CGIAR and IFAD: Sharing and Scaling up Innovations

Notes from a session organized by ILRI at the IFAD ESA Meeting,

Addis Ababa, 15 November 2012

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On 15 November 2012, as part of the IFAD East and Southern Africa regional meeting in Addis Ababa, ILRI was asked to convene and facilitate a 1 hour session on ways that CGIAR and IFAD could collaborate. The session drew on contributions from different CGIAR centres; it involved speakers from ILRI, IWMI and ICARDA. It provided a very good, but short, opportunity to make connections between some CGIAR staff and IFAD and project staff; several individual follow up conversations were triggered.

The presentation (www.slideshare.net/ILRI/cgiar-and-ifad-sharing-and-scaling-up-innovations) reflected on current collaboration experiences between IFAD and the CGIAR, it introduced the 'renewed' research for development focus of the CGIAR and its multi-center Research Programs and it explored ideas for future collaboration.

Randolph introduced the ways in which IFAD currently interact with CGIAR research: Through Technical advisory grants (TAG) from Rome; other Rome-based initiatives (such as regional learning, KM and innovation, One-off evaluations); EU country projects financed via IFAD; and perhaps projects financed through IFAD country programs.

He suggested that our experience to date included:

- Repeated expressions of intent to link research to loan portfolio
- Research to address loan project needs
- Technical Advisory Notes (TANs) – scale out technical results
- Drawing on specific CGIAR expertise (consultancy model)

The idea of this session, he suggested, was to discuss if and how we can make the partnership more meaningful. Examples he provided were:

- Establish a more systematic role of the CGIAR as IFAD's knowledge partner: win-win for both!
- Harvest better lessons from IFAD loan project to scale out
    - CGIAR can help identify, track, test, and validate innovations in projects
    - Use CGAR to help capture learning from projects: what works, what doesn't, and why?
    - CGIAR can contribute to knowledge and learning networks (country, thematic, regional)
- Feed research results into IFAD loan projects to scale out
    - Involve CGIAR partners in the planning of investment programs to make full use of technology and institutional innovations from CGIAR and partners
    - CGIAR can carry out cross country learning reviews and assessments of key opportunities/issues
    - Establish capacity to continuously review and connect emerging CGIAR research results into ongoing IFAD projects
    - Use CGIAR to provide capacity, training, mentoring support and training materials/guides to IFAD and its partners
    - For bigger problems, target CGIAR TAG/research projects more strategically with country projects in implementation
    - Together, develop an evidence-based policy agenda to foster an enabling national environment for uptake of our innovations

During the session, participants were invited to interact and reflect around several questions:

1. IFAD and research
    - What positives do you have working with research, especially the CGIAR?
    - What negatives do you have working with research, especially the CGIAR?
2. What direct feedback on what you heard about the new CGIAR programs?
3. What specific products or opportunities do you look for from research?

This document collates the feedback provided to the various questions (suggestions from cards were transcribed and spellchecked but not edited). Some overall observations include:

- In the discussions, some participants struggled to understand what we meant by 'research' (not just CGIAR); suggesting there is a disconnect between various development and research communities. Indeed many participants seemed to have no or very little knowledge of CGIAR.
- Most groups gave examples of what research has produced (technologies varieties, etc.)
- Groups listed positive roles or contributions that research could be expected to produce (for their projects).
- The list of perceived weaknesses of (all) research is lengthy, encompassing questions of relevance, cost, ownership, uptake, and quality.
- Feedback on the 'new' CGIAR raised questions about scope and operationalization.
- Several modalities (and examples) for IFAD-CGIAR collaboration were suggested.
- A range of country specific as well as regional issues/topics were suggested as opportunities to work on (in a general sense).
- It would be good to repeat such an exercise, perhaps at country as well as regional level, with more focused discussion topics and time for more detailed discussion.

What positives do you have working with 'research', especially the CGIAR?

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RESEARCH	MANY EXAMPLES OF WHAT RESEARCH DOES

• It helps educate different levels of people to think in a more relevant and better way
• It brings new technology to do things a better way
• Discovery of new knowledge such as new technologies of processing
• Research help to test variables and find out position relationships that yield results
• It touches the following areas:
  ○ Improves creativity and innovation
  ○ Mapping visioning
  ○ Livelihood enhancement
  ○ Value-chain development
  ○ Inclusiveness of gender and age group
  ○ Good governance
• Research assists the government to make policies
• Improvement in productivity in agriculture is linked to technologies developed by research.
• Research shows/displays existing gaps and provides recommendations.
• Informative (innovations)
• Influence decision making
• It helps to identify the exact development problems
• It helps to facilitate any development activity to run in a better way
• It helps to get the solution for the problem
• Association with researches gives credibility
• IFAD Projects are missing out research expertise by not collaborating with CGIAR
• IFAD grant to CGIAR in Kenya generated improved project design on payment for environmental services
• Research gives an idea of what can work – a realistic package of information, eg. Research on village chickens in Swaziland to show whether it is viable as a business venture or livelihood
• Provides opportunities for alternatives you can prioritize if you have all the facts for decision-making
• Improves M & E process
	• Research has been useful in coming up with new varieties of seeds, and how to distribute them to the farmer
	• High yielding technologies
	• Provision of information on improved farming techniques
	• Loan recoveries strategies research
	• Development of drought tolerant varieties
	• Development and adoption of labour-saving technologies.
	• High yielding planting materials
	• Introduction and testing for adaptability of new varieties, e.g. fodder
	• Introduces new useful technologies (and innovations) in agricultural industry
	• Using improved seeds developed by research in project activities
	• Private farmers involved in seed multiplication, trained by researchers
	• Introduction of disease resistant animal and crop varieties (eg new cassava mosaic resistant cassava)
	• Development of improved farming seed technologies varieties and livestock breeds, machinery etc.

