

CGIAR GENDER PROGRAM

WORKING PAPER, NO. 4

STRENGTHENING THE RECRUITMENT OF WOMEN SCIENTISTS AND PROFESSIONALS AT THE INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH CENTERS

A Guidelines Paper

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Question	Answer
1. Are women underrepresented as internationally recruited staff in CGIAR centers?	Yes. In 1993 women formed only 13% of all internationally recruited staff and only 20% of new recruits. The number and proportion of women qualifying in relevant disciplines has increased markedly over the past two decades. However, despite their significant efforts, centers are not yet fully exploiting this potential recruitment pool. (See Part B, Section 2.0)
2. Does it matter if women are underrepresented at the international level?	Yes. If the full recruitment pool is not being exploited the best staff are not necessarily being appointed. Both gender and national diversity in the staffing group can contribute significantly to center <i>effectiveness</i> and <i>efficiency</i> . (See Part A, Section 1.1)
3. Are women underrepresented throughout the hierarchy or at senior levels only?	Throughout. But there is considerable variation. The most disappointing finding is the small number of women applying for Associate Scientist posts (only 8% in 1991-92). Attracting mid-career women for Senior Scientist posts is also problematic—women's application rate for these posts was only 7%. (See Part B, Section 2.3)
4. If women apply, what chance do they have of being shortlisted and subsequently appointed?	A good chance. Our sample was small but it suggests that women have a higher than average chance of being appointed <i>if they apply</i> . Women formed one fifth of all recruits in 1991 and 1992 but only 8% of all applicants. (See Part B, Section 2.4)
5. So why don't women apply?	For several reasons. Many do not hear about center vacancies. Others may not be attracted to the way the job and center are described. Limited opportunities for spouse/partner employment deter men from encouraging their female partner's applications. Finally, women are underrepresented as postdoctoral fellows and trainees—an important route into the CGIAR system for scientific staff. (See Part B, Section 3.0)
6. So what is needed to improve centers' abilities to attract and recruit high-quality women professionals?	Action by the centers. Part C of this paper provides a complete set of guidelines for centers seeking to strengthen their recruitment of professional women by taking action in nine critical areas. See overleaf for some of the main recommendations in each area.

NINE CRITICAL AREAS FOR CENTER ACTION

- **Promoting change**
Create an atmosphere conducive to change by demonstrating leadership from the top, building commitment amongst senior staff and enlisting the support of existing women staff. Monitor the process of change and communicate success stories as a basis for making further progress.
- **Policy**
Make a policy commitment to increasing the proportion of women professional staff and spell out practical procedures to make the policy operational. Set targets for application and appointment rates. Launch a committee on gender issues in employment.
- **Advertising strategies**
Use the broadest possible range of advertising strategies and channels to publicize vacancies. Make the Search Committee accountable for mobilizing applications. Target potential women applicants by, for example, placing advertisements in the publications they read, and by purchasing and screening mailing lists. Make sure you cover universities.
- **Writing position announcements**
Make the job and the center sound as interesting and challenging as they really are. Emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of the job and its contribution to development. Actively encourage women to apply, giving details about the location and, where relevant, opportunities for spouse employment or job sharing.
- **Shortlisting**
Include all suitably qualified women on the 'long' shortlist (challenge the Search Committee if it does not list any women candidates). Find out about interpersonal skills and leadership qualifications, as well as more conventional selection criteria. Do not omit women on the basis of assumptions about their ability or willingness to work in a given location.
- **Interviews**
Conduct fair, friendly and well-planned interviews, giving consistent coverage of key issues to all candidates. Interviewing panels should reflect the national and gender diversity of existing staff. Decisions should be made on the basis of each candidate's ability to do the job and not on the basis of personal attributes, such as gender or family status.
- **Spouse/partner employment**
Provide clear policies and guidelines which state what the center will and will not do to help spouses/partners find jobs or training. Try to identify sources of funding to support spouse/partner employment.
- **Living and working arrangements**
Flexitime, split-location working, job-sharing options, a fair maternity leave policy, and an explicit policy on sexual harrassment are some of the features that will help your center attract women professionals. Rational and explicit prospects for promotion and opportunities for management training are also important.
- **The future recruitment pool**
Create and implement strategies to increase the proportion of women postdoctoral fellows and trainees. Consult with donors and with national research/training directors on how this will be achieved.

