Teagasc Draft Review Report on

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and Teagasc

Introduction

DFAT and Teagasc signed an MoU on 20th February 2015 on cooperation in agriculture for development which aimed “to draw on Teagasc expertise in agricultural development to support Ireland’s objectives of reducing hunger and under-nutrition in developing countries”.

Following a review of the MoU in early 2017, the partners entered into a new partnership agreement covering the two years 2017-2018 by signing a new MoU in May 2017. The new arrangement continues to bring together the respective resources, strengths and capacities of the two organisations to better address global agriculture challenges and opportunities.

The terms of the new agreement provide for the completion of a narrative and financial report on the work of the previous year to be completed by the end of the first quarter of the following year. This report sets out the required narrative, including all aspects of the partnership at HQ and country level and an overview of Teagasc’s wider international agricultural engagement.

Areas of Collaboration

The new MoU specifies that, subject to operational capacity and available resources, Teagasc will establish arrangements to assist Irish Aid in the following areas:

i. Technical support and advice to Irish Aid programme engagement in agricultural research, extension and education services. Such support can be provided centrally or bi-laterally through the relevant embassies.

ii. Capacity building relationships with national agricultural research and knowledge transfer institutions in Irish Aid Key Partner Countries and in other Partner Countries.

iii. Identification of possible areas in which the Irish agricultural research sector can become involved with CGIAR research centres and research programmes and take steps to realise such potential linkages.

iv. Any other work agreed by the Director of Teagasc and the Director General of the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Review of Activities and Outcomes

1. Technical support and advice to Irish Aid programme engagement in agricultural research, extension and education services. Such support can be provided centrally or bi-laterally through the relevant embassies.

- Teagasc worked directly with the Embassy in Nairobi in the process leading to the development, drafting and publication of the Ireland –Kenya Agri-Food Strategy 2017-2021. In particular, this included involvement by a Teagasc expert in a workshop in Nairobi in May...
2017 and direct involvement in the drafting of the Strategy document over the following months. The Teagasc expert continued to liaise with the Embassy in developing an implementation plan for the Strategy.

- Teagasc supported the work of the Embassy in Vietnam by hosting a high-level Vietnamese delegation in Moorepark Research Centre.
- The organisation provided technical advice to the Embassy in Mexico in preparing terms-of-reference for a planned scoping mission to Colombia in 2018 and met with the Head of Development from the Embassy in South Africa regarding possible support for agricultural development in South Africa and neighbouring countries.

**Mozambique**

- Teagasc hosted a delegation from the Animal Science Department of IIAM (Mozambique Agriculture Research Institute) for five days in August/September 2017. The goal of the visit was to develop a concept note and road map on the areas of mutual interest under the Memorandum of Understanding between Teagasc and IIAM. The delegation visited Teagasc Head Office and four of our research centres, following which they produced a detailed back-to-office report describing the visit and highlighting a number of priority actions for Teagasc input.
- In particular, IIAM have requested technical input from Teagasc to support the development of their beef and dairy sectors; reorganise the country’s extension service; provide short-term staff training in Ireland; and identify opportunities for PhD training under the Teagasc Walsh Fellowships Programme.
- As a follow-up, arrangements are being made for two Teagasc experts to visit Mozambique early in 2018.

**Kenya**

- The Irish Embassy in Nairobi supported a study visit to Teagasc by two KALRO (Kenyan Agriculture and Livestock Research Organisation) researchers from 17th to 21st April, 2017. The purpose of the visit was to learn about, and explore potential areas of collaboration in, livestock research, particularly in beef and dairy production and product development.
- Subsequently, KALRO identified the following three priority projects for which they are requesting technical support from Teagasc:
  - Milk products development and training plant at Dairy Research Institute Naivasha
  - Training in residue and Toxin Analysis for dairy and meat products
  - Pasture breeding and germplasm evaluation for enhancing livestock feed resources in Kenya.
- In 2017, Teagasc commenced funding a KALRO staff member under our Walsh Fellowships Programme to undertake a PhD in the area of potato breeding. This student is now registered in Wageningen University and has commenced his PhD programme.
• Teagasc is a member of collaboration, led by IFDC (International Fertilizer Development Center), which has secured funding from the Embassy in Nairobi to undertake a project on potato value chain capacity building activity (PCB).

**Ethiopia**

• Two of the Teagasc-funded PhD students on the Chencha potato project completed their PhDs and graduated from Wageningen University in autumn 2017.
• As a follow-up, two Teagasc experts visited Ethiopia in November in response to a request from the Head of the Bureau for Agriculture in the SNNPR, Gama Gofa Zone with a view to identifying how best to support the local extension service and get the best technical information out to local farmers.
• Teagasc has now prepared a proposal for a Knowledge Transfer Pilot Programme in SNNPR, Gama Gofe Zone and will request funding from the Embassy in Ethiopia.

