposed approach will prove relevant in terms of utility (Is this what IFS stakeholders and donors really need to know in order to improve performance in what is primarily a capacity development function?) and credibility (Is it realistic to expect to credibly attribute societal impacts to such small research projects?).

Nonetheless, the evaluation team encountered several very exciting examples of how grantees are actually achieving impact. These stories may be anecdotal, but could be very useful for understanding how grantees are themselves engaged in innovation systems. Such findings could prove useful for determining what IFS should include in programme 3, and perhaps even more importantly, what the grantees seem capable of achieving without IFS support (perhaps even indicating that programme 3 is superfluous). Thus the above critique of the focus on impacts is not meant to indicate that this is entirely irrelevant, rather that it may not be appropriate as the core of the future evaluation approach. Some interviewees noted that information on this could be easily and inexpensively gathered by first including a section in the application form where the applicants have to discuss how they perceive that their research can be put into use, which would force them in the initial stage to think this through, and then when the actual research project has been completed by asking grantees to provide a short description of if and how their research was put into use (perhaps one year after the regular grant reporting). The evident pride with which grantees described their results in the course of this evaluation suggests that they would be eager to provide such information.

The IFS mission refers to *capabilities* to conduct research and *agency* to put this research into use, both focused overwhelmingly on individual young researchers. The prima-

[16] Most Significant Change (MSC) is a participatory M&E technique where significant change stories regularly are collected to monitor pre-defined domains of change, for instance 'changes in people's lives'. The most significant of these stories are singled out by designated stakeholder or staff panels in the subsequent phase. By generating information on impact and outcomes, MSC can also facilitate the evaluation of the performance of a program as a whole (see Davis, Rick & Jess Dart 2005. "The 'Most Significant Change' (MSC) Technique. A Guide to Its Use")..

ry focus of IFS' work is on helping young researchers to start their careers, as it is within these careers that capabilities will be fostered and agency will be found. Interviews with grantees in this evaluation showed that they were justifiably proud of these impacts, but IFS and key stakeholders were more interested in the outcomes relating to whether or not the grant helped the young researchers onto the "first rung" of their career ladders. This evaluation team attempted to use a similar approach to MSC (Most Significant Change) in its interviews with grantees to explore this and found that this highly open-ended approach was not useful given the relatively linear career path of most researchers. The intention of listening to grantees about how the IFS supported them in their careers is highly appropriate, but perhaps not the method used to collect this data.

IFS has a complicated message to present in communicating its results as these are a combination of capacity development and impact within innovation systems (and perhaps even policies). IFS could perhaps learn from other research institutions that are publicising their results as a way of generating further support,[17] but it may be important to present these outcomes in such a way as to highlight capacity development outcomes more than ultimate impacts.

In sum, the evaluation team is impressed by the creative and innovative ideas in the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy 2011-2020, but is concerned that the focus on impacts may be unrealistic and provide limited utility regarding how to ensure that programming actually helps researchers in their careers. This impact focus can be interpreted as perhaps being related more to the presumed demands of certain donors, rather than the more realistic level of outcomes that stakeholders, including Sida, are likely to be interested in. Sida's current guidelines for assessing results frameworks emphasise identifying plausible outcomes (and relevant indicators) where the contribution of Sida support can be traced. Often this involves a focus on "bridging outcomes" between outputs (such as research projects) lead to broader impacts.

[17]See Marusiak J. 2010 From Paper to Policy: Building Environmental Economics Research Impact, EEPSEA 2000-2009.

6 Stakeholder Analysis Related to Scope and Relevance

6.1 RANGE AND RELEVANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS

Through the SAC and advisors and through its grantees and alumni, IFS engages with an impressive and in many cases appropriate range of stakeholders. Limited links with social scientists remain the major gap, which relates to the limited number of grants for social science topics (7.4% during the past 10 years). The evaluation team note that this implies that many aspects of relevance remain unaddressed. IFS' relationships are primarily (but not exclusively) with individuals from a broad range of institutions, rather than the institutions themselves. This is inherent in the IFS structure of providing individual grant support. IFS is above all reliant on the extraordinary personal commitments of the SAC and advisors, who devote considerable volunteer efforts to IFS' work. This is not regulated through MoUs (Memoranda of Understanding) with their respective institutions, nor should it be.

Notable exceptions to the focus on individual stakeholders are the expanding relationship with Biodiversity International (for the pilot collaborative research project) and BECA Hub (Biosciences Eastern and Central Africa) (for providing access to laboratory facilities). IFS also has close links, but relatively limited actual joint initiatives with some regional institutions, such as the African Academy of Sciences (AAS). Its relations with other key institutions in the regions, such as the Thai partners are largely managed through the intervention of key individuals, many of who were among the early grantees supported in the 1970s. This suggests the importance of alumni in keeping IFS' regional collaboration strong.

There is a broad view that the IFS alumni are a great and as yet only partially utilised resource, with potential roles in orienting potential grantees, spreading information about IFS, etc. Many of the advisors and SAC members are alumni, as are other active stakeholders. The IFS secretariat recognises that there are many more individuals who could perhaps play a more active role in, for example, building links with national research councils or providing advice to potential applicants. IFS is in the process of developing a more proactive strategy for this.

The dedication of the IFS alumni and other supporters has been seen by some of those interviewed as having a negative side in that stakeholder interactions are "too cosy", i.e., the organisation is insulated from alternative perspectives and criticism. Some of those who have more recently become engaged with IFS have noted a degree of conservatism, but also that this can be penetrated through proactive pressure to, for example, take a more open approach to innovation and interdisciplinary research.

An area where IFS seems to have had a particularly cosy relationship in the past, but not at present, is among Swedish institutions. The evaluation found an example of where, in the past, normal grant procedures were waived in order to cater to the needs of SAREC (currently FORSK) funded research led by Swedish institutions. Currently the IFS secretariat and some BoT (Board of Trustees) members have the opposite concern, as links with

Swedish institutions are too weak. Efforts are being made to strengthen these links again, but a clear direction for this is not (yet) apparent.

6.2 STRATEGIC FOCUS AND VIABILITY OF NETWORKING

An organisation with a global reach and a small secretariat must shepherd its human resources and cannot engage with all the stakeholders who may potentially be relevant. For this reason this evaluation, while noting that there are some gaps in the range of stakeholders (most notably regarding regional social science institutions) it seems appropriate that IFS does not engage too broadly. As will be discussed below, an approach is needed that reflects what it wants to achieve and how networking activities are expected to contribute to these goals.

The findings of this evaluation suggest that IFS has a potentially important role in defining a new and mutually reinforcing relationship with national research councils. IFS is beginning to explore new roles in this regard (providing technical assistance to the National Foundation for Science and Technology Development, NAFOSTED, in Viet Nam). The feedback from interviews indicates that these national research councils are, in some countries, beginning to take on similar roles to IFS. It is therefore appropriate that IFS is beginning to develop closer relations with these institutions to help them meet some of the demands from young researchers. It should be noted though, that some of these councils are primarily oriented toward mid-career or senior researchers and therefore an overlap with the mission of IFS should not be assumed to exist.

IFS maintains relations with some regional institutions. It appears that this aspect of networking is primarily important to ensure that IFS approaches are aligned with regional priorities and that IFS is aware of new trends and initiatives. This appears to be more important than actual harmonisation with the windows for research grants that these institutions sometimes provide. As these regional institutions are in some cases more directly engaged in innovation system efforts, it is likely to be important for IFS to use these linkages to define its own niche for programme 3 in the future. IFS is weak regarding networking with regional social science networks, and this may need to be a strategic priority for exploring potential complementary roles in programmes 2 and 3.

As mentioned above, a major part of the current networking efforts are intended to strengthen Swedish ties. This is clearly a major concern, and indeed a closer relationship could provide some benefits for the organisation (to be discussed further in section 9.4 below). The evaluation team has not discerned a clear strategic focus in this area, where it seems that IFS is searching for links with insufficient clarity about what it wants and needs to get from collaboration in Sweden. This is potentially problematic if it blurs the image of IFS and if it damages credibility due to impressions that the procedures and standards of this global organisation are not being maintained.

7 Views of Stakeholders on the Change Process

7.1 RELEVANCE

With a few notable exceptions, stakeholders feel that IFS has maintained a highly relevant niche. Views expressed regarding relevance in the change process were more focused on how to *maintain existing relevance while broadening into new modalities*.

As noted above, there is some scepticism about the relevance of IFS moving into programme 2 and even more regarding programme 3. These concerns are primarily in relation to whether IFS has a unique niche in these areas, and if it is relevant for a global organisation to delve into issues where relevance is reliant on being enmeshed in a web of local research institutions and other actors in the innovation systems.

7.2 CHOICE OF STRATEGIC AND VIABLE NICHE

There is broad (but not universal) recognition that IFS should ultimately contribute to broader innovation and institutional development processes in four ways, which are largely reflected in the new IFS strategy:

1. Individual research needs to ultimately contribute to development of the institutions where these researchers work.
2. There is a need for individual researchers to position themselves within broader networks and teams in their fields.
3. Individual researchers need to work with other researchers from different disciplines in order to both understand the implications of their findings and also to begin putting their research into use.
4. IFS grantees need to contribute to innovation systems.

This is not to state, however, that there is any consensus regarding if and how IFS should play an active and direct role in these four areas of action. There are, roughly, five views on this:

1. IFS has no comparative advantage in any of these areas and should choose individuals and topics for individual grants that can lead to these four outcomes but need not go further.
2. It would be good “in principle” for IFS to engage in one or more of these areas, but the transaction costs are too great and the comparative advantage of a global institution too limited to take significant steps toward such a new agenda.
3. IFS should take actions that inform, guide and encourage individual researchers, but should not become directly involved in brokering collaboration or building institutions.
4. IFS should take on a modest role in convening discussions among different actors to promote these objectives.

5. To remain relevant, IFS must (re)position itself to assume a strategic role in one or all of these areas.

7.3 ADDED VALUE IN MANAGING RESEARCH GRANTS AND NURTURING SUPPORT

Some feel that the IFS niche needs to be refined and focused by narrowing the number of research areas supported, a task that is currently underway.

There is a clear consensus that IFS has a unique and integrated role in nurturing young researchers through the extensive feedback provided on both successful and unsuccessful grant applications. Young researchers express high levels of frustration at the low (and in some cases declining) levels of support that they receive from senior researchers at their own institutions and some see this IFS feedback almost as a lifeline to learn about what constitutes a good research proposal and why.

Some questions have been raised regarding IFS' added value over national and regional institutions in arranging training workshops. Interviewees note a large, unmet demand for such training, and feedback suggests that the quality of IFS training is good or even excellent. The survey undertaken by IFS confirms this view, with particular importance placed on training in scientific writing.[18] However, some interviewees feel that this is an area where national and regional institutions should be taking the lead, rather than acting only as partners.[19] The evaluation team concurs with this view. For example, the new strategy includes new training, such as on "Understanding the political and incentive context for science use".[20] This is highly relevant and IFS may certainly have a role in initiating such training and ensuring that grantees have access to this support, but it would seem that such courses could be more appropriately led by those with direct knowledge of the "political and incentive context."

7.4 ADDED VALUE IN AN INNOVATION SYSTEM PERSPECTIVE

As noted elsewhere in this report, the question of IFS' added value within innovation systems was seen by virtually all of those interviewed as a largely hypothetical issue. Grantees stressed strongly that IFS already contributes to innovation systems by choosing to support research themes that are highly relevant for use, and by supporting researchers who are themselves highly dedicated to engaging in innovation systems. Some feel that

[18]IFS. 2011. Electronic Survey Summary Report.
[19]All such training is already undertaken in partnership with national and regional institutions, so the issue raised here relates to the relative roles of IFS and its local partners in these activities.
[20]IFS. 2011. IFS Strategy 2011-2020.

this was sufficient. Others noted that IFS could provide some modest input to, for example, inform donor agencies (especially Sida) of the outputs of IFS funded research.

A few interviewees[21] feel strongly (and the evaluation team concurs) that an innovation systems perspective demands significant social science input so that grantees understand how innovation occurs (or is blocked) in a societal perspective.

7.5 OWNERSHIP

Particularly among the SAC members, but also among many of the other key stakeholders, the evaluation team was struck by the high level of ownership expressed. IFS' unique focus on young researchers generates strong commitment among very senior researchers who feel a sense of satisfaction in seeing a young promising researcher develop. Interviewees note that this sense of satisfaction (and ownership) is lacking in the anonymous and impersonal processes associated with reviewing applications in other research councils focused on more senior research teams.

The interviews found that ownership was more mixed regarding the new research strategy. This cannot be attributed to insufficient effort on the part of the secretariat to engage with stakeholders, as the secretariat has made exceptional efforts to encourage engagement. Instead it appears that this weak ownership is due to the high level of ownership for the existing approach, mentioned above. There is a common view that "if it ain't broke don't fix it".

[21] It is important to highlight that these views were not widespread, which raises questions about the level of commitment to such changes from the organisation.

8 Evaluation Team's Assessment of the Relevance of IFS' Strategic Direction

8.1 IN RELATION TO THE POLICY FOR RESEARCH IN SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The Swedish policy for research in development cooperation 2012-2014:

i. *Does IFS contribute to partner countries and regional actors being better able to plan, produce and use research in the fight against poverty?*

IFS makes a modest and indirect contribution to actors' ability to plan research in the fight against poverty in that it provides a degree of flexibility in adapting research efforts to their needs and not just donor demands.

IFS clearly contributes to being better able to produce relevant research through the capacity developed among young researchers.

IFS makes relatively little direct contribution to ability to use research, but this is not to say that the research produced is not used. On the contrary, the choice of researchers and topics contribute significantly to use due to the actions of the young researchers themselves, who are in most cases (among those interviewed) highly dedicated to ensuring that their research directly contributes to development and poverty alleviation.

ii. *Does IFS contribute to increased production of international research relevant to the fight against poverty in developing countries?*

IFS makes a significant contribution (in relation to its size), though its outcomes should be seen in relation to longer term production of research by the young researchers receiving support rather than the direct outputs. The research themes are highly relevant to the fight against poverty. Nonetheless, IFS is primarily an initiative for individual capacity development and it would be inappropriate to judge its work in the same perspective as would be applied in assessing the outcomes of support to senior research teams.

iii. *Are these efforts implemented based on the following principles:*

1. *Flexibility*

IFS is known for its flexibility, and above all its responsiveness to the needs of young researchers. One may question, however, whether the great leeway for flexibility given in the themes supported is an obstacle to developing a strategic focus that is manageable by the secretariat and the SAC . There are no indications that this has been a problem thus far (apart from the chosen thematic foci, which are in the process of being narrowed), but it could become a significant problem if IFS rolls out programmes 2 and 3 of the new strategy, wherein this potentially unwieldy agenda could balloon to unmanageable proportions.

2. *Dialogue with other countries and international actors*

At a micro/personal level, IFS maintains, and to some extent engages with, a wide range of countries and international actors through the SAC and other stakeholders. It is not actively/directly engaged with many international organisations or the leadership of national institutions apart from some key individuals and organisations (e.g., African Academy of Sciences). This is perhaps due to the niche of IFS, focused on younger researchers and a rather broad set of themes.

3. *Implementation of the Paris Declaration*

The work of IFS can be seen as aligned with national priorities in that it responds to requests from national researchers rather than having narrowly defined calls for proposals that reflect its own (or donor) priorities. Indeed, the lack of enthusiasm within IFS for moving into interdisciplinary research and innovation systems can be seen as a rejection of what are perceived by some to be "donor fads" to instead focus on nationally recognised priorities.

This suggests a degree of trade-off in relation to alignment. If IFS takes a cautious approach to innovation systems it would seem to lead to greater alignment and ownership with the research communities in developing countries. On the other hand, these research communities are often at odds with their own governments and ministries of agriculture in particular, which are often very much focused on a shift to investing in innovation systems development.

4. *Coordination with other research financiers*

IFS has limited direct coordination with other research financiers, but the demonstrated ability of many grantees to use the small IFS grants to leverage other national and international sources of financing suggests that it is the *younger researchers themselves who do the coordination*. Development of such skills among young researchers is more important than direct engagement by IFS in donor coordination.