FOREWORD

The work of the Gender Program of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) in gender staffing is aimed at supporting the CGIAR-supported international agricultural research centers in their efforts to promote the recruitment, productivity, advancement and retention of women scientists and professionals within their organizations. The program was launched in 1991, with special project funding from seven CGIAR donors, and operates out of the CGIAR Secretariat at the World Bank in Washington D.C. The program is designed to respond to the needs and priorities of the centers and to support them in their efforts to diversify their staff through the integration of more women professionals.

Strengthening the recruitment of women scientists and professionals into international positions at the centers is a top priority of the CGIAR Gender Program. Around the world, the pool of women working in fields central to the mandates of the centers has increased dramatically in the past 15 years. Yet the participation of these women in the centers remains quite limited. Strengthening their recruitment was a key recommendation coming out of the diagnosis carried out in 1991 on the status of internationally recruited women at the centers. It was recognized that the centers needed to cast their recruitment nets more widely to effectively exploit the expanding pool of women scientists and professionals.

This recommendation was endorsed by the centers' Directors General who attended two Senior Managers' Workshops on Gender Issues held in Washington D.C. in 1991 and 1992. They indicated that they wanted the CGIAR Gender Program to give highest priority to providing support and developing recommendations for them on strategies and mechanisms for improving the recruitment of women international staff.

This paper is a direct response to that request. It analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of the current recruitment practices of the centers and then provides practical guidelines on how centers can strengthen their recruitment of women. The emphasis is on developing mechanisms for mobilizing applications from qualified women candidates and for ensuring unbiased review and selection processes. The paper is not advocating an 'affirmative action' or quota approach. The guidelines build on findings and insights gleaned from consultancies carried out with four centers that have received support from the CGIAR Gender Program in strengthening their recruitment of women: the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI) and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). This information is supplemented by data and information collected through a survey on recruitment practices completed by 14 CGIAR centers.

The objective of this paper is to provide managers in the centers with a set of practical measures that they can take to strengthen the recruitment of professional women. These

general guidelines will be supplemented over the course of the CGIAR Gender Program by further consultancies to centers interested in strengthening recruitment, in information on resources and channels for targeting women more effectively in recruitment efforts, and in the documentation of innovative approaches used at the centers and at other organizations.

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PART B. FINDINGS

2.0 THE CGIAR SYSTEM TODAY: WOMEN, WHERE ARE YOU?

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents an overview of recent application and recruitment trends at CGIAR centers and looks at the different recruitment methods used. Application and recruitment rates are analyzed and compared in order to assess the success of current recruitment strategies in attracting and recruiting women professionals.

The information used consists mainly of quantitative data collected through the recruitment survey. These data are compared with those of the earlier survey, presented by Merrill-Sands and Sachdeva (1992). Information collected during the three center visits is also used.

It is important to note that, in the recruitment survey conducted for this study, centers were asked to state the total number of men and women they had recruited in 1991 and 1992 but to give detailed recruitment information for a minimum of six posts (more only if possible). This was to reduce the burden of work on centers. The result is that the majority of figures and tables contained in this report relate to these selected posts only and not to all posts recruited in 1991 and 1992. The exception is Table 5, which relates to all posts. This distinction is made clear in the figure/table headings, which refer to 'selected posts' or 'all posts' respectively.

2.2 PROPORTION OF WOMEN IRS

In the 1993 survey centers were asked whether the proportion of women they employed in IRS posts had changed since the 1991 study. Only three centers reported a change; in two the proportion had increased (ICRISAT and the Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, CIAT), in one it had decreased (IFPRI). Assuming that the proportion of women IRS has remained constant in the other centers, the percentage of women currently employed as IRS in the CGIAR centers is now as shown in Table 1 (*overleaf*). It is likely that the proportion of women employed in the CGIAR system in 1993 has risen slightly from the 1991 average of 12% to approximately 13%.