What negatives do you have working with 'research', especially the CGIAR?

RELEVANCE?

- Not relevant to the country's agenda
- Research that does not respond to the development needs
- Too academic
- Research being more academic than practical solution solving
- Research is either very useful or not useful at all
- Researchers are sometimes busy producing work that does not respond to farmers demand
- Research not always aligned to project needs, but with that of funding agency
- Ideas of what is suitable way differ between researcher and project; difficulty of articulating objectives
- Research does not understand needs of IFAD country offices to improve impact on the ground; Research groups in the past have not even responded to our requests for assistance

SUPPLY DRIVEN

- Failure to integrate indigenous knowledge
- Supply driven approach
- The research is somehow not participative; Lack of ownership of new technologies
- Application of positive results may not yield results if stakeholders are not involved

SLOW

- Long time lag; too long time to get research output
- Takes long and may not fit in the protect cycle; it may not be useful by the time it is completed
- The results take too much time to come up

NOT WELL COMMUNICATED AND APPLIED

- Research is not well translated into practical use
- Lack of system perspective so logjams to uptake and identified
- Research is finished but there is not dissemination, no implementation of research findings
- Technologies are on the shelves but need institutional and agricultural development to deliver the technologies
- Sometimes the huge investments done in research are not used.
- Usually research findings are not used – especially when th research/innovations do not have a social aspect.
- Lack of feedback to the sampled communities
- Weak linkage between research and other actors; extension, farmers etc.
- No clear linkage between the research institutes, farmers and extension service providers.
- Difficult to communicate data and results to target stakeholders
- Lack of effective communication vehicles to enable the intended beneficiaries to learn and use the new knowledge
- Lack of dissemination of research findings to the users
- Results from research not really relevant/applicable in meeting immediate needs
- They fail to communicate/package their results to different stakeholders
- Weak linkages between research grants and IFAD activity

QUALITY

- Difficult to find someone when can interrogate an issue and do a proper analysis – lack of training for this in developing countries
- Best researchers may be the most costly or in demand, so you may have to compromise
- Data may be inaccurate or unreliable; Data may be in a format that is difficult to manipulate for your purposes; Data may not be current
- It is costly

Any direct feedback on what you heard on the new CGIAR?

Feedback on the CRPs and the three mentioned: 1.1, 3.7, 5

- Semi-arid areas have been neglected so CRPs specially dry lands very interesting
- Research should address the whole value chain in product
- No consideration of post-harvest still concentrating on production
- Where is the private sector? Too much concentration on the public
- They have not addressed productivity issues
- Need to have a regional orientation in their research
- Frequent/timely release of research outputs.
- They have not shown how they factor climatic changes
- More support to extension programmes
- Link research to markets
- Research needs to take into consideration socio-cultural elements
- Research should be practical and implementable that fits the reality on the ground
- The research should be more focus to people's needs

Feedback on IFAD-CGIAR collaboration opportunities/modalities

- The three CRPs mentioned are relevant and we can give them grants and work with them closely in design and implementation.
    - Technical service providers
    - Grants
    - Supervision
    - Implementation
- Need to develop partnerships between researchers and country portfolios
- Need for flexibilities on both sides
- Harvesting learning from projects to inform research
- Feedback for research into projects for scaling up
- How research results can inform project designs
- Need more studies on islands of success to understand why and how scale up
- Lessons have not been properly documented by IFAD projects
- CGIAR should learn from existing knowledge
- Research to focus more on project specific needs

More meat, milk and fish

- Even when a country is not targeted by this program, how possible is it to learn from experiences in the targets countries. Eg. "Dwindling fish stocks" – what has been done about this? Can it be accessed? A case of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania….
- Implementation of a small grant on goats production and marketing in South Mozambique
- Developing site specific animal health packages eg: use of netting of zero grazing units to reduce mastitis incidences by ICIPE (technology)
- Payment for environmental services piloted in three countries including Kenya and Tanzania (partnership)
- Developed soil water conservation practices under green H20 credit in Kenya (technology and partnership)

What specific products or opportunities do you look for from research, especially the CGIAR? Country-specific? Across-countries?

Country specific

- New water-efficient irrigation systems in Swaziland
- Need help in Burundi with milk processing (cooling, transportation, access to market)
- Research in aquaculture in Mozambique
- Issue of market linkages – need more information on institutions/policy issues to really make that happen(Swaziland)
- Cross-border trade – requirement make it difficult to research external/regional policy issues and infrastructure. (Swaziland)
- Processing of dairy products, eg. In Tanzania, Rwanda
- The piggery trails in Uganda; can they be up scaled?
- Uganda: Linking fish farmer to value chain. Research on how much a fish farmer can benefit if he/she harvests, sells fish to a factory which belongs to the farmers, and then they sell the processed fish
- Production of improved seeds (South Sudan): Lack appropriate institutional set up to own the task to further conduct the research agenda; Lack of clarity on how to proceed
- Burundi – livestock productivity
- Horn of Africa – Drought
- Kenya - Water management and drought

Cross Country

- NRM presents a big opportunity
- Soil fertility a big challenge in ESA
- Lots of work needed on soil management and better quality seeds.
- Dairy, piggery, fish – livelihood challenges
- Appropriate technology for ploughing, planting and harvesting for small holder and owners
- Improved technologies for climate adaptation in dry areas.
- Aqua lands – opportunity for use new dams
- Assessment of factors that influence sustainable commercialization of small holder scaling development
- Research on impact of climate change on agricultural production and flood mitigation
- Most of the micro finance policies are weak and there we need the CGIAR to improve the policies in this area.
- Varietal development → to adaptable to emerging challenges posed by climate change realities