Concept

Functions

(1) Research: Basic and applied research on key problems relating to agricultural production in the tropics with special emphasis on food crops. This would include work in:

(a) Soils and soil management -- chemistry, physics, biology, crop rotations, fertilizers

(b) Plant protection -- entomology, pathology, virology

(c) Emphasis on improvement of food crops -- plant breeding

(d) Commercial crops -- work on important problems if financed from now-IRRI or FF sources.

(e) Agricultural economics -- farm management and land economics plus marketing, price policy, tenure.

(2) Graduate Training: Emphasis in early years (5-10) on turning out substantial numbers of persons with strong Master's Degrees in key fields -- soils, plant breeding, plant protection, etc. Minimum training of two years.

(3) Extension: Staff of "subject matter specialists" in soils, agronomy (crop production), plant protection, farm management, extension methods to work with government and other extension services (This is very important).

(4) Regional Catalyst and Clearing House: As a high-level research organization concerned with getting the results of research used, the proposed institute can serve both as catalyst and clearing house in relation to other research and extension organizations in the tropics, both public and private. IRRI at Los Banos is already performing this function to a remarkable degree in South and Southeast Asia.

Geographical Coverage

As long as the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations contribute significantly to the recurring expenses of the institute, it should be clearly understood that it is expected to perform a regional function in the areas south of the Sahara and north of the Union of South Africa. It would, of course, inevitably complement and supplement to an important extent the work of other Nigerian research, extension and graduate training organizations. It also would function as a world center and clearing house on tropical agriculture, particularly on such basic matters as tropical soils and their management, about which relatively little reliable information is available.
Organization

The International Rice Research Institute was able to get off to a fast start at a high level of competence because of (1) its independent status (2) adequate and assured financing, and (3) highly qualified management in the persons of the Director and Associate Director. Its concentration on a problem of major importance in the region and its international character, exemplified by the multi-national make-up of its board and professional staff, have given the Institute a high degree of acceptability within the region from the beginning. If the institute of tropical agriculture, now under consideration, is to enjoy these advantages it must be organized in such a way as to make them possible of achievement.

Suggested Approach

Attempt to negotiate the establishment of an institute within the framework of the University of Ibadan but with a substantial degree of autonomy in the management of its affairs. The charter provisions for the proposed institute of administration for Western Nigeria to be located at the University of Ife might serve as a basis for discussion. * It is proposed, for example, that the institute of administration be under the immediate direction of a Governing Board, a number of whose members would be from outside Nigeria.

Points for Consideration

(1) The institute should not be organized or operate in such a way as to weaken the College of Agriculture at Ibadan. Rather it should strengthen the College and the two Foundations ought to be willing to consider grants to the College to strengthen its operations.

(2) It is suggested that the University of Ibadan assume responsibility for graduate education but with members of the professional staff of the institute holding appointments on the Ibadan faculty, participating in the selection of graduate students, participating in the determination of degree requirements, and perhaps teaching a graduate course or conducting a seminar and supervising graduate research to an appropriate extent.

(3) Arrangements should be made for joint institute-University use of experimental plots and major items of equipment.

* An Institute of Administration for Western Nigeria, a report prepared by The Institute of Public Administration, New York. May, 1963 (printed). See particularly the proposed charter provisions together with explanatory notes, Appendix IV, pages 59-69.
Financing

Land -- Should be furnished by Nigeria.

Buildings and equipment -- Try for long-term IDA to Nigeria from World Bank. Foundations probably would have to provide funds for initial planning and for architectural studies and cost estimates as basis for negotiations IDA loan.

Operating Expenses -- Suggest Rockefeller and Ford Foundations agree to underwrite operating expenses for stated period, say 15 years, assuming circumstances in Nigeria continue to be such that work can be pursued efficiently and effectively.

Suggest operating expenses of Rice Research Institute and proposed Ibadan institute for tropical agriculture be equally divided between the two foundations beginning calendar year 1965. Suggest further both foundations consider possibility of seven- or eight-year grants payable in annual installments.

Cost Estimates

Buildings and equipment -- Capital costs of the Rice Research Institute, including the purchase of approximately 200 acres of land from private owners for experimental plots, has amounted to about $7.5 million. This is probably as good a figure as any to use at this stage.

Operating Expenses -- The operating expenses of the Rice Research Institute, including salaries of the Director, Associate Director, and other RF personnel paid directly from New York is currently running at roughly $800,000 annually. I would guess the budget is likely to run in the neighborhood of $1 million annually in the years ahead. Assuming the same level of expense for an institute of tropical agriculture, the combined level of expenditure for the two institutes would be $2.0 annually. It is suggested that this be split between the RF and FF.

Management

It is suggested that the Rockefeller Foundation enter into a management agreement with the institute and continue to assume responsibility for its management so long as the two foundations pay the major part of the institute's operating expenses.