2.3 APPLICATION RATES OF WOMEN IRS

Centers were asked to give details of their application, shortlisting and appointment rates for recently advertised posts. As noted above, this information was requested for at

Table 1. Proportion of women IRS, 1991 and 1993

Center	1991	1993	Center	1991	1993
CIAT	11%	15%	IFPRI	13%	8%
CIMMYT	10%	10%	IIMI	10%	10%
CIP	15%	15%	IITA	14%	14%
IBPGR	28%	28%	ILCA	3%	3%
ICARDA	15%	15%	ILRAD	19%	19%
ICLARM	Not available	Not available	INIBAP	10%	Not available
ICRAF	16%	16%	IRRI	11%	11%
ICRISAT	6%	8%	ISNAR	12%	12%
			WARDA	4%	Not available

least six posts per center. Details were given for a total of 134 posts, most of which (86%) were filled through open advertising. The remainder were filled through internal transfers or direct appointments and were not advertised. In this section the overall picture with regard to application rates is presented before going on to look at male-female differences.

There was a marked difference between centers in the average number of applicants for advertised posts. Table 2 shows an average of 88 applicants per post for IIMI, compared to an average of 10 and 12 applicants per post for the Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maíz y Trigo (CIMMYT) and the Centro Internacional de la Papa (CIP) respectively.

Table 2. Average number of applicants for selected advertised posts by center, 1991-92

Center	Average No. of applicants	Center	Average No. of applicants
CIAT	27	IFPRI	39
CIMMYT	10	IIMI	88
CIP	12	IITA	29
IBPGR	67	ILCA	70
ICARDA	35	ILRAD	47
ICRAF	64	IRRI	50
ICRISAT	45	ISNAR	39

Reference: Annex 2, Table 3

This difference can be partly explained by the types of post included by centers in their sample. In general, application rates for program support and non-scientific management posts (e.g. Directors of Finance) were much higher than for scientific posts, so

centers which included a higher proportion of program support posts in their sample had higher average application rates. It cannot be assumed that the higher the average application rate the better the quality of applicants (or the greater the proportion of women who apply), but centers with an average of, say, only 20 applicants per post need to ask whether they are recruiting efficiently. Are they really tapping the potential which exists world-wide? Or could they do better?

Table 3 shows that management and program support posts have the highest average number of applicants although, as noted above, the high average for management posts is partly explained by the high application rate for non-scientific as opposed to scientific posts. The low application rates for associate scientist posts and postdoctoral fellows are worrying. An average of only 15 and 10 applicants respectively may indicate a general lack of effort by centers in getting the word out about posts.

Table 3. Average number of applicants for selected advertised posts by post type, 1991-92

Post type	Average No. of applications
Management	58
Senior scientist	38
Associate scientist	15
Program support	51
Postdoctoral fellows	10
Other ¹	20

Note: ¹ Visiting scientists, research associates etc.
Reference: Annex 2, Table 2.

Turning now to the differences in application rates between men and women: men accounted for 92% and women for 8% of applicants to the posts selected by centers for the survey (Table 4, *overleaf*). As might be expected, application rates differed considerably by post type.

The most unexpected finding is that associate scientist posts attracted only 8% women applicants, even though these positions draw on younger scientists with 3-5 years post-Ph.D. experience. Data collected by Merrill-Sands and Sachdeva (1992) show that the proportion of women scientists now qualifying in the sciences is as high as 40% in some disciplines and in some countries. There appears to be a considerable discrepancy between the potential supply and women's actual application rates for associate scientist posts.

The same argument holds for program support posts. At 16%, the application rate for women is even lower than the proportion of women who currently hold these posts,

Table 4. Men and women applicants by selected post type, 1991-91

Post type	Applicants		% women
	Men	Women	
Management	2257	133	6
Senior scientists	1401	103	7
Associate scientists	180	15	8
Program support	560	108	16
Postdoctoral fellows	134	29	18
Other ¹	180	40	18
Total	4712	428	8

Note: ¹ Visiting scientists, research associates etc.
Reference: Annex 2, Table 2.