5. *Coordination and harmonisation of support forms*

The preceding observation can be seen as an indication that the researchers themselves are taking care of "harmonisation" (quite effectively). Here again, there could be a danger that more coordination with international research financiers could draw attention away from the needs and demands of young researchers. IFS could endanger its special niche.

6. *Avoidance of the creation of parallel support structures*

It is impossible to generalise or even to draw verifiable conclusions regarding whether or not IFS constitutes a parallel support structure in each country where it works. There are some countries where national research councils are beginning to provide similar funding structures, but there are no examples found where these have attained the quality of IFS support. Also, even in these countries the need for funding for young researchers is far greater than the supply, suggesting that there is no redundancy even where parallel structures exist.

7. *Dissemination of research results and forums for dialogue*

IFS plays a very modest direct role in disseminating research results, though its limited support for conference attendance appears to be effective and grantees do seem to publish their work (this evaluation has not undertaken bibliometric analysis). The second and third programmes in the new strategy will demand a different role in the future. It may be that dissemination and modest dialogue support may be a more viable niche in relation to collaboration and engagement in innovation systems than more direct engagement in brokering collaboration.

8. *Intellectual freedom and unrestricted communication*

The freedom of applicants to propose research that interests them (as opposed to "following in the footsteps" of their professor, which is otherwise often the only way to access funding) is a notable contribution to intellectual freedom.

The new pilot project for collaborative research will be testing application of new approaches to social networking that could contribute to unrestricted communication, but it is too early to assess the relevance of this project.

9. *Combating discrimination*

The IFS secretariat has been very proactive in recent years in raising issues of gender discrimination as part of the envisioning process, with particular emphasis on Africa.[22] Apart from the response generated in the concerted effort in Africa, the other IFS consultation reports[23] appear to indicate a "lukewarm" engagement and ownership among many stakeholders for a more proactive stance in supporting women scientists. That those consulted in Latin America did not identify proactive support for women scientists as a major priority can likely be traced to that young women scientists in this region are already doing very well when it comes to securing IFS grants. Indeed, almost 60 % of the grantees in Latin America and the Caribbean are women (IFS Annual Report 2009). Discussing this matter with IFS, the team was told that women scientists from Latin America are generally submitting applications of very good quality. This brings out the importance of not automatically assuming that men have an advantage. In fact, identifying underlying reasons that young male researchers from Latin America are not as competitive as their female counterparts is relevant. Recent research on masculinities and changes in men's behaviours and relationships as responses to contemporary social change in Latin America could feed into this understanding[24] and guide potential efforts to also empower and build the capacity of young men scientists in specific geographical contexts.

[22]IFS. 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Africa. Nairobi, Kenya March 16-17, 2011
[23]IFS. 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Asia. Bangkok, Thailand March 18-19, 2011; IFS. 2011. IFS Envisioning Process 2011. Regional Consultation in Latin America. Merida, Mexico February 7-8, 2011.
[24] See e.g. Pringle, Keith, Elisabetta Ruspini and Bob Pease (Eds.). 2011. *Men and Masculinities Around the World: Transforming Men's Practices*. Palgrave MacMillan /Global Masculinities; Cornwall, Andrea, Jerker Edström and Alan Greig (Eds.). 2011. *Men and Development: Politicising Masculinities*. Zed Books; Gutmann, Matthew (Ed.) 2003. *Changing Men and Masculinities in Latin America*. Duke.

The overall "lukewarm" engagement among stakeholders for a more proactive stance in supporting women scientists was also somewhat confirmed during the evaluation team's interviews with the various stakeholders, who rarely touched upon the issue. A few pointed out that the age controversy has received almost unwarranted and heated attention during the envisioning process, while another highlighted that although the gender issue is important it varies between countries. One stakeholder group stood out, however, regarding their engagement with the gender issue, and that was the grantees, who highlighted that the age limit is particularly limiting for women researchers who often are delayed in their careers due to family responsibilities.

With regard to other forms of discrimination, the evaluation team has not encountered specific cases, which is not to claim that these may not exist. IFS is reliant on its relations with local research institutions and has little influence over their norms. One key stakeholder expressed concerns about the potential for ethnic or political discrimination.

10. *Research on an equal footing*

In strengthening the capacity of younger researchers IFS makes a notable contribution to the future capacity of academic institutions in the South to undertake research on an equal footing. At a minimum IFS contributes to reducing the deterioration of this capacity where it is declining. The original purpose of IFS in reducing brain drain is still generally relevant as several grantees pointed out that the IFS grant was instrumental in enabling them to re-establish themselves in their home institutions after obtaining a PhD in another country. The evaluation encountered no examples of researchers who had emigrated after receiving support, although one grantee reported that he was considering moving to a better off neighbouring country.

Given the greater mobility of researchers today and the need for international networks of researchers, it may be relevant for IFS to revisit and reframe its perspective on "brain drain", as the context has changed significantly since IFS was created.

11. *Knock-on effects in other areas*

As noted elsewhere in this report, IFS grantees are engaged in working with farmers, NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and the private sector to put their research into use. These constitute significant knock-on effects.

8.2 IN RELATION TO THE CHANGES UNDERWAY IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SYSTEMS

It is too early to state whether or not the new strategy will result in IFS being better situated in research and innovation systems. As noted above, there is little doubt that the aims of the strategy are appropriate as overall goals. Indeed, the focus of the past strategy remains

largely relevant. An important and as yet unanswerable question is whether IFS will find a viable niche in relation to the wider changes underway in innovation systems[25] and whether it will be able to continue to tailor its role in different countries, particularly so as to complement that of emerging national research councils.

8.3 IN RELATION TO THE POLICY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The evaluation team has also considered how the new strategy and functions fair in relation to the *Policy for Gender Equality and the Rights and Role of Women in Sweden's International Development Cooperation 2010–2015*, given that this policy explicitly states that (i) "Gender equality and the role of women in development are one of the Swedish Government's three thematic priorities in international development cooperation" (p. 7), and (ii) "Agencies carrying out activities financed by state budget expenditure area 7 ('International development cooperation') are responsible for applying the policy within the framework of their respective mandates" (p. 29).

The overall objective of the policy is to achieve gender equality, greater influence for women and greater respect for women's rights in developing countries by applying gender mainstreaming as a basic approach (p. 14). This entails: (i) integration of gender equality in interventions in general, (ii) targeting specific groups or issues through specific interventions, and or (iii) dialogue with partners on gender sensitive issues and aspects. These approaches may be implemented separately or in combination (Gender Equality in Practice: A Manual for Sida, 2009 pp. 9-10).

The evaluation team find that the work of IFS in supporting women researchers has high degree of *potential* relevance in relation to "women's political participation and influence" and "women's economic empowerment and working conditions", two of the four prioritised areas outlined in the *Policy for Gender Equality and the Rights and Role of Women in Sweden's International Development Cooperation 2010–2015* (p. 14). It is, for instance, noted in the policy that "Sweden will take action to… strengthen women's rights, opportunities and ability to exert influence on public decision-making and *policy content* at all levels (p 16, emphasis added to highlight the policy implications of research), "combat gender discriminatory and gender-segregated labour markets, and strengthen women's professional skills and employability... [and] strengthen girls' right to education and support non-traditional education, training programmes and occupational choices for girls and boys respectively, including higher education and vocational training courses" (p. 18).

To what extent has IFS acted to integrate gender equality into programming?

[25] This may include the roles of private investors in research and the ways that new public funding channels for innovation support are created and utilised. This is a "trendy" area where a range of innovation projects are creating a complex and diverse playing field in different countries and regions.

The fact that the IFS secretariat has been very proactive in recent years in raising issues of gender discrimination as part of the envisioning process suggests that there is a will to gender mainstream programming. This is also clearly reflected in the IFS Strategy document for 2011–2020. The evaluation team does, however, note a concern about their observation that the response from stakeholders regarding taking on a more proactive stance in supporting women scientists, as earlier noted, was rather "lukewarm". This could potentially hold back IFS in effectively succeeding in their gender mainstreaming efforts.

IFS states that the goal should be that at least 30 % of grantees are women by 2015 in all regions (Africa, Asia and Latin America, respectively), while by 2020 at least 40 % should be women (IFS Draft Strategy; personal communication). It is emphasised that this should be achieved without a quota system. IFS points out that while 25–30 % of their grants already are awarded to women scientists each year, particularly Africa is lagging behind with fewer women scientists submitting applications (during 2005 – 2011, only 22 % of all applications from Sub-Saharan Africa came from women, which, during the same time period, can be compared with figures of 28% for the Middle East and North Africa, 38% for South and Southeast Asia and the Pacific, and 45% for Latin America and the Caribbean). The need for targeted capacity building efforts of women scientists throughout the region is clear and something IFS currently is addressing with support from Norad (see next section).

The evaluation cannot draw conclusions regarding whether there is any sort of systemic bias in the evaluation process favouring men scientists over women scientists. Clear trends are not discernible from the available data. It would seem important for IFS to assess, for instance, if women and men scientists' proposed research topics or research methodologies differ significantly (which might not be the case), and whether male scientists' research topics are considered more sound, feasible and relevant and their methodologies more appropriate by the SAC members and advisors. If so, this could add to IFS' understanding of why fewer women are awarded grants. One step towards addressing such potential bias would be to strive for an equal number of women and men in the SACs and as advisors. Considering the lists of SAC members compiled by IFS for the evaluation team, it is noted that only around one third of the members are women. The evaluation team also notes that neither the composition of IFS staff nor the Board of Trustees is balanced in terms of gender, with 75% (12 out of 16) of IFS staff being women, while 77% (10 out of 13) of the Board of Trustees are men.

The evaluation team would also like to emphasise that the problem of gender inequality will not be adequately addressed (and solved) by simply aiming at symptoms such as the quantitative gender balance in grants distribution, since this does not address the root causes of the prevailing imbalance, and argues that this measure would need to be complemented by other measures to achieve full relevance in relation to Swedish policies and strategies.

To what extent has IFS acted to target gender activities?

During the envisioning process, the most widely discussed proactive measure to support women scientists was likely the one regarding the age limit of applicants. It was discussed, and subsequently decided by IFS, that the upper age limit for women should remain 40 years, while that for men should be lowered to 35. The justification put forward is that women scientists are delayed in their careers due to family responsibilities, which is why separate age limit criteria for women and men are needed so as to reflect this. The evaluation team concurs with this on a general basis, but is mindful that problems of gender inequality will not be adequately solved by merely introducing an age limit related gender bias to the

eligibility criteria. This is also something that IFS is aware of, hence they are already implementing complementary proactive measures, while considering others.

With support from Norad, a new programme with grants that only women can apply for was introduced in 2010. This contributed to an equal share of women and men being awarded grants that year by IFS. While such efforts can be justified in the short term (on the same grounds that quota systems are argued for), they are, nevertheless, bypassing the root causes of the otherwise unbalanced distribution of grants between women and men.

IFS has also undertaken capacity building workshops for African women scientists with support from Norad. The most recent took place in Uganda during two weeks in end-September – early-October 2012 and gathered 25 women. These women had been selected out of around 100 applicants, and coupled to the workshop was a women in science prize competition. IFS offered child care facilities during the workshop for the women participating. This meant that women who first had reported they would not be able to participate could do so when they could bring their children along. The evaluation team find this a highly interesting and innovative approach to overcome a specific cultural barrier that otherwise might have prevented these women scientists from advancing their careers. The team is particularly impressed by such efforts that are grounded in the local context.

The evaluation team notes that IFS is also developing two tailored capacity-building programmes targeting young women scientists, especially from Africa, referred to as GROWTH and FoSTER. GROWTH will be a structured mentorship and role modelling programme, and FoSTER will develop young women scientists' social, managerial and leadership skills as well as technical competencies. The rationale and the outline of the programs are fleshed out in the Draft Strategy document. While not mentioned in the Final Strategy document, they will, according to IFS, be detailed in the Implementation Plan that is currently being prepared.

In relation to the Collaborative Research programme 2, it is noted that IFS, in their Draft Strategy document, only proposes that collaborative research projects focusing on women-related development concerns should maximise women participants. While the underlying rationale behind such proposal is commendable, the team cautions that such approach stands the risk of being interpreted as, or signalling that, only women scientists understand and are capable of researching other women and their development concerns. By specifically promoting women researchers to particularly research women-issues, the problem of gender inequality is not addressed. If anything, it could be compounded by cementing already prevailing gender norms and stereotypes. Women-related development concerns must be every researcher's concern if Swedish policy objectives are to be fulfilled. A way forward could be to rather seek a balanced involvement of women and men in relation to research on these specific issues. At the same time, the team recognises that as there are fewer women scientists applying, these projects are not likely to end up becoming women-only projects even with such strategy in place.

Finally, the evaluation team is concerned by the fact that only Norad is currently supporting specific capacity building interventions targeted at women scientists in Africa and beyond. Not only does this effectively put a check on the number of interventions that can be undertaken, which may prevent up-scaling, but it may also undermine the long-term sustainability of such efforts, since they stand and fall with a single funding source.

9 The Comparative Efficiency of IFS' Strategic Direction

9.1 NICHE: DOES THE NEW STRATEGY FOCUS AND CAPITALISE ON IFS' STRENGTHS?

The strategy is likely to capitalise on IFS' existing strengths if (and only if) the core of strategies 2 and 3 build directly on individual research grants. If IFS develops entirely new approaches that are not firmly anchored in the individual research grants this could be relevant in relation to poverty alleviation needs, but would not capitalise on IFS' current strengths. This is a view that is shared by many of the key stakeholders and grantees who feel that the new programmes are seen as certainly relevant in a societal perspective, but will only be relevant in relation to IFS' niche if they build on programme 1.

9.2 STRATEGIC FOCUS IN RELATION TO OTHER ACTORS

Individual research grants and nurturing

Other institutions provide types of services in relation to provision of individual grants that are similar in some respects to those provided by IFS, but interviewees overwhelmingly stressed that these services very rarely achieved the same level of quality as IFS. Quality in this respect relates to review and feedback on applications, responsiveness to questions and advice on proposal drafting, and above all in relating to the particular needs of young researchers.

There appears to be no other organisation that takes such a concerted approach to nurturing and enabling young researchers to pursue their own interests. This is unique and valuable as a way of fostering these individuals' capacity to think independently and develop new areas of inquiry in countries where research institutions are inflexible and/or in decline. This is not to claim that this individual support will necessarily lead to organisational or institutional change, tasks for which IFS has very limited capacity to contribute.

An important factor to note in relation to the individual research grants is that several grantees stress that receipt of an IFS grant enabled them to develop a track record in managing a grant by themselves and also "certified" that their work was of sufficient quality to receive international support. They were able to then leverage this credibility to obtain other grants from national and international research councils that otherwise would be unlikely to finance such early career researchers.

Collaborative research

IFS has yet to clearly identify a unique strategic focus in relation to collaborative research. This is not to imply that such a strategic niche does not exist. IFS presumably could provide a link between the thematic knowledge of international research institutions and the cadre of young researchers with which it works and could help the two sets of actors to ex-

plore new areas together. The thematically focused collaboration with Biodiversity International in the pilot is a good example of such an opportunity.

Contributing innovation

Innovation systems are very popular in many donor circles and whereas it is not possible in this evaluation to summarise the types and quality of these other services, it is clear that IFS will have a challenge in identifying a unique and high quality niche. The failure of IFS stakeholders to develop a dialogue on this yet and the fact that most stakeholder interviewees acknowledged having no idea where to start in this are evidence that IFS may have only a very limited and perhaps specialised role (if any) to play in this area.

9.3 COST EFFICIENCY

The evaluation team encountered no other organisation that currently provides comparable services and therefore does not have a reference point for judging comparative cost efficiency. The challenge in judging cost efficiency is that IFS combines targeted provision of very small grants (USD12,000) with individual capacity development support. It is not a typical research council since it is dedicated to "nurturing" young researchers. Neither is it a typical individual capacity development organisation as its core activity is provision of research grants. IFS costs in relation to the amount of research funds disbursed are very high, but the costs in relation to, for example, provision of individual research capacity development support are presumably very low.

Given the fact that there is no clear point of reference for assessing cost efficiency it is more important to assess whether there are improvements that could be made in the current structure to enhance efficiency. The evaluation team judges that devolution of any functions to regional offices would have the opposite effect, whereas enhanced partnership might lead to greater efficiency. This is discussed further in section 10.2 below.

