Agriculture at its 15th Session in January 2015 endorsed a set of guidelines to facilitate the process of mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity into policies, programmes and national and regional plans of action on nutrition, which among other things provides useful guidance to support countries in developing sustainable and nutrition-sensitive food systems. This presentation explored some of these initiatives, with detailed examples from the Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition project funded by the Global Environment Facility. It examined the opportunities and challenges they present for upscaling and mainstreaming agricultural biodiversity for improved nutrition and other sustainability outcomes.

Key words: agricultural biodiversity, nutrition-sensitive food systems, mainstreaming, policy

Capacity development: What, where, how?

Per Rudebjer

Bioversity International (Italy)

Working in poor communities in Guatemala, Mali and India, the new IFAD-EU NUS Project will use agricultural biodiversity to manage risks and empower the poor. The goal of the Project is 'to strengthen the capacities of women and men farmers, including indigenous communities, and other value-chain actors to manage risks associated with climate change, poor nutrition status and economic disempowerment'. The Project will seek 'proof of concept' that better-managed traditional crops and landraces, linked to nutrition-sensitive value chains, can contribute to enhanced nutrition, income and empowerment, and safeguarding livelihood assets. For this to happen, decisions, actions and interactions of people and organizations would need to change, compared to the current state. The Project's theory of change i) describes the socio-economic and agro-ecological context in which the intervention is taking place, ii) analyses the actors, organizations and networks that participate in, or influence change, iii) outlines a desired change and describes a set of activities—at farm, community, national and international levels—that would trigger the anticipated change. Capacity development, both as a distinct activity, such as training, and as a process embedded in participatory action research, value chain enhancement, and policy influence, plays a central role in the Project and needs to be understood by Project staff and partners alike. Using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development definition of 'capacity' as 'the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully', a capacity development framework is presented to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Project's capacity-related activities. A literature review of capacity development and change processes in complex adaptive systems is presented, along with practical examples and lessons from earlier projects managed by Bioversity International on upgrading value chains of neglected and underutilized species, linking nutrition and agricultural diversity, and managing climate risks at farm level.

Key words: capacity development, neglected and underutilized species, policy, theory of change, training, value chains

Applying Outcome Mapping to research for development projects: The new IFAD-EU NUS Project

Elisabetta Gotor

Bioversity International (Italy)

Part of the challenge in monitoring and evaluating research for development initiatives comes from the multiplicity of interventions and actors that intervene and interact along the project pathway. Since 2013 Bioversity International is encouraging and supporting the use of Outcome Mapping[‡] among its scientists and project managers as a tool for establishing an integrated system for

[‡] http://www.outcomemapping.ca/

project and program planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning. Outcome Mapping is a project planning, monitoring and evaluation approach that helps build the bridge between 'outputs' (knowledge products) and 'outcomes' (changes in behaviour).

Generally, our thinking about research for development gets stuck at the question of how to get our knowledge products in use. Outcome mapping helps span the divide by focusing on the behaviours of boundary partners and thinking through ways in which we can work with those partners more effectively to achieve our development goals. The application of this methodology will help us to:

- Clarify intended interventions and desired outcomes
- Assess contributions to social change
- Bring partners and stakeholders into planning, monitoring and evaluation processes
- Foster organizational learning
- Strengthen partnerships and alliances
- Integrate monitoring and evaluation into projects or programs from the planning stage
- Balance monitoring and evaluation for both accountability and learning
- Provide tools and vocabulary for understanding the complexity of social change

This exercise is of critical importance to CGIAR Centers given the move to a performance-based funding system linked to delivery of development objectives.

Key words: indicators, evaluation, monitoring, outcome mapping, project planning, stakeholders