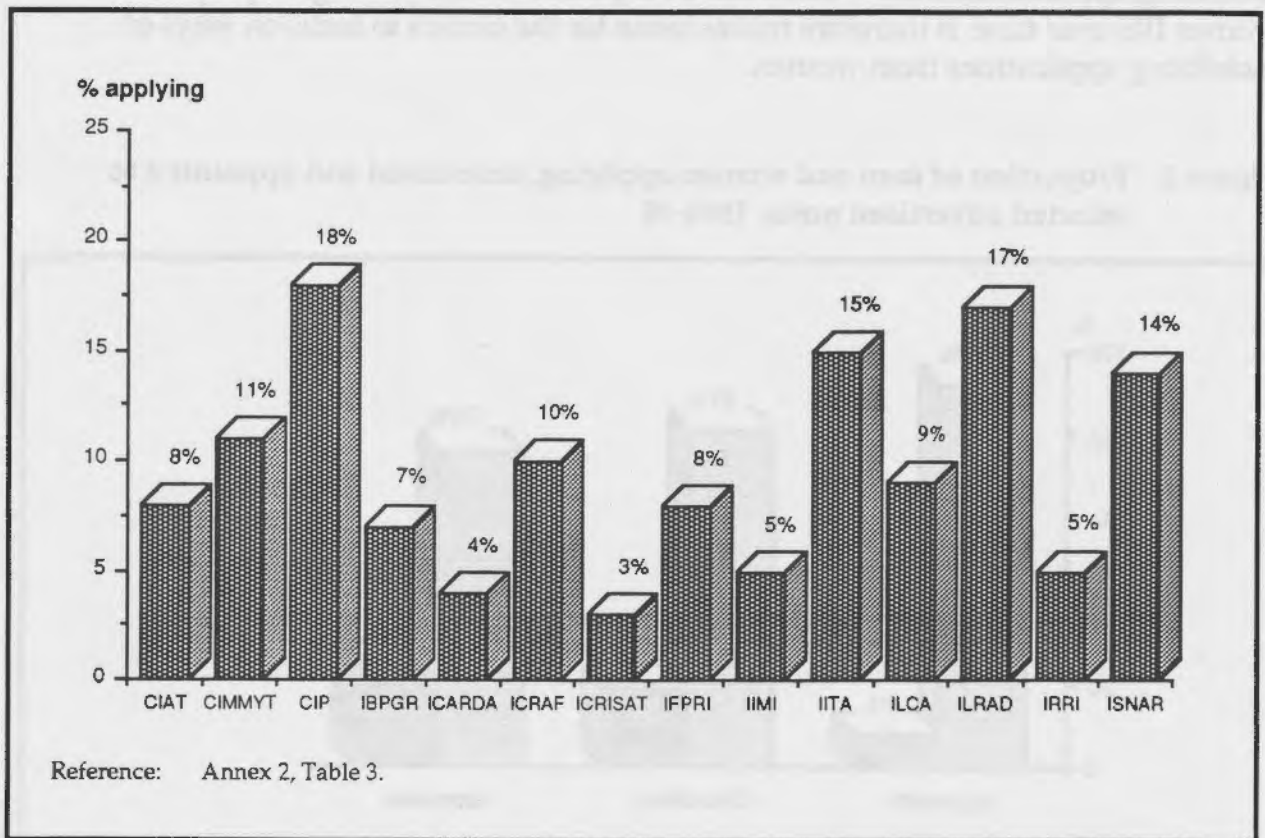
which stands at 24% (Merrill-Sands and Sachdeva, 1992). It might be argued that today's program support posts tend to be at a more senior level than those recruited for in the past and that they therefore attract fewer women applicants. However, the proportion of high-quality women working in such areas as training, information (documentation and publishing) and computer services has also increased over time, making this 'lack of supply' argument unconvincing.

The low proportion of women applying for management posts (6%) is less surprising given the relative dearth of qualified women in the agricultural sciences 15 years ago and the need for previous management experience for most management posts. But it is disappointing that the category of post which attracts most applicants overall attracts the lowest proportion of women applicants. A lack of supply may not be the only explanation. It may well be that the 'old boy' network for mobilizing candidates continues to work most effectively at this level, particularly within the scientific community.