Key stakeholders generally report that the IFS secretariat, after the reorganisation that was undertaken in response to the 2010 evaluation, is highly efficient. The evaluation team encountered no signs to the contrary. Interviewees stressed that the staff of the secretariat work extremely hard and in several cases concern was expressed that they were already over-burdened and that it would be unwise to undertake reforms and changes that would constitute an additional workload on existing staff.

Perhaps the greatest but least apparent factor influencing IFS' cost efficiency is the organisation's proven capacity to leverage an extraordinary level of volunteer input from SAC members and advisors. The secretariat costs should therefore not only be compared to the financial benefits accruing to grantees, but also the benefits they receive from this very considerable pro bono capacity development support. It is not possible to quantify these additional benefits, but the evaluation team was very impressed by the high proportion of IFS' work that is undertaken by these often very senior researchers free of charge. The level of input they provide in relation to the size of support provided appears to be far greater than that provided in most research council review processes. They report that they provide this support primarily due to the satisfaction they receive in helping young researchers on the first rung in their careers. Interviewees often note that this is not possible in most research support structures today as young researchers are engaged only as underlings of

more senior staff and due to what is perceived of as the increasingly formal and bureaucratic nature of the research enterprise. It is important to highlight this as an aspect of cost efficiency since any changes in IFS' modus operandi that could weaken this volunteer commitment could significantly lower the level of cost efficiency that IFS achieves today.

Another aspect of cost efficiency that cannot be quantified but appears to be considerable is the extent to which IFS grants enable grantees to leverage additional funds, as noted above. Some of the grantees interviewed implied that this credibility in relation to other potential financiers may be of greater financial benefit than the small IFS grant itself.

9.4 LOCATION AND POTENTIAL HOSTING IN SWEDEN

Since the previous evaluation IFS has moved to less expensive offices and is currently investigating whether smaller and less expensive premises can be arranged at the current location. It appears that rental issues are a concern for the organisation.

The evaluation team does not have the appropriate skills to make an evidence based and verifiable assessment of whether cheaper and more appropriate offices could be found in Sweden. Ideas have been floated regarding savings that might be incurred if IFS was to move, and possibly even be "hosted" by SLU in Uppsala. It is not clear what such a "hosting" would entail, but it is apparent that any connection with SLU would probably mean that IFS would have to pay the same square metre cost at the Ultuna campus as an academic institution, which would be far higher than the current rent.

On the other hand, if IFS was to move to the Ultuna campus but remain entirely independent of SLU and Uppsala University, the rent would be quite modest. One could question then whether such a move would be justified if IFS would not reap any benefits from a closer formal relationship with Uppsala academia. It would seem more appropriate to investigate lower cost offices in the greater Stockholm area given that most of the staff live in Stockholm.

Discussions of "hosting", or any other options to formalise a closer relationship with Uppsala institutions, are at an early stage and it is therefore not possible to present an analysis of the implications of such arrangements apart from the following general observations.

One potential *advantage* to a closer relationship with Swedish academia is that IFS could be seen as having somewhat stronger research credentials. One interviewee noted that IFS is currently perceived as being "sort of a NGO" and would therefore benefit from clearer academic links. Another potential advantage of being hosted is that IFS might be seen as more of a Swedish institution and thereby have a chance of obtaining other forms of Swedish support, apart from Sida. This is purely speculative, however, and the evaluation team has no basis for judging whether or not this is a realistic hope.

A potential *disadvantage* of such an arrangement is that IFS would be perceived more as a Swedish institution, which could in turn reduce the likelihood of obtaining greater balance in the funding received from international donors. A second disadvantage is that pressures could appear to favour grants to those associated with Swedish programmes and to disregard procedures and standards. As noted above, an example was encountered of such an arrangement in the past. There is no reason to suspect that such "cosy" relationships ex-

ist today, but the credibility of IFS depends on ensuring that this kind of relationship is not re-established. For this reason it is important that IFS adopt a transparent, focused and strategic approach to strengthening ties with Swedish academia.

As a final point, the evaluation has noted that the issue of office rental costs appears to have received a very high degree of attention at Sida. In 2011 these costs amounted to slightly less than 5% of IFS expenditure (a relative increase over past years due to declining income). Even if lower cost accommodation is found, this would be unlikely to result in more than 1-2% reduction in overall expenditure, and could increase costs due to relocation. If the new location is far from Stockholm it may lead to loss of skilled and dedicated staff who do not wish to relocate or commute long distances. Given the relatively modest potential benefits and considerable potential costs the evaluation team concludes that inordinate attention has been given to this issue relative to other pressing concerns.

10 Potential for Decentralisation

10.1 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF HAVING THE IFS SECRETARIAT IN SWEDEN

IFS stakeholders are almost unanimous in their view that it is appropriate to continue to maintain the secretariat in Sweden. This is due to Sweden being perceived as:

- Neutral and not subject to local politics
- A welcoming location
- Having stability
- Having the solid IT infrastructure needed, including for future IT-based networking
- Being historically linked with IFS, thus representing continuity
- Being close to the main donor

Furthermore, informants feel that there was no pressing reason to move the secretariat and that a move would generate massive costs in terms of staff continuity at the secretariat, and could be perceived of as an indication of instability. Some noted that the continuing discussion on this topic is a distraction from more important issues.

Most notably, almost none of those interviewed feel that IFS should be based in a developing country as such a move could give an impression that IFS would have a bias toward the region where it would be based. Any such move is seen as inevitably creating suspicion and competition that would be highly detrimental to IFS' reputation for impartiality and independence.

Perhaps paradoxically, the role of IFS as a neutral, Sweden-based intermediary may be particularly important in conjunction with new emerging South-South partnerships. Some long established partners to IFS are now becoming donors to IFS and are assuming new roles in supporting poorer neighbouring countries (e.g., Thailand). This is of course a welcome and important development. A problem may arise in that trust between neighbours may be limited and the inclusion of a neutral "third party" such as IFS can make these new relationships more multilateral, which can be essential where bilateral relationships are fraught with broader geopolitical tensions. This is of course a complex role for IFS and it is not certain that the secretariat will have the capacity to manage such complexities (therefore the evaluation does not make any specific recommendations for this), but it is worthwhile noting this as a factor to consider related to the location of the secretariat.

The evaluation team concurs with the judgement of the overwhelming majority of those interviewed that it would be inappropriate to considering moving the secretariat. Nonetheless, it is important that IFS staff continue to have opportunities for some travel (currently often taking place as part of training workshops) as a degree of face-to-face contact with grantees is essential to ensure that staff have a sense of how the programmes are performing.

10.2 AREAS FOR POTENTIAL DECENTRALISATION

The IFS secretariat is actively considering how to achieve effective decentralisation, after having recognised that the creation of physical regional offices is neither effective nor efficient.[26] There is clear consensus that individual grant management should not be spread to more than one location. Several noted the importance of maintaining a critical mass at one office. Almost all stakeholders interviewed (and the evaluation team) concur with the view of the secretariat that the attempt to establish a hub at RUFORUM in Uganda was ill conceived. Many have expressed the view that this effort was motivated by a desire to pander to donor demands rather than being based on an analysis of how to best work with local stakeholders.

This is not to say that the concept of a "hub" is necessarily dismissed, rather that the roles and structures of these hubs need to be considered differently. In general there is a sense that some of the current nurturing roles could be more appropriately led from countries and regions. Even if there is no support among most key stakeholders for moving the secretariat or setting up regional offices, there are some areas where suggestions have been raised for decentralising activities through new forms of partnerships. These fall into the following categories:

- Partnerships for training

A few of the stakeholders interviewed expressed concerns, shared by the evaluation team, that IFS has not sufficiently built on local partnerships for short training workshops. All IFS workshops are done in partnership, but it would seem that IFS could shift to a mere supportive role, directing potential grantees to locally organised courses and if required co-financing such training rather than leading these activities.

- Mobilising the alumni

IFS recognises that its alumni are an important and currently only partially utilised resource. Plans are being considered for how to better build on this resource. This evaluation cannot provide deeper analysis of this issue than that which IFS itself is undertaking, but it is important to note here that this is an area where decentralisation can potentially be achieved through more proactively using alumni as honorary "ambassadors" or even country representatives to advise and inform potential grantees about how IFS works and to facilitate networking at country level. It appears that awareness of IFS spreads largely through ad hoc word-of-mouth processes, something that could perhaps be improved through a more structured relationship with alumni.

[26] IFS. 2011. Bringing IFS Closer to its Constituencies

It should be mentioned here that in the past IFS had plans to establish a mentorship programme which would draw heavily on alumni.[27] Some interviewees suggested that this idea be revived again, particularly for grantees from especially weak institutions. This rather expensive programme (USD 450,000 over three years) was not implemented but it may provide some ideas for considering future options to better utilise the alumni as IFS' decentralised arm.

- Making greater use of key stakeholder skills and engagement

In addition to the alumni, other stakeholders (e.g., SAC members) have skills in web-based information and training that have not been utilised by the secretariat. This is not just a matter of decentralising to the South, but also of using skills throughout the network. This could, for example, consist of web-based tutorials and orientation materials related to intellectual property rights, agricultural innovation systems or current roles of agricultural extension services.

- Leveraging partnerships with national research councils and middle income Southern institutions

The playing field is changing for IFS in that national research councils are of growing importance and capacity. Interviewees (especially grantees) stress that at present these structures do not provide the same services as IFS, but they do provide complementary and/or matching services. Some interviewees (and the evaluation team) feel that IFS could use its know-how and reputation to support strategic thinking about future structures of support for young researchers through a more proactive dialogue and exchange of experience. This is starting in Viet Nam.

In discussing the four sets of suggestions listed above interviewees repeatedly mentioned the importance of IFS retaining its own institutional identity and independence. Especially among senior national Southern stakeholders there is a fear that local agendas and vested interests could take over and that IFS needs safeguards to prevent this in any decentralisation effort.

[27] Mantell, Sinclair, and Michael Ståhl. 2003. A Strengthened Mentorship Programme; Mantell, Sinclair, and Michael Ståhl. 2004. IFS' Mentorship Initiative.

11 Implications of Findings for the Sida/IFS Partnership

11.1 COMMUNICATIONS ISSUES AND THE SIDA/IFS PARTNERSHIP

In the course of the evaluation it has become apparent that neither Sida nor IFS are satisfied with the quality of their interactions. Both have expressed frustration that they do not have sufficient understanding about the intentions of the partner. Some of this is obviously due to the reorganisation and changing approaches to research cooperation at Sida. There may also be other factors in the relationship that the evaluation team has not been able to decipher. A result of this is that IFS has operated with a high degree of uncertainty regarding future financing, which has had detrimental effects on the organisation's confidence in future planning. Other donors are naturally wondering what Sida's intentions are and this is causing anxiety that could affect other contributions as well.

Weak communication is not just an issue at Sida Stockholm. At country level (Swedish embassies) there seems to be very little awareness of the potential contribution that IFS financed research makes to achieving development objectives or of where IFS financed research could directly contribute to other Swedish financed programmes.

IFS has responded to the problems they have seen in their communication with Sida by struggling to rebuild ties with Swedish academia in an apparent hope that this will increase their visibility and encourage greater ownership in Sweden. It is not certain that this will have the desired effect.

11.2 IFS' NICHE IN THE SWEDISH DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

Despite these problems in the relationship with Sida, the evaluation team concludes that IFS does have a strong niche in the Swedish development research portfolio. It contributes to filling an important gap in support for young researchers and is well positioned to also provide a useful mix of research council and capacity development functions. IFS has, based on the sample of grantees interviewed, clearly succeeded in "picking winners" in terms of engaging highly motivated and successful young researchers who are undertaking research that is relevant to Swedish development goals and could in the future contribute more directly to Swedish development cooperation.

Of particular note, the long relationship that IFS has with institutions in what have become middle income countries may be creating opportunities for Sida to move from traditional modes of research cooperation to new approaches focused more on South-South cooperation. It is still too early to assess whether (or specifically how) this can be developed further, but the potential is important to note.

12 IFS Results

As noted above, in relation to efficiency, it is important to assess IFS costs in relation to the results actually achieved. These results can only partially be measured in terms of peer reviewed publications, as is the norm in much traditional research council support. The emphasis at IFS is, in the view of the evaluation team, primarily in relation to capacity development.[28] Regrettably, the following list of results is largely qualitative, as the findings largely reflect how grantees and key stakeholders perceive the results of their grants. Interviewees themselves stressed that the small IFS grants *contributed* to results in a number of ways, even if these results cannot be specifically *attributed* to IFS support.

The results listed below can be interpreted as suggesting that IFS has an important message about what it achieves that could be used more proactively in accessing new and diversified funding streams. This would be reliant on having a results framework and a monitoring and evaluation system that highlight these considerable achievements.

12.1 RESULTS THAT CAN BE *ATTRIBUTED* TO IFS SUPPORT

Outputs/publications

Even if the evaluation has not uncovered recent data on how many publications grantees have produced, the grantees interviewed (which may not be a representative sample) who had completed their funded research had almost all published or expected to publish in international publications in the near future. Given the small size of the grant the evaluation team judges this performance to be very good.

Increased credibility in own institutions

When asked about IFS influence on their careers, most grantees acknowledged that it was difficult to directly attribute changes to IFS support, but that the receipt of an international grant, no matter how small, had a significant direct impact on their status within their departments and enabled them to argue for the need to pursue their research interests. Some grantees also noted that the IFS grant enabled them to establish their own laboratory, which in itself generated significant credibility among colleagues. Also, some grantees who used IFS funds to engage bachelors and masters students in their projects noted that this enabled

[28] As noted above, the new IFS strategy and proposed monitoring and evaluation system give greater emphasis to societal impacts and innovations, but the evaluation team concludes that this is an inaccurate representation of what IFS stakeholders actually focus on achieving.

them to start undertaking a supervisory role in their departments, something that would otherwise have been impossible.

Increased credibility among other research councils

Several grantees interviewed mentioned that the receipt of a IFS grant increased their chances of leveraging additional funds (for the same project that IFS had funded or new projects), particularly from national research councils that appeared ready to support a more junior researcher if they had received the "stamp of approval" from an international body such as IFS.

Increased self confidence

Some of those interviewed noted that the feedback on their first proposals, even if they did not receive the first grant, gave them needed self-confidence to apply again to IFS and others. This naturally varies significantly from individual to individual, but appears to be important for some researchers who have recently completed their PhDs, but who are struggling to get established as a researcher.

Increased knowledge of how to manage a research project

Several of those interviewed noted that if they had not received the IFS grant they would not have learnt how to manage a research grant on their own. This experience had knock-on effects in terms of self-confidence and also on credibility among other research councils.

12.2 RESULTS WHERE IFS HAS *CONTRIBUTED*

Advancing on the career ladder

Interviews attempted to ascertain whether IFS actually helps researchers, most of whom have recently received their PhD, to get onto the "first rung" in their career ladders. Interviewees generally acknowledged that this could not be entirely attributed to IFS support, but that they feel the IFS grant created additional credibility and experience which together contributed to this achievement. A few noted that the IFS grant enabled them to start their post-doctoral career as a researcher, without getting locked into a career path focused entirely on lecturing.

Accessing additional research funds

As noted above, IFS grants increase researchers' credibility, as does any international grant. This is seen as indirectly leading to processes by which a range of additional funding could be leveraged. A few interviewees noted that this credibility was more important than the actual funding received since they needed much larger grants to actually carry out the intended research.

Development of new applied technologies and products

Several of those interviewed were very proud that their IFS grant was part of a process that has led to the development of new technologies that are actually being put into use, either through public programmes supporting farmers or through collaboration with private investors.

Providing a basis for engagement with agricultural extension

A few interviewees mentioned that they were working with agricultural extension to diffuse the technologies that they had developed with IFS support. Some mentioned that they saw this as an ethical imperative.

