



Australian Government

Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research

Adapting conservation agriculture for rapid adoption by small holder farmers in North Africa (CSE-2011-025)

First Steering Committee Meeting

Hammamet, Tunisia, 1st October 2012

Participants :

- Dr. John Dixon, ACIAR research program manager/ Principal regional coordinator South & West Asia and Africa
- Dr. Jim Fortune, principal consultant, Rural Solutions SA
- Pr. Habib Amamou, President IRESA, Ministry of Agriculture Tunisia
- Dr. Abdeljabbar Bahri, Head of Tadla Research Regional Center, INRA Morocco (on behalf of Dr. Mohamed Badraoui, Director INRA Morocco)
- Dr. Omar Zaghouane, Director General ITGC, Algiers, Algeria
- Dr. Kamel Shideed, Assistant Director General – International Cooperation & Communication, ICARDA
- Dr. Mohamed El Mourid, Regional Coordinator, North Africa Program, ICARDA
- Dr. Halim Ben Haj Salah, National Project Coordinator Tunisia/ Director General INGC Tunisia (observer)
- Dr. Oussama El Gharras, national Project Coordinator Morocco/ CRRRA Settlat, INRA Morocco (observer)
- Dr. Patrick Wall, ACIAR consultant to CANA (observer)
- Dr. Ali Nefzaoui, Interim Technical Coordinator CANA ACIAR, North Africa Program, ICARDA
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Opening statements

Dr. Kamel Shideed on behalf of ICARDA Director General welcomed participants and gave the floor to the host country. Pr. Habib Amamou who spoke on behalf of HE the Minister of Agriculture, Tunisia welcomed the participants from ACIAR, ICARDA and Algeria and Morocco.

Dr John Dixon on behalf of ACIAR and AusAid expressed his thanks to ICARDA and national programs at this historical time for a project aiming at stabilizing production systems in dry areas.

Dr. Jim Fortune on behalf of RSSA expressed his optimism given his good experience in similar environments.

Dr. Kamel Shideed presented briefly the new CGIAR reforms and highlighted some key elements for sound impact pathways, the need to develop linkages with various partners (NGOs, private sector, etc.), the linkages with other ACIAR and non-ACIAR experiences, and the capacity development of young scientists from the region.

The agenda of the first SC meeting then has been presented and approved (attached).

Presentation of the project

Dr. Mohammad El Mourid presented a brief description of the project and stressed the linkages with the recently-approved IFAD-funded project on crop and livestock integration and that includes two countries from the region (Algeria and Tunisia) as well as the ACIAR conservation agriculture in Iraq and where North Africa may host trainees from Iraq. He reminded that the 3 project platforms cover three agro-systems that will serve the whole region in addition to Mauritania, Libya and Sudan. Dr El Mourid tackled the issue of innovation platforms that constitute a change of paradigm in implementing project activities and stressed the need to provide partners with comprehensive documentation and to allow 3 participants from the region to attend an upcoming ACIAR workshop on innovation platforms (Kenya, December 3, 2012). Finally he expressed his appreciation and thanks to Dr. Patrick Wall for his help in designing the research for implementation at the farm level.

Dr. John Dixon stressed the need to show in the workplan the mechanism and operation of linkages with all partners.

Presentation of the Plan of Work and Budget (POWB) 2012-2013

Dr. Halim Ben Haj Salah, on behalf of national teams presented the plan of work for the 2012-2013 season and indicated that the budget is as per project contract.

Project monitoring and evaluation

Dr. Jim Fortune presented a proposal for the implementation of monitoring and evaluation.

During the discussion, Dr. John Dixon informed about AusAid available documentation on M&E and that major indicators primarily include poverty, effectiveness on how the funds are managed and gender equity (women share should be at least 40 %). He also expressed the need for the SC to have a fully detailed plan of work a few days before any future SCM. The plan of work should include key points on a Gantt chart with relevant specific and quantified milestones and human and financial resources.

Action: The framework of the POWB has been approved and it has been agreed that a final plan of work and budget will be send to the steering committee members by **October 20, 2012**.