**Vietnam**

• A team from IPSARD (Institute for Policy and Strategy for Agriculture & Rural Development) spent three days in Teagasc Athenry learning about our economic modelling capacity and identifying areas where Teagasc could provide support.
• In December 2016, two Teagasc experts visited IPSARD to build on the collaboration and to provide further training in the area of economic modelling.

**Eritrea:**

**Dairy Project**

• Teagasc is providing support through a community dairy model that can be replicated across Eritrea. It introduced a dairy model based on sustainable ‘home grown’ forage using cow breeds which are suitable to this system and adaptable to the climatic conditions of the area. The project has two interlinked components: (i) a pilot model dairy farm where dairy farming best practice will be demonstrated at NARI and (ii) support to selected dairy farmers close to the NARI Halhale research station with the aim of transferring the technology from the research station to the wider community and providing a dairy research focus for the centre.
• Teagasc is also working with NARI and Vita to promote food security at national and regional levels through access to a reliable source of potato tubers (seed), which, in turn, would help improve household incomes of beneficiary farmers. The focus of the project is on developing a scale model of a seed potato system, seed multiplication, tissue culture development and up-skilling of research and extension staff.
• Teagasc commenced supporting three staff members from the Eritrean Agriculture Research Institute to undertake higher degrees in Ireland. One is registered for a PhD in UCD, on strategies for developing a sees potato industry in Eritrea. The other two are registered for Master’s degrees in UCC whilst also undertaking further capacity building in Teagasc Moorepark.
Identification of possible areas in which the Irish agricultural research sector can become involved with CGIAR research centres and research programmes and take steps to realise such potential linkages.

No developments in this area in 2017.

Any other work agreed by the Director of Teagasc and the Director General of Development Cooperation Division.

- Teagasc maintained its commitment to IFIAD (The Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development) by continuing to chair the organisation, inputting to working groups and providing a speaker for the annual conference in October.

Administration of MoU

- The steering committee did not formally meet during the year, but informal contacts were maintained.

Overall Assessment

As a result of the partnership with Irish Aid, Teagasc has, after a very long absence, reengaged in the field of international agricultural development. In the short period since reengaging, Teagasc has, based on its internationally recognised expertise in agricultural research and knowledge transfer, established itself as a key player in the Irish context. The organisation played a lead role in establishing IFIAD and is looked to as a partner by many of our large NGOs. The organisation has built very strong bonds with Irish Aid and is now regularly included as a destination overseas for delegations visiting Ireland.

The Teagasc development strategy is focused on development of local capacity in research and knowledge transfer. Typically, Teagasc’s commitment aims to leverage its own expertise in agricultural research and knowledge transfer to maximum effectiveness by combining its expertise with other complementary actors. It prioritises activities relating to institutional linkages and supports, policy development, institutional capacity building and structured knowledge transfer from Ireland. In this regard, we support the objective of emphasizing long-term capacity building support to national research and extension institutions themselves, as their weaknesses continue to hold back the potential of the agricultural sectors in many developing countries.

The organisation has also quickly established formal relationships with counterparts in many of the Irish Aid partner countries and in non-partner countries. It has built excellent relationships with a number of the CG Research Programmes and with other international bodies. Many developing countries view the Teagasc AKIS model as being the one to emulate for their own countries and the Teagasc Advisory Service, in particular, is viewed internationally as being unique and excellent in terms of its core activities and this expertise is increasingly being sought out.

Over the course of the year, Teagasc has

1. Strengthened its aspiration to be a leader in global agricultural research and knowledge transfer.
2. Built new international linkages with significant international research and knowledge transfer organisations.

3. Provided new opportunities for staff development, by putting their current research and knowledge transfer portfolios in an international context (“widening horizons”, “thinking outside the box”).

4. Rendered Teagasc an attractive partner for future collaborative research and knowledge transfer initiatives on development issues and provided access to new funding streams (e.g. Irish Aid, EU development funds).

Teagasc is now firmly committed, within its resource constraints and its mission of supporting Irish agri-food as its primary task, to working with Irish Aid, national and international research organisations, NGOs and the private sector to:

- Help ensure that poor individuals, families and communities have improved food and nutrition security
- Enable better functioning, climate resilient food systems and markets that are accessible to and benefit the rural poor
- Support developing countries are to make better of use domestic resources to reduce poverty.