13 Conclusions

13.1 IFS AS A NETWORK

Despite its many years of operation and seemingly solid track record, IFS remains a fragile institution. This is not just related to its dependence on a small funding base and one major donor, but is also due to its reliance on a network of committed individuals who provide their support on a voluntary basis. IFS will only survive if it is able to continue to leverage support from this network. As such, IFS should recognise that it must maintain the *vibrancy* of its network as a core priority. This is implicit in how IFS operates today, but a more strategic and focused approach could be achieved if IFS was to more explicitly recognise that it is the network that drives the secretariat and not vice versa. Future plans would benefit from empirical analysis of how networks function and how they are fostered. This would also provide a basis for clearer prioritisation and strategic direction in networking activities, in Sweden, among national research councils and other current and potential constituents of the IFS network, as will be elaborated in the recommendations below.

13.2 IFS' RELEVANCE FOR EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT

A recent report[29] reviewing progress in early career development among researchers in Africa has proposed that there are six areas where support is needed. These areas seem appropriate for judging the relevance and effectiveness of the work of IFS and its future direction. It should be stressed, however, that IFS is a small organisation operating in three continents with a fluctuating flow of resources and the evaluators deem that it would be inappropriate for IFS to attempt to "tick all the boxes", particularly as some of these functions can and should be managed entirely by Southern institutions themselves. The evaluation team has arrived at the following conclusions based on the perceptions of the stakeholders interviewed.

1. Opportunities to stay connected to their peers, locally, regionally and internationally, through networks and conferences, and through participating in their respective research communities.

[29] Harle, Jonathan. 2011. Foundations for the Future: Supporting the early careers of African researchers. A paper commissioned by the British Academy as part of the Nairobi Process. The British Academy, The Association of Commonwealth Universities. December 2011

IFS currently makes a modest but important contribution to this through support for conference participation. The intentions regarding collaborative research are expected to expand this area of support, but IFS is only starting to identify a clear and manageable niche in this regard. Opportunities to build on the interests of the IFS alumni to mobilise such networking without significant support from the secretariat have not yet been explored.

2. Guidance and support to enable the development of PhD work into publishable form and secure their first peer reviewed articles.

Individual research grants and the feedback received from the SACs in the proposal stage have made some contribution in this regard. It appears that IFS support has enabled a first step toward the production of peer reviewed articles. The evaluation team judges that this is an appropriate ambition level for IFS in this regard.

3. Time and assistance to define a research agenda, design new projects, and secure funding to enable it.

IFS has provided young researchers with surprisingly good support, given the structure it has, to enable young researchers to define their own research agendas independently from their institutional hierarchy, and of course obtain funding to carry out the research.

4. Access to modest seed funding to build on doctoral work, or to explore new ideas.

See above.

5. The ability to supervise future doctoral students of their own, in order to contribute to the research base of their departments.

This is in some respects a "hidden benefit" from IFS' "individual" research grants, i.e., they are not actually individual in that the researchers often use these funds to engage masters and bachelors students as research assistants to start their careers. It would seem that there are opportunities to use the second and third grants (or even collaborative research grants) more strategically in this regard.

6. A supportive institutional context, where the institution and its senior academics seek to enable their progression, encourage research and foster collegiality and mentorship.

This is of course primarily the responsibility of collaborating institutions rather than IFS itself. IFS works with individuals and provides very little institutional development support. It would overburden the SAC members if IFS called on them to provide further mentoring efforts, though the modest support provided is significant and highly appreciated. Here again, there may be untapped opportunities to mobilise more efforts in this regard through the alumni, and the collaborative research function may also make a modest contribution, although the niche for this is not yet clearly identified.

13.3 NEW DIRECTIONS REQUIRE NEW MODUS OPERANDI, BUT MUST BUILD ON EXISTING DRIVE

The secretariat should not and cannot realistically assume significantly increased responsibilities in conjunction with strategic programmes 2 and 3. Their current workload is too heavy, and their skill-sets are probably inappropriate for these new tasks. The SAC and advisors are investing a large amount of volunteer input at present. They should not be expected to take on much greater further duties. This raises three issues.

- Programmes 2 and 3 should largely be managed as discreet projects for the foreseeable future to avoid endangering the well functioning core aspects of IFS' work.[30]
- Despite the need for developing parallel management structures, it is also important to ensure that these new programmes actually build upon the identity, history and motivations that drive IFS as an institution. The career of the individual young researcher must remain in focus, even if resources are not always channelled to individuals.
- The new strategy refers to the need for a "graduation strategy from IFS support". Interviews with grantees clearly indicate that they neither want nor need IFS support to "graduate", as they are doing this themselves. IFS needs to be aware of and build on the "graduation strategies" of its grantees, but should not assume that it has a major role or responsibility in this regard. Existing support for conference participation and perhaps new initiatives to share research results with development cooperation agencies are examples of such support, but more is unlikely to be needed.

13.4 IFS AS A SUSTAINABLE AND EFFICIENT INSTITUTION

The history of "picking winners" among young researchers, the vibrancy of the IFS network and the effectiveness of the secretariat are the foundations for its efficiency and progress toward sustainability. The evaluation team concludes that IFS delivers "value for money" in terms of a unique combination of research outputs and capacity development among a target group that often ends up in a gap between PhD scholarships and support to senior researchers.

There would seem to be potential to leverage this track record in providing "value for money" to access "more money". IFS has achieved results that it has yet to turn into a powerful message and a concerted fundraising approach that would lead to greater sustain-

[30] An evaluation such as this cannot predict what opportunities may arise for integrating such functions into regular secretariat activities in the future.

ability. The detailed and sometimes "cosy" approach taken in the envisioning process has been important internally, but has yet to generate a powerful message about why IFS is an ideal partner for linking research support to capacity development among early career researchers. This would appear to be the most important next step for IFS.

"Sustainability" in IFS is of course related to funding, and the continued reliance on Sida as the dominant financier is highly problematic. The current indications of declining core funding are cause for particular concern. Efforts to engage closer with Swedish institutions may generate other resource flows, but it is not possible to even speculate on the likelihood of these efforts yielding results in this respect. The evaluators conclude that engagement with potential major international funding sources should be a higher priority.

In addition to funding, sustainability is reliant on maintaining the commitment that currently exists from SAC members and advisors. Any changes being considered in IFS' prevailing modus operandi and institutional base should be assessed in relation to the risks that could arise in relation to maintaining these commitment levels. This is particularly notable if programmes 2 and 3 prove very popular among donors and effectively draw resources from programme 1 (if core funding continues to decline). It is too early to speculate about the likelihood of such a development, but it is a scenario that should be "on the radar screen".

Finally, the ToRs for this evaluation ask for suggestions regarding a Sida "exit strategy" from support to IFS. The evaluation team concludes that a complete exit strategy in the short- to medium-term would be catastrophic for an organisation that is both heavily dependent on Sida support and is regrettably perceived as a Swedish initiative. IFS needs to develop its own "exit strategy" from this current state of affairs. Sida can support this process by giving clear temporal and quantitative indications about how it intends to decrease its relative levels of support so that IFS can make its own decisions about how to either diversity its financing strategy or reduce the scope of its operations.

13.5 IS IT LIKELY THAT THE NEW STRATEGY WILL ACHIEVE ITS AIMS?

The major fundamental change in the new strategy is a commitment to put research into use. The IFS secretariat, SAC members and other key stakeholders are aware that such a commitment involves a shift of strategic direction towards interdisciplinarity and some changes in how grantees are supported to collaborate with each other and with actors in the innovation systems where they live. There is little consensus regarding how far IFS should or could go in these directions. IFS will need to determine what is possible and what is desirable in this regard.

The very open and constructive discourse within the IFS network, and the high degree of personal commitment bode well for eventually finding such a consensus. But as this consensus is not in place it is not possible for this evaluation to assess the likelihood of success. The evaluation team notes the following concerns regarding this process:

- It does not yet appear that IFS has found a path for clarifying its ambition level regarding interdisciplinary. The refinement of research themes that has recently been developed is a step forward in this regard, but may not be sufficient.

- There is a distrust of donor intentions related to innovation systems, which may be an obstacle for a constructive discussion of what kind of "lite" effort should be chosen for programme 3.
- The IFS secretariat lacks a clear approach to developing new (especially Swedish) partnerships, which could eventually be a distraction for the core task of continued redefinition of the organisation's overall strategic direction.
- Dialogue with the core donor, Sida, is insufficient.
- The clarity of future direction, which will be required for a more proactive approach to diversification of income sources, has yet to be established.

An overall finding of this evaluation is that IFS is already quite effective in supporting young scientists to undertake research that is being put into use. This is due to good choice of grantees, constructive support and flexible modalities. It is above all important to recognise these core strengths and ensure that new modalities are designed in such a way so as to support the exceptional efforts that IFS' young grantees are engaged in. Research is put into use in a local context, and a global organisation such as IFS can only make a modest contribution to fostering these local innovation systems.

Finally, the prospects for the new IFS strategy to lead to intended objectives is reliant on mobilising clear and diversified commitments to support implementation. This is in turn dependent on IFS having a clear and unambiguous message about where it wants to go and how it wants to get there. The envisioning process has been useful and appropriate for bringing stakeholders together to plan how to proceed in the future. The next step is to finalise this process and present the new strategy to the non-stakeholders (especially the donors) that must be engaged in order to implement the strategy.

13.6 ADDITIONAL OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT

- In order to serve the needs of young researchers who are beginning their careers after a PhD programme a tailored combination of capacity development and financing is required.
- In order to achieve the aims of the Policy for Research in Swedish Development Cooperation it is essential to recognise that young researchers need to pursue their own interests and develop new areas of research. Most traditional research councils that channel financing via senior researchers do not support this.
- In order to achieve the aims of the Policy for Gender Equality and the Rights and Role of Women in Sweden's International Development Cooperation, continued and concerted efforts to gender mainstream programming is essential. To achieve a higher level of gender equality, it is not enough to introduce separate age limit criteria as targeted capacity building efforts of women scientists throughout the region are needed.
- Contrary to the perceptions of many senior researchers, young postdoctoral researchers are often committed to and capable of engagement in innovation systems. It may be more appropriate to find ways to support their own initiatives than to invent entirely new mechanisms to support innovation systems.

14 Recommendations

14.1 RECOMMENDATIONS TO IFS

Most of the following recommendations refer to the importance of clarifying strategic focus. This is important both for internal direction and also so as to facilitate a more constructive dialogue with Sida. It is recognised that with regard to some of these issues (e.g., decentralisation) such strategic analyses are already done, and others (e.g., working with the alumni) are underway. It is also recognised that, in the aftermath of a very participatory planning process, there are inevitably a number of different views and opinions tabled which need to be reconciled. As such, it is also recognised that some of these issues are already recognised and will presumably be addressed within existing strategic planning processes.

- IFS should expeditiously "finalise" the new strategy, in the sense of being able to present a sufficiently clear future direction when pursuing new funding sources. This should include the various aspects listed below.
- Plans for pilots to learn about how to proceed with programmes 2 and 3 need to focus more clearly on what needs to be learnt in order to make decisions for future replication or scaling up, i.e., the pilots should test the "theory of change" wherein these programmes are expected to achieve their intended outcomes.
- Intentions and ambitions regarding how (and how far) to pursue interdisciplinarity in programmes 2 and 3 need to be made more transparent. This should be linked to a clear analysis of what is required to "put research into use". It is recognised that this will be a potentially very controversial topic among key stakeholders, but failure to clarify this aspect of IFS' new strategy can be highly detrimental to defining an understandable and viable niche in these new programme areas.
- IFS should pursue programme 3 with considerable caution, as it could damage credibility among core stakeholders. Modest activities related to networking and orientation regarding important themes in innovation systems should be the main priorities and could lead to a more constructive discourse on an eventual IFS niche in innovation systems. It may even be advisable to make this a sub-component of programme 2 to emphasise the modest ambition level.
- IFS should continue its focus on achieving greater gender equity, with particular attention to tailoring approaches to the diverse challenges faced in different regions and contexts. This should be reflected in clear commitments in the finalised strategy.
- Fundraising efforts, particularly with regard to potential major institutional partners such as the CGIAR, should build on a clearer presentation of the results it is achieving, especially as related to capacity development of young researchers.
- IFS should have a clear and explicit strategy to gradually reduce its level of dependence on Sida, either by obtaining more diversified funding commitments or by reducing the scope and/or scale of its activities.
- IFS should continue to pursue its plans to identify how to better utilise its alumni.

- The website should be developed more as a tool for online tutorials and dialogue with the IFS community.
- IFS should pursue its efforts to strengthen links with Swedish institutions in a more focused manner. All collaboration is not necessarily appropriate or useful collaboration. The evaluation team recognises that IFS would benefit from closer relationships in the secretariat's host country, but the costs of such efforts may outweigh the benefits if they involve sidestepping IFS' procedures and standards. Collaborative projects should be pursued based on seeing where IFS and potential Swedish partners each have something unique to offer the other.
- IFS should not establish field offices but should consider options to build on country level partnerships, as noted in section 10.2 above, particularly with regard to playing more of a purely supportive role in training workshops.
- The prioritisation of training workshops should be reassessed to ensure that they contribute to broader learning processes. Given the limited resources available and the likelihood that these process will be very different in the different regions, this again suggests that the IFS niche should be in more of a supportive role, perhaps enabling grantees to take advantage of training supplied by other institutions.
- IFS should only consider moving offices if it is convinced that the institutional benefits and/or financial savings would outweigh the costs and disruptions incurred.
- A particular strength of IFS is its emerging role as a highly trusted "neutral" global partner in potentially politically delicate South-South relations between middle- and low-income countries in a give region. This evaluation does not have specific recommendations in this regard, as every set of regional relationships has unique historical and geopolitical dimensions, but this is an emerging aspect of IFS' work where it should pay close and careful attention, as this role could be both important and sensitive.
- As part of reviewing its role in these South-South relations, IFS should take explicit steps to further develop the as yet limited support it receives from so-called non-traditional donors. A first step in this direction could be to commission a desk based review of the extent to which non-traditional donors are funding related research and capacity development efforts. This would provide a basis for identifying how to proceed. The reputation and trust that IFS has among many senior researchers in emerging middle-income countries bodes well for IFS obtaining an increasing share of its financing from these sources and/or acting as a conduit for joint initiatives on a regional or sub-regional basis.
- IFS should rethink its monitoring and evaluation strategy based on what it needs to learn about career outcomes of the young researchers it supports, and perhaps downplay the currently proposed focus on impacts, which may not be realistic, credible or useful.
- One aspect of the new monitoring and evaluation system should be to broadly assess areas of potential gender discrimination, starting with the proposal evaluation process, and use this knowledge to enhance the organisation's understanding of gender dynamics in the careers of young female and male researchers.

14.2 RECOMMENDATIONS TO SIDA (AND PERHAPS OTHER DONORS)

- Sida should continue support to IFS and ensure that, to the extent possible, IFS has a clearer and more long-term planning horizon once IFS first presents a clear and long-term development strategy. The high level of reliance on Sida funding is admittedly far from ideal, but it is a fact-on-the-ground, that implies a degree of responsibility for closer dialogue from Sida.
- Sida should inform and discuss with other donors and potential donors its views on future financing and to discuss how income streams could be diversified. This evaluation could be used as a point of departure for some of these discussions.
- Once IFS clarifies its strategy regarding gender equity, Sida should engage with Norad to discuss how to harmonise funding so as to ensure that the progress that has been made in enhancing gender equity is perceived and supported as a multi-donor priority and is not seen to be a Norwegian project.
- It is appropriate that programmes 2 and 3 are largely initiated through pilot projects funded by (other) donors. Sida should not divert its existing core support to these projects, but should be proactive in learning from these initiatives to inform future support to IFS and even other research programmes that are moving toward an increased focus on innovation systems.
- Sida should of course closely monitor the efficiency of IFS operations, but should consider costs in relation to a range of benefits related not only to grant expenditure, but also capacity development among an important and otherwise insufficiently served target group.
- Also regarding efficiency, Sida should recognise that expenditure related to the SAC and other networking costs actually generates a high degree of "in-kind" support to grantees in the form of pro bono human resource inputs. Even if these efforts cannot be quantified, they have major impact on the cost-benefit ratio in IFS' work.