Dr. El Mourid suggested the following guideline for developing the plan of work which has been approved:

1. Title of the activity (suggested acronym for whole project is CANA)
2. Team composition and time allocated
3. Detailed methodology (Materials and methods)
4. Milestones
5. Inputs needed
6. Budget for the activity

Other issues raised during the discussion include:

- Need for a science baseline (science and technology development) for each platform requested and how constraints to CA can be identified for farmers who have not been exposed to this technology (Dr Bahri)
- How are we going to engage women in the process in order to meet AusAid requirement (Dr Fortune)
- With the support of Dr. P. Wall, the project coordinator will develop a common format that allows all project participants to implement field activities using the same methodology.
- To change the exchange of visits within the region from individual visits into a regional travelling workshop
- Dr. John Dixon suggests that an adoption plan will be developed as part of objective 1 that leads team members to successful outscaling of CA activities.

- **Action:** It has been agreed that the adoption will be part of the first project progress report due end of December 2012.
- The reporting mechanism should follow the procedure outlined in the project document, starting from the platform to the coordination unit to ICARDA management to ACIAR. The project produces also a detailed technical report to be finalized following the annual technical coordination and planning meeting. Dr. Wall has been requested to improve the quality of this report.

Venue of the coming SCM

It has been agreed that the next meeting of the steering committee will be in Setif, Algeria during the last week of September 2013; the exact date will be communicated in due time.

Action: Confirm venue arrangements with Algerian partners for meeting in September 2013 (and communicate dates for confirmation with SC and project team by January 2013 (*suggestion*))

Dr. Dixon stressed that adoption pathways and out-scaling are critical issues and target people must be invited to the SC meetings. This will allow the SC to become an advocacy for policy change. He added that any issue can be brought to the SC via email or teleconference during the year.

Other business

Several issues have been raised and clarified, particularly the following:

- Small changes of budget line item is allowed by ACIAR for amounts less than \$10,000 in consultation with project coordinator, with appropriate note in regular reporting.
- Morocco and Tunisia requested to use funds initially allocated to buy TDRs equipment for operation and office supplies. Formal request should be addressed to NARP RC
- The involvement of ESA Kef (Tunisia) in the project needs to be discussed between Prof. Amamou, Dr. Halim Ben Haj Salah and Dr. El Mourid.

Action: IRESA and ICARDA NARP will meet to discuss the Tunisian team composition

- Involvement of Australian students in the project is welcomed and needs to be arranged between the concerned institutions; Dr. El Mourid and Dr. Fortune will develop an implementation protocol. This will involve a project variation when arrangements complete.
- Australia is offering competitive scholarships for MSc and PhD which is welcomed and considered as an augmentation to the project. Interested persons should consult the website (<http://www.adsafrica.com.au>; <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/sclar/pages>; <http://aciar.gov.au/training>)
- Changes in national teams composition are allowed in consultation with project coordinator. Formal request to be addressed to NARP RC

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Closing remarks

Dr. Dixon, Dr. Fortune and Dr. Shideed, representing ACIAR and AusAid, RSSA and ICARDA respectively, expressed their appreciation and thanks to the host country and their full satisfaction with the progress made.

Prof. Amamou expressed his thanks to ACIAR, AusAid and ICARDA for their efficient collaboration and to colleagues from Algeria and Morocco. He particularly thanked ICARDA for its continuing collaboration and for making all necessary arrangements of this successful meeting.

Appendix 1: Agenda of the first SCM

Steering Committee Meeting

Hammamet, Tunisia, 1st October 2012

Draft Agenda

Monday, 1 October 08:30-11:00

08:30 – 08:45	Opening: statements: Host Country, ACIAR, RSSA and ICARDA	K. Shideed, H. Amamou, J. Dixon, J. Foirtune
08:45 – 09:00	Presentation of the Project	M. El Mourid
09:00 – 10:00	Presentation of the POWB 2012-2013	H. Ben Haj Salah, O. El Gharras, O. Zaghouane
10:30- 10:40	Monitoring& Evaluation	J. Fortune
10:00 – 10:30	Discussion and approval of POWB 2012-2013	
10:40 – 10:50	Any other business	
11:00	Closing	

Appendix 2. List of participants

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