The proportion of women applying for senior scientist posts (7%) is disappointing, even given that these posts require a minimum of between 5 and 10 years experience. Supply trends indicate that a good proportion of women were qualifying in the social and biological sciences 10 or 12 years ago. Women constituted 27% of Ph.D.'s in the social sciences, 31% of Ph.D.'s in the biological sciences and 14% in the agricultural sciences between 1980 and 1984 in the USA (Merrill-Sands and Sachdeva, 1992). In the Philippines over the same period women earned over 40% of the Ph.D.'s in agriculture and related disciplines and over 50% of the Ph.D.'s in socio-economics at the University of Los Baños, the leading agricultural university in the country. This disparity between supply and demand is explored in greater detail in Section 3.1.

Application rates for women also differed by center, with more than half the centers surveyed having fewer than 10% women applicants and *over a third* having 5% or fewer women applicants (Figure 1). Although we should not read too much into comparisons

Figure 1. Proportion of women applying for selected advertised posts by center, 1991-92



because the number of posts is relatively small, the fact that women are only 5% of applicants at some centers indicates the need for a serious review of advertising strategies.

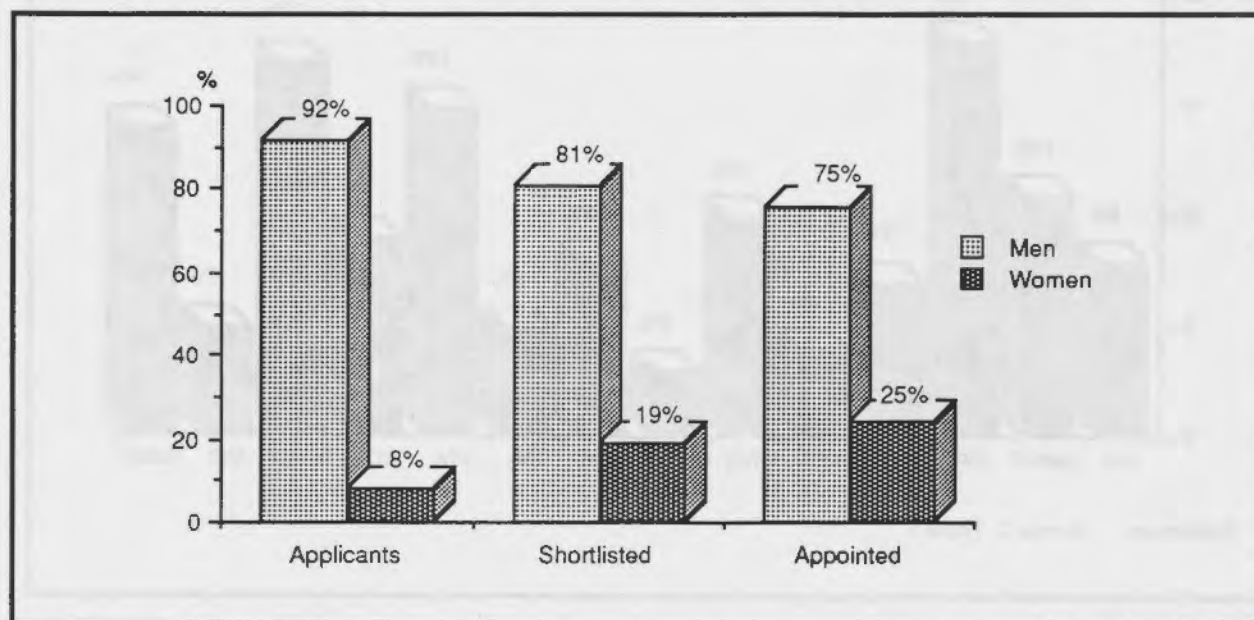
2.4 RECRUITMENT RATES OF WOMEN IRS

A comparison of application, shortlisting and appointment rates shows a steady increase in the proportion of women represented at each stage of the recruitment process. At the centers visited this was explained in terms of the quality of women's applications; a relatively high proportion of men tend to apply for jobs without having the basic qualifications required for the post. Women are more likely to apply only if properly qualified; they are therefore more likely to be shortlisted and, subsequently, appointed¹.

¹ The higher proportion of women shortlisted may also reflect the efforts of some centers to increase the numbers of women on their staff. Also, due to the non-random nature of the sample, centers may have inadvertently introduced a bias by selecting posts where women were better represented at later stages of the recruitment process.