14.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SIDA AND IFS

- The evaluation team has not been able to determine the causes of the poor communication between Sida and IFS, but notes that this must be addressed through joint efforts. It is recommended that the IFS secretariat convene a meeting between Sida and the IFS BoT to discuss both the findings of this evaluation and the issues that need to be addressed to move forward in a constructive and transparent manner.
- Sida should, as far as possible, set clear temporal and quantitative targets for reducing its relative share of IFS funding, and in so doing encourage IFS to develop a strategy to reduce its dependence on Sida, either through diversified financial support or by reducing the scale and scope of its activities.
- Together with the IFS secretariat, once decisions are made about future support Sida should make clear its views about the new strategy to the IFS BoT, which should in turn inform the wider IFS community and potential new donors.

- IFS should explore opportunities to raise awareness of grantees' relevant and applicable research findings among embassies and Sida programme officers. Sida FORSK should encourage this by passing on information to embassies of grantees' relevant and applicable research related to country strategies and programming portfolios. IFS could convene annual "sharing fairs" or perhaps simply by provide information to grantees and recent alumni about Sida programming plans and contact persons at country level. Embassies with regional portfolios may be able to identify other opportunities for such sharing of experience.
- IFS' new foray into providing technical advice for a national research council (in Viet Nam) may be replicable elsewhere. This can of course be done in non-Sida financed contexts, but could also perhaps be utilised elsewhere in FORSK programming. Sida should follow this new development and, if successful, advise programme officers in Stockholm and elsewhere about how they might recognise how IFS is a potential resource in this regard.

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference

Case No.: Date
2009-000734 15 May 2012

Terms of reference/Requirements specification – Review of the International Foundation for Science (IFS)

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Information about Sida

Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is a government Agency. Our goal is to contribute to enabling poor people to improve their living conditions. As other Swedish government agencies, Sida works independently within the framework established by the Swedish Government and Parliament. They decide on the financial limits, the countries with which Sweden (and thus, Sida) will cooperate, and the focus and content of that cooperation. For additional information, please visit Sida's website, www.sida.se

1.2 Information about the Unit for Research Cooperation

Sida's Unit for Research Cooperation (FORSK) is part of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. FORSK has the overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010 – 2014 and the strategy for Sida´s support for research cooperation 2010 – 2014 and reports to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This strategy is to govern Sida's support for research cooperation during the period 2010–2014 inclusive. The strategy is based on the Government's policy for development research cooperation, which in turn is a response to the developing countries' need for scientifically based knowledge as a means of effectively combating poverty. Sida's research support is a cornerstone of the Swedish development research support system.

The overall objective of the research support financed under expenditure area 7, International Aid, is *to strengthen and improve research of relevance to the fight against poverty in developing countries.*

In order to achieve the overall objective, Sida's activities under Sweden's development research policy are to focus on three specific areas:

- Research capacity building in developing countries and regions
- Research of relevance to developing countries
- Swedish research of relevance to developing countries

Further, the Strategy for Sida's support to research cooperation establishes in more detail three modalities of cooperation, namely:

- Capacity building: Support to national universities and to regional and global research institutions and organisations, so that partners are better able to plan, produce and use research in the fight against poverty. Examples of support measures are administrative reforms, support to PhD programmes and support which promote access for researchers from low income countries to participate in global and regional research networks. Synergies between the bilateral, regional and global supports are important in this regard.
- New Knowledge: Support to promote the production of research relevant for low income countries, which is quality assured according to conventional academic principles.
- Normative function: Mostly multilateral organisations, which provide policy advice to member states and are able to expand the existing discourse in strategic areas of importance. In addition, this could be national and regional institutions that can change laws, in particular research councils and ministries.

For more information about Sida's Unit for Research Cooperation, please consult www.sidaresearch.se.

1.3 Partner country

The IFS is based in Sweden but its work is international in scope. It focusses mostly on collaborative activities in developing countries.

1.4 Cooperation partner

International Foundation for Science (IFS) was founded as a research council and registered as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Sweden in 1972. The IFS receives funding from a portfolio of donors and funders including development organisations and science academies. Sida has since the start been the largest donor and before 2010 Sida andthe Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) provided about 80 percent of IFS's budget. After Norad withdrew its core support that year, Sida is the only large core contributor. The annual budget is approximately USD 5 million. The IFS has 135 affiliated organisations in 86 countries, mainly in the developing world. The IFS Secretariat is located in Stockholm, Sweden.

In 2009, the IFS opened an office in Uganda in collaboration with The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building (RUFORUM), a consortium of 29 universities across Eastern, Central and Southern Africa,. However, what was intended to become an African IFS hub and a part of a larger-scale decentralisation process in the organisation has rather remained a fairly untapped resource. As of yet, the Kampala office employs one person, a Program Manager fulfilling both managerial and scientific tasks, whereas the staff at the IFS headquarter in Stockholm currently adds up to 18. The 2010 evaluation of the IFS (Enclosure 2) concludes that the organisation's leadership is hesitant to expand IFS's presence in the target countries since the motives for this were perceived as vague and a plausible outcome was that the efficiency and focus of the IFS intervention would be jeopardised.

1.5 Intervention/Project description

The main objective of the organization is to contribute towards strengthening the capability of young men and women scientists in developing countries to conduct relevant and high quality research and their individual agency to put it into use. In the next decade IFS aims to support excellent individual and collaborative research, to build capability of early career scientists in the developing world, and to contribute innovation to the sustainable management of biological and water resources. In particular, to enable young scientists to contribute to a global research community that is reducing poverty and supporting sustainable development. The primary focus will be the promotion of excellent science through early career research grants and capability enhancing support to researchers in developing countries. Based on an extensive consultation process in 2011, IFS launches a 10 year strategy with three distinct research approaches,

1. Individual Research Approach (Specific Objectives: Capability of young developing country1 scientists built, to produce new research

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1 All countries within the regions below with a Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, Atlas method (current USD)1 at or below the average for Middle Income Countries (MIC) will be considered eligible for IFS individual grant support and as principal investigators within IFS collaborative research findings, relevant for developing countries and of assured quality according to current academic principals)

Around 3,000 early career scientists in poor countries will receive advice and quality assured support according to current academic principles from up to 1,000 IFS Scientific Advisors; 500 of the best researchers will win research grants; around 500 will attend workshops and training and a constituency of 5,000 will regularly access on line resources.

2. Collaborative Research Approach (Specific Objectives: Capability of researchers from developing countries to access collaborative research networks promoted, including links to the international research community). Hundreds of African scientists will be invited to join the digital IFS Community where access to Web-2 resources, and facilitation and mentoring by IFS scientists will encourage and support the development of collaborative research proposals. Sixty of the best collaborative researchers will gain research and travel grants.

3. Contributing Innovation Approach (Specific Objectives: The use of research in developing countries promoted and the demand for research increased). In 2012 IFS will finalise the design of its methodology to support the agency of early career scientists to put their research into use, through bespoke capability enhancing support and facilitated links to entrepreneurial and policy domains, which will be launched in 2013.

Historically, the core component of IFS's program is a competitive grant scheme, which provides support to young scientists in low- and middle income countries in form of research grants, travel grants and literature grants. Promising young scientists receive funds to conduct minor research in eight research areas - aquatic resources, animal production

and health, crop science, forestry and agroforestry, food science, natural products, social science and water resources. During the years IFS has built up a large alumni network. IFS research grants have been distributed to over 7,000 students across 103 developing countries. Each grant amounted to USD 12,000 and may be renewed twice. It is intended for the purchase of the basic tools needed to conduct a research project: equipment, expendable supplies, and literature.

Sida's aim is to assist low-income countries to build up and use their own knowledge and expertise in their struggle against poverty. Sida's research cooperation is governed by Policy for Global Development (PGU), Policy for Africa: "Sweden and Africa - a policy to address common challenges and opportunities" and the Strategy for Research Cooperation 2010 -2014.

1.6 Current situation in the relevant sector

While many of the middle-income countries have invested in science, most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, parts of South-East Asia and Pacific, and Central America are still lagging behind. The total expenditure is about 0.2 percent of the GNP, compared with well over 1 percent in Brazil and 4
percent in the leading industrialised countries, such as Sweden. It may be added that emerging economies, including China and India, are at present rapidly increasing research funding. The low-income countries are still in need of donor support for research capacity building.

1.7 Related programmes/projects and other development cooperation activities

The work of the IFS overlaps that of other organizations. Most notably, the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) and the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) conduct activities similar to those of the IFS. In addition, the larger universities in East Africa and associations such as the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), the Bio-resources Innovations Network for Eastern African Development (Bio-Innovate) and the Lake Victoria Research Initiative (VicRes) do or could possibly be charged with performing tasks correspondent to IFS activities.

2 SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT

2.1 General information

Sida’s financial support to the IFS is to be reviewed. The findings of this review will provide Sida with a foundation for the assessment of future financial contributions to the IFS. More specifically, the reviewer should focus on the following:

2.2 Scope of work

Organisation

- How has the organization changed in the last 10 years to better adapt to a changing world?
- Is IFS dimensioned properly to carry out its mission and conduct its activities?
- Considering the high level of administrative costs, could the IFSactivities be organised differently in order to reduce the costs?

- What are the key functions performed by IFS?

Relevance

- Are the granting schemes consistent with the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries?
- Are the selection criteria for the different granting schemes relevant, e.g. do the grants reach the intended beneficiaries, how is scientific quality of the applications weighted in?
- Are the courses and workshops offered by IFS reflecting the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries?
- How do the key functions and activities carried out by IFS correspond to the policies that govern Sida's research cooperation (are the functions and activities relevant)?

Effectiveness and impact

- Is the IFS strategy2 effective in relation to the main objective 'to contribute towards strengthening the capability of young men and women scientists in developing countries to conduct relevant and high quality research and their individual agency to put it into use'.
- Is supplying many relatively small grants to students in developing countries the most cost-efficient method to work towards the strengthened research capacity of developing countries.
- What is the actual contribution of the IFS to alleviate the impediments to research capacity building in developing countries? (The reviewer should also attempt to trace the funding to shed light on the recipients and their studies).

Efficiency

- Compare the cost of IFS to achieve their intended results3 with those of ISP, TWAS, OWSD and potential new partners4.

2 IFS Strategy 2011-2020
3 The fact that the IFS's main body is based in Sweden implies high administrative costs compared to the organization's equivalents. Similar programs exist in Sweden (international science program, ISP), globally (TWAS, OWSD) and potentially also in Africa.
4 There are African universities and research institutes that do or could potentially do the same kind of work as the IFS. It is therefore a relevant question whether all or part of the

- What are the consequences of a move of key IFS functions to its African office and what will happen with the global approach if the office is based in a specific region?

Sustainability

- What are the costs and benefits of extending Sida's support to the IFS to perform the relevant identified activities and functions versus distribute the relevant activities to other actors?
- What would happen with IFS if Sida would withdraw or decrease its support? Describe exit strategies
- Which are the current and/or future alternatives to the IFS to perform the relevant identified activities and key functions?

2.3 Budget
SEK 300,000

2.4 Schedule
Inception report due 15 June 2012
Draft of final report due 1 October 2012
Final report due 1 November 2012

2.5.1 Requirements for the person responsible for the implementation of the service
The tenderer must propose a person with
I. a doctoral degree
II. 10 years of experience from research-related work
III. 10 years of experience from development-related work
IV. Previous experience in research capacity building in developing countries
V. Experience in conduction similar reviews
VI. The person proposed must have very good knowledge in spoken and written English.

IFS's functions could be transferred to Sida's research cooperation partners in Africa and a cost-benefit analysis of such a move would be useful to Sida.

Annex 2 - Inception Report

1. Executive Summary

This inception report presents the approach that Indevelop will use in its decentralised evaluation of the International Foundation for Science (IFS). It draws on documentation review and initial interviews. Based on discussions with Sida it is understood that the scope of the evaluation is, first, to describe the process of developing a new strategy for the work of the organisation and, second, to analyse the emerging role of IFS in a changing context of capacity development for research in developing countries. The evaluation will compare the IFS strategy with alternative approaches and institutions that could be engaged to provide similar forms of support. This inception report proposes a somewhat different structure of evaluation questions than that in the ToRs. The proposal focuses the approach more specifically on the issues of relevance, efficiency and sustainability that are the core concerns of Sida in commissioning this evaluation.

The primary overall challenge in relation to the scope of the evaluation is that the IFS strategy has not yet been fully formulated. Therefore it will not be possible to *evaluate* all aspects of the strategy in that it is not yet in place and has not yet begun to be implemented. Instead the team will combine an evaluative approach with *assessment* of the strategy in relation to the chosen criteria.

The approach applied will focus on the following eight areas of analysis:

1. Description of the processes underway since 2010
2. Description of strategy and functions
3. Stakeholder analysis related to scope and relevance
4. Views of stakeholders on the change process
5. Evaluation team's judgement of the relevance of strategic direction
6. Evaluation team's judgement of the comparative efficiency of IFS' strategic direction
7. Potential approaches for greater effectiveness/efficiency/sustainability through dece tralisation/devolution or different networking structures
8. Implications of findings for the Sida/IFS partnership

Four sets of methods will be used:

1. The evaluation team will review IFS documentation. The team will also scan available evaluations and analysis of similar organisations and networks as a basis for identifying comparable indicators of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.
2. Strategic stakeholders, will be interviewed. Grantees will be interviewed during field visits and by skype. When interviewing stakeholders with a close relationship with the organisation the evaluation team will gather information on how these stakeholders perceive the implicit theories of change regarding IFS' work, both in terms of current structures and regarding the new proposed strategies. With younger researchers the team will tentatively try to adapt and apply elements of the Most Significant Change method to find out how IFS supports them in starting their careers.

3. In late August a workshop will be held to present the emerging findings and both IFS and Sida staff will be encouraged to reflect upon their possibly contrasting perspectives on the strategic change process that is underway and the implications of these perspectives and priorities for their future partnership.
4. In-depth interview will be conducted with comparable organisations to obtain an overview of (1) how other organisations perform similar functions to IFS, (2) whether they have found more efficient, sustainable or locally anchored means to do so, and (3) how they see an organisation such as IFS adapting past roles to new challenges in an innovations system perspective.

2. Assessment of scope of the evaluation

2.1 Introduction

This inception report is based upon initial review of documentation and meetings held with Sida FORSK and IFS during June 26-27, 2012. The purpose of the inception report is to propose an approach that would clarify the focus of the evaluation and suggest methods. Due to the summer holidays it is hoped that comments to this inception report can be received no later than July 6 so that the evaluation can commence promptly.

2.2 Background

2.2.1 IFS – Changing strategy in a changing world

The International Foundation for Science (IFS) was founded in 1972 to enhance research capacity in developing countries by extending support to promising young scientists; a group facing particular challenges in successfully furthering their research careers. Through its mandate, IFS also aimed at stalling the brain drain many of these countries were experiencing.

Since its inception, IFS has awarded more than 7,000 small grants to young researchers in 100 countries and around 17,500 researchers have benefitted from other forms of capacity building support, including thematic workshops. The thematic focus has throughout been on research in a broad spectrum of biological and water resources.

In 2010 IFS initiated a strategic reform process, yet to be completed. The organisation has undertaken a large participatory envisioning exercise aiming at contemplating its future direction and incorporating recommendations that have materialised from earlier external evaluations and the mission statement by the new director. Following this envisioning exercise, IFS has revised its mission. The new mission is:

'To contribute towards strengthening the capability of young men and women scientists in developing countries to conduct relevant and high quality research and their individual agency to put it into use'.

To achieve the new mission, IFS will implement three parallel programs: (i) grants and capability enhancing support to individual young researchers from least developed countries; (ii) grants and capability enhancing support for collaborative research; and (iii) support to contribute innovation and to put research into use. While the first programme is much in line with their old agenda, the second and third programs are new, reflecting a recognition of, on

one hand, the ever more complex development challenges that face humanity and that often demand concerted research efforts across scientific disciplines and geographic regions to be addressed in a satisfactory way, and, on the other, the need to help bridge the divide between science and policy and practice.

While the general aspects of the new strategy have been mapped out, the details are yet to be formulated and, importantly, the strategy as a whole is yet to be implemented.

2.2.2 Previous External Evaluation of IFS: The 2010 Evaluation

In 2009 an external evaluation of IFS was commissioned. The purpose was not only to take stock of the implementation and results of the IFS program between 2001 and 2008, but even more so to identify lessons to be learnt and provide directions and specific recommendations on how to move forward so as to in the best way cater for the new demands and challenges of its target group and remain relevant and competitive in a changing world.

