Knowledge Management in CACILM Phase II - Project Inception Workshop

10-12 June 2013, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

Meeting minutes

The International Fund for Agricultural Development endorsed a three-year regional grant to the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), which seeks to support the second phase of Central Asian Countries Initiative for Land Management (CACILM) by building a knowledge platform to consolidate knowledge and for scaling-up sustainable land management (SLM) interventions. For background information about this project, please refer to the background note in Appendix A. The purpose of the inception workshop, held 10-12 June 2013, was to (i) launch the project by presenting its objectives, expected outcomes and core activities to a relevant range of partners, and (ii) establish implementation arrangements and agree on project work plan.

About 30 officials from ministries of agriculture and nature protection agencies, soil scientists and researchers, universities, farmer representatives, practitioners from pasture and forest management, and other partners involved in knowledge management for SLM interventions attended the workshop. The workshop was co-organized jointly by ICARDA and GIZ Regional Program for Sustainable Use of Natural Resources. Several development and partner international agencies also attended, including FAO and the World Bank. The list of participants is included in Appendix B.

The event was inaugurated by Dr Nurlan Duysheev, State Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Melioration of Kyrgyz Republic.

The workshop was divided into several plenary sessions and break-out groups (see appendix A and C). This document provides a brief report for each session, followed by the work plan established at the meeting.

Session 1: introductory session

Chair: Academician Dzhamin Akimaliev   Moderator: Jozef Turok

The opening session started with a welcoming statements by ICARDA (Theib Oweis and Jozef Turok), IFAD (Kanat Sultanaliev), and GIZ (Stepan Uncovsky) representatives followed by presentations to explain the broader context of launching this new initiative, general objectives and rationale of the project as well as specific presentations highlighting each component of the project. Each presentation was followed by discussion and with general discussion at the end where participants from the countries and partner institutions interacted with ICARDA's project team to clarify ideas and getting into a level of consensus. The main focus was on how the project will help in making knowledge, practices and technologies readily available to be used by various stakeholders including farmers and land users to make impacts on improving livelihood via sustainable management of land (and water) resources. Organizations reiterated commitment to collaborate to achieve the project objectives.

The role of this comparably small project in building a 'bridge' between the first phase of CACILM and its future orientation was emphasized. By focusing on the synthesis, packaging and dissemination of knowledge on SLM practices in Central Asian countries, the project will facilitate widespread uptake by a

diverse group of stakeholders, in particular farmers and other land users as well as policy makers. It is expected that the project will contribute towards a second phase of CACILM, along with other projects that may hopefully be funded in future. Linkages with the newly launched CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems were also mentioned.

Session 2: identifying capacities, needs, gaps and priorities at national level

Chair: Dr Stepan Uncovsky   Rapporteur: Feras Ziadat

The first part of this session included four presentations from the four CA countries. They highlighted examples of sustainable land management technologies that are successfully implemented in these countries. These presentations were useful for all participants to learn about these technologies and the potential for further SLM. The need for knowledge management (KM) and dissemination came as an important requirement for sustainable management of resources in these countries with various challenges and opportunities in each country.

The second part of this session was the subdivision of all participants into four working groups, one group per country. The purpose is to discuss and develop priorities for KM of SLM approaches and technologies in each country. Each group answered three questions:

- Which SLM practices work and which do not?
- What are the priorities for SLM KM in each country?
- What are the gaps in SLM KM in each country?

Each country presented the outcome of the discussion in a plenary session with interactive discussion among all participants. The results from the three countries are summarized in Appendix C.

In addition to the specific information for each country (Appendix C), some issues worth indicating:

- Scale of applicability of the successful SLM: in order to select successful SLM for out-scaling we should consider that the SLM is applicable for large area within the country or within CA. this means that we shouldn't spend efforts on SLM with applicability in small area and limited number of farmers/users.
- Need to include approaches not only technologies.
- Need to know the regional level SLM as well as the country level SLM, i.e. those which can be applied at regional level or only at country level.
- Out-scaling of the good SLM not only within the country but also for other countries. Closing some gaps might be simply accomplished by looking at experiences with relevant SLM in neighboring countries.

Session 3: Reviewing knowledge management at regional level

This session was devoted to prepare work plan for the whole project (three years). For this purpose, the participants were divided into three groups, each one to build a work plan for each component: (i) knowledge synthesis and generation; (ii) knowledge packaging and dissemination; and (iii) using knowledge in policy dialogue. A template was distributed for the three groups to be followed in formulating the work plan. The outcome for the three groups is listed in Appendix D. the following items were included in the template: Activity number, Description of activity, Methods, Time Frame, Outputs, Delivered by (month), and Budget (USD). The three work plans for the three components were presented in a Plenary session and were discussed to fine-tune and integrate the three components.

Session 4: Wider linkages and collaboration in CACILM II

This session was devoted to explore collaboration with partners who are working on SLM and particularly in knowledge management. Two presentations were delivered by GIZ, one on the new project FLERMONECA and one about using the WOCAT tools for knowledge documentation and management. The two presentations and the discussion highlighted the great potential of collaboration with regional, country and international organizations in CA. this should be one of the focuses of this project to achieve wider reach among stakeholders.

Session 5: Identifying partnerships and impact pathways

During this session, each country was asked to identify potential partners. These partners could be local (at national level), regional or international institutions. This will be helpful for two ways interactions between this project and whoever is working with SLM-KM in CA. in one hand the project can benefit from the previous and existing experiences in this domain. On the other hand, other projects/institutions can benefit and use the methodologies and approaches developing in the course of this project. Since the project is still in the inceptions phase, considering the experiences and demand of these institutions/project will help in building project procedure that is out-scalable to the rest of CA.