The different 'progress' of men and women through the recruitment process is demonstrated in Figure 2. The figure shows that as long as women apply they have a higher than average chance of being appointed. If this relationship is maintained, increasing applications from women can be expected to lead to a higher proportion of women IRS over time. It therefore makes sense for the centers to focus on ways of mobilizing applications from women.

Figure 2. Proportion of men and women applying, shortlisted and appointed to selected advertised posts, 1991-92



When all posts recruited by the centers in 1991 and 1992 are taken into account (i.e. not just the selected posts centers included in their sample for the survey), we find that women accounted for 20% of recruits to IRS posts (Table 5 *opposite*).

As the table shows, the proportion of women appointed to IRS posts by center varied between 0% and 40%, with an average of 19%. However, it would be unwise to assume too much from these figures given the small numbers involved. Over half the centers had eight or fewer appointments, so even one female appointment significantly affected percentages. CIMMYT's 40% recruitment rate is impressive, especially during a period of overall contraction in staff, but it includes four postdoctoral posts appointed by outside recruiters, i.e. donors.

Appointment rates, like application rates, also varied significantly by post type (Table 6 *opposite*). In general, women's appointment rates exceeded their application rates. In some cases the difference was quite large. For example, women were appointed to a much larger proportion (31%) of associate scientist posts than have been expected from their application rate (8%).

Table 5. Percentage of women appointed to to all IRS posts by center, 1991-92

Center	Appointed		% women
	Men	Women	
CIAT	14	5	26
CIMMYT	12	8	40
CIP	6	3	33
IBPGR	5	1	17
ICARDA	22	6	21
ICRAF	21	6	22
ICRISAT	17	3	15
IFPRI	10	2	17
IIMI	11	1	8
IITA	30	8	21
ILCA	18	2	10
ILRAD	6	3	33
IRRI	29	3	9
ISNAR	9	0	0
Totals	210	51	19

Reference: Annex 2, Table 1.

Table 6. Percentage of women appointed to selected advertised IRS posts by type of post, 1991-92

Post type	Men	Women	% women
Management	36	5	12
Senior scientists	31	9	23
Associate scientists	9	4	31
Program support	8	5	38
Postdoctoral fellows	8	8	50
Other ¹	8	3	27
Total	100	34	25 ²

Note: ¹ Visiting scientists, research associates etc.
² The 25% total appointment rate for women in this table is 5% higher than the appointment rate for all posts recruited in 1991-92, shown in Table 5. This indicates that there was a slight bias in the sample of selected posts chosen by centers for the survey.

Reference: Annex 2, Table 2.

At first glance women's appointment rate as postdoctoral fellows (50%) is also more encouraging than their application rate (18%). However, the postdoctoral posts included in the sample may not be representative of all postdoctoral appointments in 1991 and

1992 because some centers did not include postdoctoral fellowships when answering the survey questionnaire. IRRI, for example, appointed only 9% women postdoctoral fellows for 1991 and 1992 (3 out of 34) and ICRISAT only 15% (3 out of 20 between 1991 and 1993). This is a very different picture to that gleaned from the survey, where the number of women postdoctoral fellows appeared equal to the number of men. Based on evidence from IRRI and ICRISAT, and taking into account the proportion of women postdoctoral fellows in the CGIAR system overall (18% in 1991), it is probable that women continued to represent a minority of postdoctoral appointments in 1991-92.

2.5 RECRUITMENT METHODS USED TO ATTRACT APPLICANTS

Centers were asked to specify the recruitment methods they used. All centers relied on a range of strategies, the most common being open advertisement and the use of center contacts. Center contacts were activated in two different ways. All centers sent position announcements to a list of individuals and institutions requesting help in identifying suitable candidates. This list included past and present Board members, members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the CGIAR, donors, heads of national research institutes and other professionals with close links with the center. In addition, some centers—and some Search Committees—made specific efforts to disseminate the position announcement to professional colleagues and to tap their personal networks. Other recruitment methods used by centers included encouraging applications from within the center, encouraging applications from other centers, and inviting specific individuals to apply. Figure 3 shows the main recruitment methods used for the 1991-92 posts about which centers gave details.

Figure 3. Recruitment methods used to publicize vacancies for selected IRS posts, 1991-92