The evaluation confirmed a continued high relevance of IFS' mandate, the organisation's high reputation among young researchers, and the grants' positive impacts on grantees. However, the evaluation team highlighted several shortcomings and areas for improvement, including administrative inefficiency and a counterproductive organisational culture, weak focus on development relevance in grant-making, little consideration of the need for interdisciplinary research approaches, and limited efforts to form strategic partnerships. Their recommendations included that IFS should keep its mission statement but develop an institutional strategic 2020 vision; develop strategies for gender mainstreaming and collaboration with public and private institutions; mainly focus on supporting young researchers from Low-Income Countries; make adjustments in grant sizes and lower the upper age limit; maintain a thematic focus but collapse the eight eligible research areas into 2-3 programme areas; adopt Results-Based Management in all its operations and adopt an M&E (Monitoring & Evaluation) system; reorganise, re-culture and relocate the Secretariat, make some adjustments of the Governance structure, and decentralise by creating (three) regional offices; give priority to capacity building among staff; and broaden its funding base.

Some of these recommendations have subsequently either been implemented or have become a point of departure in the envisioning exercise.

2.3 Understanding of the intended scope

The assignment is understood to focus primarily on two aspects of the work of IFS. The first is description of the process of developing a new strategy for the work of the organisation. The second is analysis of the emerging role of IFS in a changing context of capacity development for research in developing countries. The evaluation is expected to be both *descriptive*, since Sida does not feel it currently has a sufficient overview of IFS' work, and *analytical* in terms of drawing conclusions (primarily) about the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the work of IFS, now and when the new IFS strategy for 2011-2020 is rolled out.

It is understood that the timeframe to be reviewed is to principally, but not exclusively, focus on the period since the last evaluation, which was presented in 2010. The current evaluation will not replicate nor duplicate the analysis of the 2010 evaluation, but will instead focus on the current situation of IFS within its ongoing strategic reform process.

2.3.1 Restructuring of the Terms of Reference

The scope described above is not explicitly proposed in the Terms of Reference (ToRs), but rather derives from an initial discussion the evaluation team leader had with Sida FORSK and initial interviews with IFS staff held on June 26-27, 2012. In discussions with Sida, which centred on clarifications in relation to issues raised in Indevelop's initial proposal for the evaluation, it became clear that Sida was commissioning the evaluation for two overall reasons. First, Sida feel that it lacked an overall understanding of the progress that was being made in IFS' strategic reform process. It therefore required an independent perspective on what was underway and what was likely to be the outcome of that process. Second, Sida wanted to assess the relative efficiency, relevance and sustainability of the IFS model in relation to the new constellations of research support organisations that have emerged in Southern countries in recent years.

In order to better focus the frame of reference for the evaluation, this inception report proposes a somewhat different structure of evaluation questions than that in the ToRs. The proposal outlined below basically covers the same questions, but focuses the approach on the descriptive and analytical aspects noted above and also more specifically on the issues of relevance, efficiency and sustainability that are the core concerns of Sida in commissioning this evaluation.

It should be stressed that the evaluation will also look at effectiveness, but primarily as a basis for understanding the comparative advantage of IFS (i.e., their relevance and relative efficiency) in the broader context. It is understood that the 2010 evaluation findings and the monitoring efforts of IFS itself are of sufficient quality and are recent enough to provide a basis for judging overall effectiveness.

2.4 Timing and scope

The primary overall challenge in relation to the scope of the evaluation is the fact that the details of the IFS strategy have not yet been fully formulated, much less rolled out. Since 2010 IFS has been actively and inclusively interacting with its stakeholders to develop the new strategy, and that process is not yet complete. Therefore it will not be possible to *evaluate* all aspects of the strategy in that it is not yet in place and has not yet begun to be implemented. Instead the team will combine an evaluative approach with *assessment* of the strategy in relation to the chosen criteria.

It should be noted that IFS currently still effectively operates based on the earlier strategy and some functions (most notably monitoring and evaluation functions) have been effectively suspended in recent years in order to focus on the participatory strategic development process that has been underway. In brief, the current state of strategy development at IFS can be summarised as follows:

Programme One, Individual Research: This component of the strategy largely involves a set of incremental changes to the existing core functions of IFS. Perhaps due to the fact that this is something that IFS stakeholders are familiar with, they have provided extensive feedback and it appears that this part of the new strategy is almost in place but has not actually been implemented. Nonetheless, as the changes to this programme are relatively modest it is expected that this aspect of IFS' work can be evaluated. A greater challenge will be to stimulate those interviewed to reflect on programme one in relation to the other two programmes that are not yet in place.

Programme Two, Collaborative Research: This component is new, but appears to draw on trends toward broader collaboration that many IFS stakeholders are already involved in. IFS stakeholder discussions have led to relatively well developed plans, but these have not been finalised nor rolled out. They will soon be piloted with funding from the Carnegie Foundation. It is likely that interviewees will provide some insight on this and it is likely that much of the evaluation of IFS' comparative advantage may focus on how this component is likely to lead to a restructuring of IFS' relationships, rather than assuming that this programme will merely consisting of a set of activities that IFS itself undertakes.

Programme Three, Contributing Innovation: This component has only just begun to be thought through and it is very unclear what it might consist of. Despite this obvious limitation to the evaluation, it is within the context of prevailing innovation systems that IFS may need to find its future relevance and sustainability. For this reason it is appropriate to include this programme in the analysis, even if this aspect of the evaluation will presumably be highly formative.

2.5 Recommendations regarding evaluation scope

1. The evaluation should be restructured (see proposal in section four below) to include both descriptive and analytical aspects and to focus the analytical evaluation questions on relevance, efficiency and sustainability.
2. The focus of the evaluation will be on the period since the 2010 evaluation, but naturally include the perspective of earlier findings.
3. The evaluation will be largely formative, in the sense of analysing where IFS is (or may be) heading rather than where it has been.

3. Relevance and evaluability of evaluation questions

3.1 Comments on the evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference

The Indevelop proposal for this evaluation included a number of requests for clarification and suggestions for regrouping of the evaluation questions. Based on discussions with Sida it was suggested that Indevelop propose an alternative structure to better fit the actual purpose that had been clarified in the meeting with Sida.

A significant focus in the ToRs was on alternatives for greater decentralisation of IFS activities, drawing on the experience of the IFS "hub" that had been established in Uganda. In discussions with IFS it was revealed that this hub had already been closed and the experience analysed internally. For this reason it is proposed that less attention be given to the experience of the Uganda hub per se (the evaluators will interview the host of the hub, RUFORUM, but will not visit the closed office) to instead focus on analysis of how stakeholders and non-stakeholders perceive different options for decentralisation, with regional hubs as being just one such option.

Furthermore, it is expected that the analyses of the relative efficiency of alternative institutions will be closely linked to analyses of options for greater decentralisation. Efficiencies in global/regional organisations relate to how they define their core functions and their relationships with regional/national partners. As such, the alternative models suggested for analysis in the ToRs will be analysed more as models for different approaches to decentralisation, rather than as overall alternative funding channels for Sida.

3.2 Recommendations regarding evaluation questions

1. This alternative structure is presented in section 4.1 below. It is hoped that the structure presented retains the essence of the original questions but is expected to be more useable and clearer in relation to the formative focus of the evaluation.
2. The analysis of decentralisation options is proposed to focus more on functions that could be decentralised, rather than specific technical forms for this. The latter would require more detailed investigations and even negotiations with potential partners than is possible or appropriate in an evaluation such as this.

4. Proposed approach and methodology

4.1 Proposed approach

The following is a proposal for restructured evaluation questions:

1. Description of the processes underway since 2010
   a. "Envisioning" and the strategic planning process: *What has been the process of strategic restructuring of IFS since 2010?*
   b. Ongoing work under the former strategy: *How and to what extent has IFS maintained its effectiveness since 2010?*
   c. Management response to the 2010 evaluation: *How have these recommendations been acted upon?*
   d. Financial uncertainty and its impacts on IFS processes: *How have financial uncertainties affected IFS' strategic change processes and ongoing performance?*
2. Description of strategy and functions
   a. Strategic programme 1, Individual research: *What changes have been proposed in relation to individual research support (including eligibility criteria) and why have they been proposed?*
   b. Strategic programme 2, Collaborative research: *What types of new relationships have been proposed for collaborative research and what does this suggest regarding changes in IFS' relationship with its stakeholders?*
   c. Strategic programme 3, Contributing innovation: *What does the proposed initial framework imply regarding future IFS intentions in positioning itself in innovations systems?*
   d. Function 1, Grant management: *How effective and efficient is IFS currently as a grant management organisation?*
   e. Function 2, "Nurturing" young researchers: *How has IFS been able to develop its additional functions, beyond actual grant provision, in "nurturing" young researchers at the "first rung on the ladder" of their careers?*
   f. Function 3, Networking: *What is the role of IFS in relation to the research networks in which it operates?*
   g. Comparison with other networks/young researcher support functions/grant management structures with similar aims: *How do organisations with similar functions operate and how do they compare with IFS in relation to efficiency and effectiveness?*

h. IFS' changing role in prevailing innovation systems: *To what extent (and how)has IFS engaged in broader innovation systems beyond the research community?*

i. Results-based management: *Where does IFS stand in reassessing and focusing its results-based management efforts?*

3. Stakeholder analysis related to scope and relevance
   a. Range of stakeholders: *Who are the stakeholders that IFS engages closely with?*
   b. Relevance of stakeholders in relation to other networks: *Are these stakeholders relevant in relation to complying with the principles and achieving the objectives of the* ***Policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014****?*
   c. Replication and overlaps in networking: *Does IFS have a unique niche in these networks or are there other organisations fulfilling similar functions?*
   d. Gaps among key stakeholders: *Are there key actors who are not currently stakeholders in the IFS networks, and who therefore should be engaged in order to comply with the principles and achieve the objectives of the* ***Policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014****?*
   e. Viability of networking -scale and scope: *Has IFS focused (now and in the coming strategy roll out) on an appropriate scale and scope of stakeholders in relation to organisational efficiency and ultimate sustainability?*
4. Views of stakeholders on the change process
   a. Relevance: *Do stakeholders perceive that IFS is moving toward greater relevance in relation to other research organisations and the broader innovation systems?*
   b. Choice of strategic niche: *Do stakeholders perceive that IFS is limiting itself to an appropriate, strategic and limited niche?*
   c. Perceived viability: *Do stakeholders recognise the challenges that IFS faces in defining a sustainable scope and scale of its operations and, if so, how do they perceive IFS' change process in moving toward such a focus?*
   d. Added value among other research grant management structures: *What is seen to be IFS' unique added value in relation to other research grant management structures?*
   e. Added value among other young researcher support functions: *What is seen to be IFS' unique added value in relation to other young researcher support functions?*
   f. Added value in an innovation system perspective: *What is seen to be IFS' unique added value in relation to contributing to broader innovation systems?*
   g. Ownership: *What are the levels and expressions of ownership for the work of IFS among stakeholders?*
5. Evaluation team's judgement of the relevance of strategic direction. In relation to the **Policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014**:
   a. Does IFS contribute to partner countries and regional actors being better able to plan, produce and use research in the fight against poverty?
   b. *Does IFS contribute to increased production of international research relevant to the fight against poverty in developing countries?*
   c. *Are these efforts implemented based on the following principles:*
      - *Flexibility*
      - *Dialogue with other countries and international actors*
      - *Implementation of the Paris Declaration*
      - *Coordination with other research financiers*

- *Coordination and harmonisation of support forms*
- *Avoidance of the creation of parallel support structures*
- *Dissemination of research results and forums for dialogue*
- *Intellectual freedom and unrestricted communication*
- *Combating discrimination*
- *Research on an equal footing*
- *Knock-on effects in other areas?*

d. In relation to the wider changes underway in architecture related to research and innovation systems: *Does the new strategy situate IFS appropriately in relation to overall trends in research architecture and innovation systems?*

e. In relation to results-based management: *Does the new monitoring and evaluation approach provide an appropriate basis for results-based management in the future?*

f. In relation to Gender Equality in Practice: A Manual for Sida: *To what extent has IFS acted to (a) integrate gender equality into programming, (b) target gender ativities, and (c) engage in a gender aware dialogue.*

6. Evaluation team's judgement of the comparative efficiency of IFS' strategic direction
   a. Niche: *Does the new strategy focus and capitalise on IFS' strengths?*
   b. Strategic focus in relation to other actors: *Do other organisations provide similar types/quality of services to those IFS intends to provide under the new strategy (and/or services more closely related to Sida priorities)?*
      i. Individual research
      ii. Collaborative research
      iii. Contributing innovation
      iv. Grants management
      v. "Nurturing" young researchers
      vi. Networking
   c. Cost efficiency: *Could other organisations provide similar types/quality of services at lower cost?*
   d. Location and hosting: *Could other hosting arrangements (in Sweden and internationally) reduce costs and increase effectiveness and efficiency?*
7. Potential approaches for greater effectiveness/efficiency/sustainability through de centralisation/devolution or different networking structures
   a. What are the strengths and weaknesses of a network with a secretariat in Sweden?
      i. Effectiveness
      ii. Efficiency
      iii. Sustainability
   b. What functions could be decentralised/deconcentrated/devolved in order to attain better effectiveness and sustainability (ownership)?
      i. Deconcentration: Shifting of administrative responsibilities to local offices/partners
      ii. Decentralisation: Transfer of power over IFS activities to local partners
      iii. Devolution: Transfer of governance functions to local partners
      iv. Implications for accountability to donors, local partners, individual researchers

   c. *What functions could be decentralised/deconcentrated/devolved in order to attain greater efficiency and more appropriate accountability relationships?*
8. Implications of findings for the Sida/IFS partnership
   a. *What are the communications issues that affect the quality of the Sida/IFS partnership?*
   b. *What is the IFS niche in the Swedish development research portfolio?*
   c. *What is Sida's role within the IFS donor group; how could a more appropriate balance be achieved in donor support; and ultimately how could this lead to greater sustainability?*

4.2 Proposed methodology

The proposed methodology consists of four evaluative approaches:

1. The evaluation team will review IFS documentation focusing on the strategic planning process and monitoring and evaluation efforts. The team will also scan available evaluations and analysis of similar organisations and networks as a basis for identifying comparable indicators of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. If possible the functions of these alternative organisations will be assessed in relation to the **Policy for research in Swedish development cooperation 2010-2014.** This review of documentation will be undertaken during July.
2. Strategic stakeholders, including members of the Board of Trustees, collaborating organisations and others deemed relevant will be interviewed in an in-depth manner, either during field visits or by skype. Grantees will be selectively interviewed using a limited semi-structured format in Kenya, Thailand and Vietnam during field visits. Other grantees will be interviewed by skype. We will strive to make sure that the sample adequately reflects the diversity of stakeholders, including grantees. When interviewing stakeholders with a close relationship with the organisation the evaluation team will gather information on how these stakeholders perceive the implicit theories of change/action regarding IFS' work, both in terms of current structures and regarding the new proposed strategies. With younger researchers the team will tentatively try to adapt and apply elements of the Most Significant Change method that IFS intends to use in its future monitoring system with a focus on finding out what the "first rung on the career ladder" actually means for these researchers. Most Significant Change related methods will also be applied to assess how IFS staff perceive the changes that have occurred in their organisation. These interviews will be undertaken between July and September. It should be stressed here that Most Significant Change methodologies are usually undertaken as part of internal participatory monitoring systems. In this case the methods will be applied in a different context and in an evaluation that is oriented toward both accountability and learning. Therefore, these methods may need to be adjusted in the course of the evaluation.

   IFS has a new logical framework that has not yet come into force as a structure for planning and monitoring (due to the transitional phase that the organisation is in). Therefore the evaluation will not attempt to assess performance based on the indicators in that logical framework. However, the evaluation will look critically at the extent to which this framework reflects the theories of change and critical assumptions of key stakeholders.