The government or non-government bodies that will help in implementing the program were identified. The aim is to find intermediate organizations that help in closing the gap between scientists and end-users. The following types of institutions were identified for the whole CA. the full list of potential partners, for each country, is listed in Appendix E.

- Scientific and research institute
- Agricultural institutes
- Development projects (FAO-GEF)
- Agencies in land resources
- Extension services

- Training and consultants agencies
- Pastoral departments
- Water users associations
- Farmers' associations
- NGOs
- Mass media
- Parliamentarians
- Euro-Asian center Russia
- FLERMONICA

Session 6: developing work plan

During this session the participants were divided into three groups, one group for each project's component. Each group developed a detailed work plan for the first year of the project, between March 2013 and March 2014. A template was distributed for the groups with key issues to discuss: Activity, Sub-Activity, Methods, Team, Outputs, Delivered by (Date), and Budget (USD). The detailed work plans for the first year is explained in Appendix F.

The detailed work plans were presented in a plenary session to harmonize for the three components and to make sure there is proper integration to achieve the project goals.

Session 7: Conclusions and closures

- Thank all participants for their input and interest in this project.
- Emphasizing that this particular project is only a project **in** CACILM Phase II.
- This project is somewhat different than most projects implemented by ICARDA where bio-physical activities are undertaken (field work, data analyzes, publications). In this project we focus on what has been done (SLM best practices) and we try to find venues to reach upstream (policy makers) and downstream (farmers). It is a big challenge and with dedication and commitment of all partners we will all succeed. The advantage of ICARDA is that we work closely with the NARS and farmers and we would like to build on this and strengthened further.
- ICARDA would like to work with institutions instead of individuals. If institution is not behind the person cannot work or deliver. Each represented country should communicate to us the list of individual linked to this project. One coordinator and one focal point per component (total 3). ICARDA will develop TOR for each component to find the most relevant focal point.
- Before transferring any funds to NARS and collaborators, we need to finalize the workplan. Thus we need to schedule all activities in a timetable for year 1.
- The next annual meeting will take place in March/April 2014. Please advice to where we should organize it. If there is a volunteer country, we can soon fix a date.

- Hopefully IFAD will continue to support this project. In addition we will try to get additional support and linkages to other projects such as CRP 1.1.
- We like to thank GIZ for their active involvement in this workshop, sharing knowledge and logistic support. Special thanks go also to IFAD, World Bank, and host country. Last but not least, this meeting would not have taken place without the support of Tashkent office and in particular Dr Turok Josef and his team.

Project budget

The project budget was discussed and the distribution among various components and budget items was presented for the first year. The share of various parties is shown in the following table.

Indicative first-year budget (June 2013 – March 2014) [in USD]

Item	Component I		Component II		Component III	
	National Partners	ICARDA	National Partners	ICARDA	National Partners	ICARDA
Personnel	10,000	40,000	5,000	37,000	4,000	37,000
Operations	26,000	10,000	14,000	7,000	12,000	5,500
Travel	7,000	6,000	3,500	3,000	12,000	10,000
Training	77,000	17,000	9,000	2,000	9,000	3,000
Equipment	13,000	9,000	9,000	5,000	5,000	2,500
Total excl. overheads	133,000	82,000	40,500	54,000	42,000	58,000

General comments about the meeting

- The meeting highlighted the urgent need for efficient system to document knowledge and disseminate appropriate practices, technologies and options to the users and the role that this might play in fostering sustainable resources management in CA.
- There are many previous experiences and knowledge on SLM. However, their impacts on SLM implementation and on farmers' livelihood, land productivity and mitigation of land degradation is not seen as satisfactory. Therefore, an innovative approach is needed. Collaboration between many institutions is indispensable.
- The main question remains is how to reach the farmers/land users and how to influence their decisions in a way that bring benefits and in the same time sustainability? This requires, among other tasks, raising the awareness of decision makers to encourage the mainstreaming of SLM in the land use policies, training the extensions services and technicians on the selection and implementation of successful SLM, in essence, to be innovative in conveying knowledge in a proper way that reaches people.
- There was a great deal of misunderstanding and confusion of the role of Knowledge Management in general and what is required of this project in particular together with expected

linkage to the CACILM phase I. The meeting clarified many of those issues but still some to be clarified over the course of the project implementation.

- A great deal of capacity building to nationals is needed in knowledge management processes and implementation down to farmers.
- Participants identified lots of knowledge available and documented through various venues such as WOCAT. However, the weak part of knowledge management still to be strengthened is how to link up with policy makers and down with farmers organizations. It was recommended that the two stakeholders be given special attention

Immediate actions and follow up:

- Finalize the meeting minutes and work plans (responsibility: Feras, Aden, Michael, Jozef, Theib, Mounir).
- Building the project team for each country (Jozef and Feras)
- Formulate TOR for the focal point to nominate competent partner from each country (Feras, Aden, Michael, Jozef, Theib, Mounir).
- Formulate steering committee for the project (Jozef and Theib).
- Identify partners for the project at national, regional and international levels (Feras and Jozef)
- Follow up the appointment of project coordinator (Jozef, Theib and Feras)
- Sign MOA between ICARDA and the partner in each country to allow budget transfer (Jozef and Feras)