3. In late August (tentatively August 21 or 22) a workshop will be held in Stockholm with the IFS secretariat, Sida and (perhaps) a limited group of additional key stakeholders where the evaluation team will present the emerging findings and both IFS and Sida staff will be encouraged to reflect upon their possibly contrasting perspectives on the strategic change process that is underway and the implications of these perspectives and priorities for their future partnership. It is expected that this workshop will provide a basis for further evaluative analysis that focuses on the most important issues that need to be resolved in the Sida/IFS partnership. While in Stockholm additional interviews will be undertaken with IFS staff, primarily to gain a deeper understanding of how they practically work with partners on a day-to-day basis.
4. When it becomes apparent what might be considered comparable organisations and "non-stakeholders" with relevant perspectives, in depth interviews will be conducted to obtain an overview of (1) how other organisations perform similar functions to IFS, (2) whether they have found more efficient, sustainable or locally anchored means to do so, and (3) how they see an organisation such as IFS adapting past roles to new challenges in an innovations system perspective. These interviews will be undertaken during early October.

A draft report will be delivered on October 15, at which time a presentation will be made at Sida. The deadline for comments on the report will be set at October 31 and the final report will be submitted on November 10.

Annex 3 - Analysis of IFS Responses to the 2010 Evaluation

In 2009 an external evaluation of IFS was commissioned.[31] The purpose was not only to take stock of the implementation and results of the IFS program between 2001 and 2008, but even more so to identify lessons to be learnt and provide directions and specific recommendations on how to move forward so as to in the best way cater for the new demands and challenges of its target group and remain relevant and competitive in a changing world.

The evaluation confirmed a continued high relevance of IFS' mandate, the organisation's high reputation among young researchers, and the grants' positive impacts on grantees. However, the evaluation team highlighted several shortcomings and areas for improvement, including administrative inefficiency and a counterproductive organisational culture, weak focus on development relevance in grant-making, little consideration of the need for interdisciplinary research approaches, and limited efforts to form strategic partnerships.

The following summarises the recommendations made in the 2010 evaluation and the evaluation team's assessment of the extent to which IFS has responded. Overall the current evaluation team judges that many of these recommendations have, most appropriately, been rejected and addressed in a very different manner through the participatory envisioning process and through decisions made by the BoT. The level of detail in many of these recommendations seems to have overstepped the role of an evaluator vis-à-vis the organisation's governance and management.

Strongly recommended that a common institutional strategic vision for IFS 2020 be developed through an inclusive, consultative and participatory process. Focus should remain on the individual scientists, however IFS also works to influence the environment in which they work. Relevance to development should be factored in.

This has been implemented in an appropriate manner.

Develop strategies on how to further increase the proportion of women scientists in the granting programme and how to collaborate with public and private sector institutions to leverage IFS efforts.

This has been implemented, with varying results.

With regard to the target groups of the IFS activities, the main focus should be on supporting young individual researchers in Low-Income Countries.

[31]Muraguri-Mwololo, Rosa, Roland Schertenleib and Arne Svensson. 2010. External Evaluation of the International Foundation for Science (IFS). Professional Management. Final report 2010-01-14

This focus has been strengthened.

In a second priority, the engagement of IFS in Low- and Middle-Income countries – which were earlier eligible for the IFS grant program but have now a stronger scientific funding infrastructure - should be based on specific collaboration packages.

This has not been implemented and does not appear to be a priority within the collaborative research systems being developed. Furthermore, it would seem inappropriate and perhaps even somewhat patronising for IFS to predefine relationships between low and middle-income countries, even though IFS could facilitate such relationships where demand is expressed.

The upper limit of each grant should be increased.

This has not been implemented, partly due to the financial uncertainties facing IFS.

A thematic focus is necessary. The thematic focus on sustainable management of biological and water resources is still justified. Within this general thematic focus few (2-3) research programmes should be defined. Important criteria for deciding on the programmes are relevance to the MDGs, relevance to issues of great global concern such as mitigation and adaptation to Climate Change, and existing expertise within the IFS network.

Decisions about new areas of support are being made by an IFS task force. They have not been finalised but from the feedback received it appears that they are being refocused around issues of greater societal relevance. Furthermore, the new innovations system window may provide a greater focus on relevance, but this is unclear.

To improve effectiveness, the upper age limit for male and female grantees should be reduced to 35 years. Manage more strategically, efficiently, effectively and in keeping with current development management practices, IFS has to adopt Results-Based-Management in all its operations, especially programming.

The secretariat has received support from AIMS for this purpose but it cannot be said to have adopted a strong RBM (Results-Based Management) approach to all operations.

To reorganise the Secretariat

This has been done

The IFS Governance structure should be maintained

This has been done

If IFS is going to develop a distributed organisation, it should comprise of HQ in Stockholm and at least 3 regional IFS offices (at least one each in Africa, Asia and Latin America). The HQ and the regional offices should have the same brand name and should preferably be parts of the same legal entity.

The current evaluation team fails to understand how this recommendation is in accordance with the need to reduce secretariat costs and enhance strategic management. This recommendation seems to have generated considerable confusion for IFS as it proposed a "solution" for a poorly defined "problem" and appears to have been completely unrealistic.

IFS should actively look for more cost-effective location.

This has been done, though even less expensive offices could perhaps have been founds.

For greater stability, IFS should broaden funding base especially its range of long-term funders/donors.

This has been attempted, with limited success apart from the notable (but small) support that is now being provided by middle income countries.

Annex 4 - Comparison with Other Organisations

The following is an attempt to summarise similarities and differences between IFS and other organisations providing related services. As will be made clear below, this comparison primarily indicates that these organisations are not actually commensurable due to their differences in mandates, structures, financing and target groups.

In the Terms of Reference (Annex 1; 1.7), the following organizations were identified as carrying out similar activities to those of IFS:

- *TWAS* - The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World
- *OWSD* - The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World

In addition, the following were identified in the Terms of Reference as possibly being in a position to perform tasks correspondent to IFS' activities:

- *Universities* - The larger universities in East Africa
- *WIOMSA* - The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
- *Bio-Innovate* - The Bio-resources Innovations Network for Eastern African Development
- *VicRes* - The Lake Victoria Research Initiative

Moreover, the 2010 Evaluation[32] (p. 24) identified the following organizations and programs as 'likeminded' to IFS:

- *START* - global change SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training
- *TWAS* - The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World
- *IRD* - Institut de Recherche pour le Développement
- *UNU* - e.g. United Nations University's Institute for Advanced Studies(UNU/IAS)

[32] Muraguri-Mwololo, Rosa, Roland Schertenleib and Arne Svensson. 2010. External Evaluation of the International Foundation for Science (IFS). Professional Management. Final report 2010-01-14. See page 24.

Comparison with TWAS and OWSD

	IFS **International Foundation for Science**	***TWAS*** **The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World**	***OWSD*** **The Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World**
OVERVIEW			
Mandate / Mission	'To contribute towards strengthening the capability of young men and women scientists in developing countries to conduct relevant and high quality research and their individual agency to put it into use'.	'To promote scientific capacity and excellence for sustainable development in the South'.	'…uniting women scientists from the South with the objective of strengthening their role in the development process and promoting their representation in scientific and technological leadership'.
Objectives	(i) Capability of young developing country scientists built to produce new research findings, relevant to developing countries and of assured quality according to current academic principles; (ii) Capability of researchers from developing countries to access collaborative research networks promoted, including links to the international research community; (iii) The use of research in developing countries promoted and the demand for research increased.	(i) Recognise, support and promote excellence in scientific research in the developing world; (ii) Respond to the needs of young scientists in S&T-lagging developing countries; (iii) Promote South-South and South-North cooperation in science, technology and innovation; (iv) Encourage scientific research and sharing of experiences in solving major problems facing developing countries.	(i) Increase the participation of women in developing countries in scientific and technological research, teaching and leadership; (ii) Promote the recognition of the scientific and technological achievements of women scientists and technologists in developing countries; (iii) Promote collaboration and communication among women scientists and technologists in developing countries and with the inter-

			national scientific community as a whole; (iv) Increase access of women in developing countries to the socioeconomic benefits of science and technology; (v) Promote participation of women scientists and technologists in the development of their country; and (vi) Increase understanding of the role of science and technology in supporting women's development activities.
Targeted research areas / scientific fields	*(Applied sciences)* • Biological and water resources (very liberally defined… explicit about that the researchers need to define the research problems relevant in their national context; e.g. in relation to agriculture, energy, fisheries, food security, forestry, health and nutrition, natural products, water and sanitation)	• Basic sciences: Biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics Please note that the TWAS Research Grants Programme supports research in the **basic sciences**. Proposals focusing on more applied research <u>should be submitted to IFS</u>. Thus, projects submitted to TWAS that relate to applications in agriculture or medicine or that use existing techniques to screen, for example, medicinal plants for bioactive substances or to monitor an environment for pollutants will be rejected.	• Natural sciences (all branches)
Projects / programs / activities	(i) Grants and capability enhancing support to individual young researchers from least developed countries; (ii) Grants and capability enhancing support for collabora-	(i-a) Grants to individual researchers: building scientific capacity (incl. specific grants for young researchers); (i-b) Grants to research units: building scientific capacity; (ii) Prices: recognising excellence in scientific research in the developing world;	(i) Post-graduate training fellowships for women scientists to pursue PhDs at centers of excellence in the South (3 years

	tive research; (iii) Capability enhancing support to contribute innovation and to put research into use.	(iii) Exchange: enhancing scientific collaboration (fellowships at various academic levels, professorships, associateships) – South-South and North-South. *N.B. TWAS and OSWD fellowship programs are mutually exclusive and researchers can only apply to one of them*; (iv) Meetings: encouraging the flow of scientific information; (v) Collaborations: engaged in various fixed-term collaborative projects; (vi) Science and Diplomacy: building regional cooperation and networks among TWAS members and associated countries, and increasing the capacity of foreign ministries, research ministries and international policy organisations to build science partnerships.	fully funded).*N.B. TWAS and OSWD fellowship programs are mutually exclusive and researchers can only apply to one of them*; (ii) Prices: to recognise women scientists working and living in developing countries who have made significant contributions to the advancement of scientific knowledge Activities: (a) Improving access to educational, training and professional development opportunities for women scientists and technologists in developing countries; (b) Recognising scientific excellence and other achievements of women scientists and technologists in developing countries; (c) Enhancing opportunities and developing strategies for the participation of

			women in the development and utilisation of new technologies; (d) Developing strategies for the participation and leadership of women in national and international science and innovation systems; (e) Making science more responsive to the needs of society, especially those of women and of women's development activities; (f) Promoting the involvement of women in harnessing science and technology for sustainable development; and (g) Undertaking such projects and actions as it deems appropriate for achieving its objectives.
Functions	*(i) Grant management* *(ii) Nurturing young researchers* *(iii) Networking*	*(i) Grant management* *(ii) Price management* *(iii) Exchange management* *(iv) Nurturing researchers* *(v) Networking*	*(i) Grant management* *(ii) Price management* *(iii) Networking*
Targeted countries	• Program 1: developing country scientists who are attached to institutions with a reasonable academic environment in the world's Least Developed	• Grants are awarded to individual researchers and research units in 81 science-and-technology-lagging countries (S&TLC) (see Annex)	• Grants: All countries in SSA and all LDCs (see Annex) • Prices: All

	Countries (LDC). Persons from countries with a GNI per capita, Atlas method (current US$) at or below the average for Middle Income Countries (MIC) will be considered eligible for Program 1 support. • Program 2: to be led by researchers from countries where GNI/capita is equal to or below the average for MIC countries but may include scientists from other countries. • Program 3: networks and partnerships will be considered based on the benefit they bring to scientists from countries where GNI/capita is equal to or below the average for MIC countries.		developing countries
Share of grantees being women	30% women (50% in 2010)	???	100% women
Specific targeting of young researchers	Full program	(i) Individual research grants; (ii) Hosts annual conference for young scholars; (iii) Grants for South-South postgraduate and postdoctoral fellowships; (iv) Prices for young scientists; *(TWAS-COMSTECH Grants)*	Full program
GRANTS			
Age eligibility criterion for grants	• For individual research grants: - 40 years for women - 35 years for men • For collaborative research grants: - Same age criterion as above for principal investigator	• For individual research grants: generally 45 years • For grants to research units: no upper age limit; principal investigator should be senior	N.A.
Academic degree eligibility criterion for grants	MSc/MA degree or PhD degree	PhD degree	MSc degree (or equivalent) or an outstanding BSc honors degree
Grant size ceiling	• Individual research grants: $12,000 • Collaborative research grants (3-5 persons): $12,000pp + $3,000pp	• Individual research grants: $15,000 • Research unit grants: $30,000	• Fully funded PhD fellowships for 3 years – grant size varies
Possibility for renewal	• Twice	• Individual research grants:	N.A.

of grant		twice (?) • Research unit grants: twice	
What the grant may and may not be used for	• Purchase of basic tools for research: equipment, expendable supplies, and literature, as well as field activities. • Basic research facilities and salaries are not covered.	• To purchase scientific equipment, consumables and specialised literature (textbooks and proceedings only). • The grant does not cover salaries of researchers and/or students, field expenses, travel expenses and/or participation in international conferences.	N.A.
FELLOWSHIPS			
Age eligibility criterion for fellowships	N.A.	• For post-graduate fellowships: 30-35 years • For post-doctoral fellowships: 40-45 years, or within 5 years from PhD • For other fellowships, associateships and professorships: no age criterion	• Generally 40 years
What the fellowship program covers	N.A.	• International travel and visa expenses covered by TWAS. • Program partners provide a stipend to cover living expenses, including health insurance. • The Fellowships do not include provisions for accompanying family members. Applications for part-time Fellowships will be considered ineligible.	• Travel expenses and a modest monthly living allowance for 3 years (amount determined in consultation with the host institution).
PRICES (AWARDS)			
Age eligibility criterion for prices	N.A.	• For young scientist prices: 40 years • For other prices: no age criterion	• 45 years and received most recent degree within the previous 10 years
Price size	N.A.	• $2,000 for young scientists • $15,00 for senior scientists • $100,000 special price	• $5,000
Support for meetings: grant size ceiling	N.A.	• International scientific meetings: $5,000 • Computer science in Africa meetings: €4,000	N.A.
CAPABILITY ENHANCING SUPPORT			
Capability enhancing support (often in collaboration with partners) (not complete list)	• input on research grant applications to all applicants, including those who are not awarded • thematic workshops • research skills	• workshops • scientific meetings • networking • publications	• Runs two list servers for OWSDW members to keep each other informed and updated on ac-

	workshops, e.g. scientific writing workshops on how to write applications or articles • international conferences • networking		tivities related to OWSD, National chapters, Fellowships, job and post-doctoral opportunities, conferences, and any other items of interest • GenderInSITE (Gender in Science, Innovation, Technology and Engineering) network and campaign • Networking
ADMIN			
How do they operate?	• Giving out grants straight to the grantees, although administered by their institution; • Buying and delivering equipment to the grantees; • Hosting and co-arranging workshops.	• Giving out grants straight to the grantees, although administered by their institution; • Generally, TWAS keeps the grants, buying and delivering equipment to the grantees; • The price for young scientists is given out to national science academies and organisations to administer and screen for suitable awardees; • Individual prices and medals (approx. 1-3 awardees per annum are administered by TWAS); • Hosting, co-arranging and financing meetings. • Paying for International travel and visa expenses for those enrolled on the Fellowship programs.	???
Where do they operate from?	• Secretariat in Stockholm, Sweden	• Secretariat in Trieste, Italy – located on the premises of the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP); • 5 regional offices, fairly distributed geographically across the developing countries (Beijing, China; Bangalore, India; Alexandria, Egypt; Nairobi, Kenya; and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). These are assuming	• Secretariat hosted by TWAS (TWAS provides administrative support) • 7 national chapters

		greater responsibility for the Academy's activities, including the selection of TWAS Young Affiliates and the awarding of TWAS regional prizes; • 20 national chapters	
Major funders	• Sida (core funding) • Norad (support to activities strengthening female researchers and gender related issues in connection with the IFS core foci) • Carnegie Foundation (Program 2) *See Annual Report for complete list*	• Grants: Sida • TWAS expenses: Italian Gov. • The Kuwait Foundation for Science (KFAS)	• Grants: Sida • Admin. carried out by TWAS
Efficiency: **How economically resources/inputs are transformed into results**	• Draws on the SAC members' volunteer efforts; can keep the number of staff rather small • Provides substantial individual capacity building support besides the actual grants	• UNESCO administers TWAS' funds and staff • TWAS' expenses covered by the Italian Government • The 5 regional offices are assuming greater responsibility for the Academy's activities, including the selection of TWAS Young Affiliates and the awarding of TWAS regional prizes. • TWAS provides administrative support for OWSD, the InterAcademy Panel (IAP) and the InterAcademy Medical Panel (IAMP).	TWAS provides administrative support for OWSD (which should mean that OWSD does not incur such costs themselves)
COLLABORATIONS			
Joint grants with (possibly not complete list):	• IFS-COMSTECH Joint Research Grants (see TWAS column) • IFS- OPCW (The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) Joint Research Grants	• TWAS-COMSTECH (Standing Committee on Scientific & Technological Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) Grants Explicit about complementing the TWAS Research Grants Program in Basic Sciences and IFS. The program aims at encouraging the pursuit of scientific excellence in OIC countries by identifying and supporting the best young scientists in these countries; reinforcing and promoting scientific research and strengthening the endogenous capacity in science and technology; and counteracting the brain drain and reducing the exodus of scientific talent from the OIC	• N.A.

		countries. - awarded to individual young researchers in OIC countries (57) - earth sciences, engineering sciences, information technology and computer sciences, materials science including nanotechnology, pharmaceutical sciences and renewable energy - 40 years - PhD degree - $15,000 - To be used for same purposes as TWAS grants • Renewable once	
Collaborative partners / joint activities with (not complete list):	• COMSTECH: grants • SLU Agricultural Science for Global Development: collaborate on Program 2 • CTA (The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation): initiative, workshop • RUFORUM (The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture): Ugandan hub, workshops • AWARD: workshops • Syngenta: workshops • Norad: seminar + support to activities strengthening female researchers and gender related issues in connection with the IFS core foci • VLIR-UOS (Flemish Interuniversity Council – University Development Cooperation): workshops • WIOMSA (the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association): workshops and other activities • ISP (the International Science Programme): conference • SETAC (the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry): conference • IOCD (the International	• COMSTECH: grants • OSWD: GenderInSITE (Gender in Science, Innovation, Technology and Engineering) network and campaign workshops • UNESCO • ICTP (Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics): workshops, support to young scientists, networks • ICGEB (International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology): supporting networks • UNDP-SSC (UNDP Special Unit for South-South Collaboration) • UNU-IAS (UNU Institute for Advanced Studies) • EU FP7 project / EuroAfriCa-ICT project: conferences and workshops, networking • Microsoft: prices and workshops • ISTIC (International Science,Technology and Innovation Centre for South-South Cooperation, Malaysia): prices and workshops • DFG (German Research Foundation): South-North PostDoc fellowship program *TWAS and OSWD fellowship programs are mutually exclusive*	• IAP (the InterAcademy Panel), the global network of science academies, largely through the IAP Women for Science Programme • Member of INAS's Women for Science Working Group • NASAC to develop an initiative for women in science with academies in sub-Saharan Africa • TWAS: GenderInSITE (Gender in Science, Innovation, Technology and Engineering) network and campaign workshops

	Organisation for Chemical Sciences in Development): conference • ICPAC (IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC): workshop • Bioversity International: workshop • ANAFE (the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education, Kenya): workshop • IRDCAM (the Institut de Recherche et de Développement sur la Biodiversité des Plantes Cultivées, Aromatiques et Médicinales, Benin) : workshop • PGRRI (the Plant Genetic Resources Research Institute, Ghana): workshop Universities: workshops	*and researchers can only apply to one of them.* -	*TWAS and OSWD fellowship programs are mutually exclusive and researchers can only apply to one of them.*
BENEFICIARIES			
Number of research grantees in 2010	• 112 individual research grantees • *8 IFS-COMSTECH Joint Research Grantees* • *13 IFS-OPCV research projects*	• 24 individual research grantees • 13 research unit grantees • *22 TWAS-COMSTECH Joint Research Grantees*	N.A.
Number and type of other beneficiaries in 2010	• 13 workshops for 435 young scientists • *In total 1700 young scientists benefited in one way or the other*	• 31 new associates (46 in total) • 160 fellowships (122 post grad and post doc) – N.B. they offer 300 but cannot fill all!!! • 3 professorships • 4 visiting scholars • 21 scientific meetings • 27 young scientists received prices • 9 senior scientists received prices • 3 young African scientists received the TWAS-AAS Microsoft awards (no longer operational)	• 26 fellowship awardees (31 according to TWAS) 10 price awardees

The 81 science-lagging developing countries identified by TWAS

1. Afghanistan	21. Dominican Republic	41. Kyrgyzstan	61. Samoa
2. Angola	22. Ecuador	42. Lao PDR	62. São Tome and Principe
3. Azerbaijan	23. El Salvador	43. Lesotho	63. Senegal
4. Bangladesh	24. Equatorial Guinea	44. Liberia	64. Sierra Leone
5. Belize	25. Eritrea	45. Madagascar	65. Solomon Islands
6. Benin	26. Ethiopia	46. Malawi	66. Somalia
7. Bhutan	27. Gabon	47. Maldives	67. South Sudan
8. Botswana	28. Gambia	48. Mali	68. Sudan
9. Burkina Faso	29. Ghana	49. Mauritania	69. Suriname
10. Burundi	30. Guatemala	50. Mongolia	70. Tajikistan
11. Cambodia	31. Guinea-Bissau	51. Mozambique	71. Tanzania
12. Cameroon	32. Guinea	52. Myanmar	72. Timor-Leste
13. Cape Verde	33. Guyana	53. Nepal	73. Togo
14. Central African Republic	34. Haiti	54. Nicaragua	74. Tuvalu
	35. Honduras	55. Niger	75. Uganda
15. Chad	36. Indonesia	56. Nigeria	76. Uzbekistan
16. Comoros Islands	37. Jamaica	57. Papua New Guinea	77. Vanuatu
17. Congo, Dem. Rep.	38. Kenya	58. Paraguay	78. Vietnam
18. Congo, Rep.	39. Kiribati	59. Peru	79. Yemen
19. Côte d'Ivoire	40. Korea DPR	60. Rwanda	80. Zambia
20. Djibouti			81. Zimbabwe

The LDC identified by OWSD, N.B. – ALL countries in SSA are eligible…

Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros Islands, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Yemen and Zambia

In addition, the evaluation team briefly reviewed information about the following organisations and programmes and concluded that it was unlikely that they would have a role that is similar to that of IFS:

- *ASARECA* - Association for strengthening agricultural research in Eastern and Central Africa
- *RUFORUM* - The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
- *WIOMSA* - The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
- *Bio-Innovate* - The Bio-resources Innovations Network for Eastern African Development
- *VicRes* - The Lake Victoria Research Initiative
- *START* - global change SysTem for Analysis, Research and Training
- *IRD* - Institut de Recherche pour le Développement
- *UNU* - United Nations University
- *COSTIS* - Consortium of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South
- *IAP* – Global Network of Science Academies
- *IAMP* – InterAcademy Medical Panel

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Annex 6 - Persons Interviewed

Grantees

Alejandra DOMIC	National Herbarium in Bolivia La Paz, Bolivia
Alisa VANGNAI	Chulalongkorn University, Dept of Biochemistry, Vietnam
Calvin ONYANGO	Kenya Industrial research and development institute, Kenya
Carolina Isaza ARANGUREN	National University of Colombia, instutot de sciencias naturals, Colombia
Charles LANGE	National Museums of Kenya
Christian THINE	University of Nairobi, Dept of Environmental Engineering, Kenya
Deborah OBONGO	University of Nairobi, Dept of Chemistry, Kenya
Du Thanh HANG	Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF), Dept of Animal Nutrition, Vietnam
Edmore GASURA	University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, and Makerere University of Kampala, Uganda Em-
manuel NZUNDA	Sokoine University, Faculty of Forestry and Nature Conservation, Tanzania
Fentahun Mengistu TIRUNEH	Amhara Agricultural Research Institute, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia
George OSANJO	University of Nairobi, Dept of Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy, Kenya
Jemal Ahmed MUHIDIN	Somali Region Pastoral & Agro-pastoral Research Institute (SoRPARI), Ethiopia
Jose Antonio CASTILLO	Fundacion PROIMPA, Bolivia
Kenneth ARINAITWE	Makerere University of Kampala, Uganda
Langa TEMBO	Makerere University of Kampala, Uganda, and University of Zambia, Zambia
Mesfin TILAHUN GELAYE	K.U. Leuven, Division of Agriculture and Food Economics, Dept. of Earth and Environmental Science, Belgium
Paul NDANGANGA	Bird Life International, Kenya
Ricardo MARIA	Instituto de Investigacao Agraria de Mocambique, Mozambique
Robert MUZIRA	National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO), Mbarara Zonal Agricultural Research Institute, Uganda
Ruth ODHIAMBO	University of Nairobi, Dept. of Chemistry, Kenya
Sakamon DEVAHASTIN	King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand
Steven MATEMA	University of Zimbabwe, Dept. of Sociology, Zimbabwe
Tequero OKUMO	University of Nairobi, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Dept. of Clinical Studies, Kenya
Tien Van DAM	Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF), Dept. of Animal Physiology, Vietnam
Vanvimon SAKSMERPROME	Centex Shrimp, and Mahidol University, Thailand

Key stakeholders and other key informants

Anders BARFOD	Århus University, Dept of Biosciences, Denmark
Anja NYGREN	University of Helsinki, Dept. of Political and Economic Studies, Finland
August TEMU	World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Kenya
Berhanu ABEGAZ	African Academy of Sciences, Kenya

Daniel MUGENDI	Kenyatta University, Dept of Environmental Science, School of Environmental Studies, Kenya
Do Tien DUNG	National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED), Vietnam
Edith TALEISNIK	National Research Council of Argentina (CONICET), and Universidad Católica de Córdoba, Argentina
Eugenio PARENTE	University of Basilicata, Italy
Gunnar JACKS	KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden (Prof. Emeritus)
Jean-Francois GIOVANNETTI	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE), Genaral Directorate for International Cooperation & Development (DGCID), France
Jess LOWENBERG-DEBOER	Purdue University, International Programs in Agriculture, USA
Jürg PFISTER	Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT), Switzerland
Karl HARMSEN	UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA), Ghana (recently retired)
Len REYNOLDS	Consultant
Lilian IGWETA-TONNANG	African Insect Science for Food and Health (ICIPE), Kenya
Maha TUTUNJI	University of Jordan, Jordan
María VALDES	National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), Mexico
Mario MARGIOTTA	African Insect Science for Food and Health (ICIPE), Kenya
Olanrewaju B. SMITH	International Trypanotolerance Centre, the Gambia
Patrick VAN DAMME	Ghent University, Dept. of Plants Production, Belgium
Per RUDEBJER	Bioversity International, Italy
Rob SKILTON	Biosciences Eastern and Central Africa (BECA), Kenya
Rodney HERBERT	University of Dundee, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Scotland, the U.K. (Prof. Emeritus)
Sinclair MANTELL	Consultant (Nakhlatech), Sweden
Tariq BUTT	Swansea University, Bio control and natural products group, Wales, the U.K.
Torbjörn FAGERSTRÖM	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Sweden
Vichai REUTRAKUL	Mahidol University, Department of Chemistry, Thailand
Wenche BARTH EIDE	University of Oslo, Dept. of Nutrition, Norway
Yunus D. MGAYA	University of Dar es Salaam, Faculty of Aquatic Sciences and Technology, Tanzania

Annex 7 - IFS income and expenditure 2007-2011

Summary of IFS income (donor by donor) and expenditure 2011-2007

Income	**Core Contributions**	**2011**	**2010**	**2009**	**2008**	**2007**
	France, MAE	776	909	1 042	579	1 597
	Germany, DFG	2 585	2 626	2 870	2 833	2 418
	Sweden, Sida	25 000	20 000	25 000	23 000	23 000
	Switzerland, SNSF	2 768	2 732	2 871	2 333	1 411
	United Kingdom, DFID	403	1 216	3 497	2 429	2 628
	Norway, NORAD		4 125	4 314	3 997	4 055
	Belgium, DGDC					935
	Netherlands, Minbuza					2 743
	Sum:	**31 531**	**31 607**	**39 594**	**35 171**	**38 787**
	Restricted Contributions					
	Sweden, Sida		1 627	7 041	6 725	7 936
	USA, Carnegie	223				
	Pakisten, COMSTECH	333	368	784	866	823
	Netherlands, OPCW	162	377	781	743	787
	Switzerland, Syngenta	877	94	221	307	243
	Norway, NORAD	322	3 329	911	240	
	ACP/EU	78	230			
	EU, Sunray	164				
	France, IRD	32		132	100	
	Kenya, AWARD	473	789	3 020	99	
	USA, MacArthur	5 483	3 002	13 127	1 178	11
	Belgium, VLIR		1 186		868	350
	Belgium, Setac		93			
	Sweden Uppsala University, ISP		140			
	Belgium, IOCD		69			
	Japan, UNU			0	245	265
	Sweden, Mistra			612	2 833	2 209
	France, MAE				580	
	Nigeria, ETF			117		

Sum:	**8 145**	**11 305**	**26 746**	**14 784**	**12 624**
Other					
Research Grants Withdrawn	735	431	441	2 908	376
Other Income	199	249	170	111	135
Interest Income	174	35	210	915	745
Total Income	**40 785**	**43 627**	**67 161**	**53 889**	**52 667**
Expense					
Research Grants:	16 232	9 818	20 427	20 732	21 742
Capacity Enhancing Support:					
Capacity Enhancing Support (CES) - Grantees	209	214	615	2 860	2 451
Capacity Enhancing Support (CES) - Applicants	0	31	207	443	762
Capacity Enhancing Support (CES) - Workshops (organised by IFS &/or partner organisations and includes costs for grantees, applicants & potential applicants)	562	4 217	7 214	7 037	4 460
Capacity Enhancing Support (CES) - Support to Alumni & Networks	0	0	83	106	23
Total CES:	771	4 462	8 119	10 446	7 695
Total Research Grants and CES	17 003	14 280	28 546	31 178	29 437
Equipment, transport, consumables, spare parts - PRISM Project	4 562	1 508	11 650		
Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Meetings	441	452	1 294	1 815	1 697
Total Research Grants, CES, PRISM and SAC Meetings	22 005	16 240	41 491	32 993	31 133
Travel - Secretariat	144	411	556	948	1 110
Travel - Others	383	1 184	905	926	1 443
Total Travel	528	1 595	1 461	1 874	2 554
Occupancy	1 965	1 947	2 009	1 700	1 565
General & Administrative Expense	2 161	5 804	5 292	5 014	4 558
Total Occupancy and General & Administrative	4 127	7 751	7 300	6 714	6 124
Salaries	7 694	9 444	9 349	9 585	8 582
Taxes, Benefits & Other Personnel Expense	4 788	5 108	5 111	5 690	5 863
Total Personnel	12 482	14 552	14 459	15 275	14 445
Total Expense	**39 141**	**40 138**	**64 711**	**56 856**	**54 255**
Income less Expense	**1 644**	**3 487**	**2 448**	**-2 969**	**-1 587**

Evaluation of the International Foundation for Science

This evaluation assesses the process of the International Foundation of Science (IFS) in developing a new strategy and analyses the results achieved in light of the changing context of capacity development for research in developing countries. Findings indicate that IFS has a unique niche and provides impressive support to early career researchers. Its achievements are not just related to funding research, but also capacity development among young researchers who may otherwise fall between doctoral support and modalities directed toward more senior researchers. New plans for widening efforts into collaborative research and engagement in innovation systems are appropriate in principle, but have yet to achieve strong ownership among IFS stakeholders. It will be important to ensure that ambition levels reflect both development needs and financial challenges. IFS' successful track record suggests that there is potential to attract broader support if the new strategy can be used to present a clear message about what IFS has achieved and where it intends to go in the future.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
Address: S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden. Office: Valhallavägen 199, Stockholm
Telephone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Telefax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64
Postgiro: 1 56 34–9. VAT. No. SE 202100-478901
E-mail: info@sida.se. Homepage: http://www.sida.se

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