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STAKEHOLDER MEETING

Research Information Systems/WISARD

Agenda Item: **6g – Program Initiatives, Research Information Systems/WISARD**

This item is for: Information   **X**   Discussion   ☐   Decision   ☐

Proposed Action: None

Background: WISARD stands for Web-based Information System on Agriculture Research and Rural Development. The CGIAR portfolio of research projects is accessible and searchable through the System. The attached paper presents an overview of WISARD. A brief presentation on the System is included in Parallel Session II.

Comments:

WISARD- Decentralized information management in a shared environment
AGM October 2001

F.Neuman, IAC-Wageningen UR

Web-based information systems are of increasing importance to share information among researchers, managers and policymakers across the globe. Moreover it provides the basis for the development of institutional memories and knowledge systems .

WISARD is the web-based Information System on Agriculture Research and Rural Development focused on Projects, Organisations, Persons and Outputs/ documents/maps.. Its objective is to reduce duplication of investments, build on existing knowledge, identify gaps in knowledge, search experts and form partnerships. WISARD is used by stakeholders at all levels to manage their own information in a shared environment. Data management is decentralised and is carried out on-line from various parts of the world.. Over 180.000 persons have searched the system this year.

The entire CGIAR portfolio of over 200 projects and projects of other stakeholders is searchable by theme, country and free text. Details including homepages of over 10.000 stakeholder organisations are searchable in various ways. (See www.wisard.org). Partners include among others CGIAR Secretariat, national and organisational focal points in S. Asia of the Rice Wheat Consortium (RWC) including research institutes, universities, extension services, the IPM-Europe network, Netherlands Forum on ARD, KIT, Wageningen UR, CABI, IFAD, FAO Global IPM facility, GFAR, DGIS, Neth. Min of Agric, Mexican farmers organisations and several key NGOs who already share their own information via WISARD.

Capacity building and regional training has started and will receive increased importance in the coming years in a wide partnership mode. This is underpinned by inclusion of new technologies such as GIS and related modules on technologies and local knowledge.

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OVERVIEW OF WISARD

WHAT IS WISARD

WISARD the Web-based Information System on Agriculture Research and Development is an integrated and decentralized web-based system. (www.wisard.org).
It has a central clearing house function and seeks to provide answers to the question 'Who is doing what where, with whom and what is the result'. This is achieved in a decentralised shared environment with on-line management by various stakeholders.
Target groups are researchers, managers of NARIs, universities, NGOs and farmers organisations.

It was developed to enhance efficiency, avoid duplications, enhance use of information and local knowledge and foster partnerships between actors.

It focuses on 4 'pillars':

- ➢ Projects
- ➢ Persons,
- ➢ Organizations
- ➢ Outputs/documents (gray literature, maps, Powerpoint shows, training-material)

HOW DOES IT WORK AND WHAT IS ITS FUNCTIONALITY?

2.1 Search Interface

You can search the system for each of the 'pillars': projects, organisations, persons and outputs. There are several entree points: geographic, thematic and person/organization. From entrée you can ' click-on' on and zoom in the respective associated information. In addition to individual searches WISARD provides directories of organisations, projects and persons per country, organisation or per thematic field.

2.2 Data management

The system has been built for decentralized management. Focal points at organizational, network and national levelassure quality control and manage their data on-line: they input, update and change data from various parts of the world. Data are entered mainly by organisations but can also be entered by individuals. Data are only visible after clearing/quality control by the respective focal point.

CONTENT AND USE OF WISARD

The system is increasingly used; so far over 220.000 people have searched and used the system. www.wisard.org. The World Bank Global development Gateway links to WISARD for agricultural projects in each country. WISARD and ISNAR-AROW exchange information on organizations.

WISARD contains details including website, mandate, contact address of over 10,000 agriculture stakeholders (research institutes, ministries, academia, international organisations, NGOs, private sector agencies). Over 4,000 projects from NARS, Donors and IARCs and 3,000 researchers are accessible on-line, while these numbers are increasing continuously. He CGIAR portfolio is accessible on-line http://www.cgiar.org/research/index.html

For special topics, e.g. IPM and Forestry, special views have been created. /www.wis.cgiar.org/wisard/specialviews.html gives details of over 1,000 IPM projects from different organizations, donors as well as NARS. For other networks or consortia working on key themes similar views can be prepared.

WHO ARE PARTICIPATING?

At present focal points are active in the following organisations:
- Various stakeholder organisations: Farmers organisations in Mexico, research organisations such as KIT, Wageningen University & Research Centre, CABI, Punjab Agric. University, NATP-ICAR and CG Secretariat on behalf of the CGIAR, NGOs such as IIRR, Agromisa, CIRAN,
- Thematic networks and organisations such as IPM Europe, Burotrop, FAO Global IPM Facility/GFAR, European forest networks, PAN
- Eco-regional programs and system-wide programs of the CGIAR (RWC, SLP, ASB)

- National systems in S. Asia: India-ICAR, Pakistan-PARC, Nepal-NARC and Bangladesh-BARC

Financial support is provided by a multitude of agencies ranging from the EC, DGIS, and Min. of Agriculture of the Netherlands, the CG-Secretariat and the Rice-Wheat Consortium (CIMMYT). Individual organizations and networks provide time and labour for data input.

MAIN DEVELOPMENT AND NEXT STEPS

- ➢ Additional modules. With international NGOs a module will be developed for 'Best practices, lessons learnt, local knowledge'. This will be an interactive process involving intermediary local organizations as well as relevant content organizations and collaboration with CGIAR would seem highly relevant.
- ➢ Awareness raising and capability development in the regions together with partners. It is aimed to arrive at a critical mass in the regions of information professionals from national systems, IARCs, advanced centers, key NGOs and content agencies.
- ➢ Integration or data-exchange e.g. exchanges with well-established relevant databases. This holds for publications, PR material, projects and organizations. A pilot to harmonize data between European forest agencies and WISARD is being carried out. Data-exchange with ISNAR-AROW is already on-going.
- ➢ Web-mapping that is geo-referencing to display info on maps and making overviews at even district level for projects and organizations will start in 2002 in a pilot for S. Asia.
- ➢ Customized views for organizations and networks. See the regional S. Asian view of the Rice -Wheat Consortium in 'PRISM' at www.wis.cgiar.org/rwc/sharedhome.html. IAC/ WIS Int., CIMMYT/RWC and Indian programmers have developed this jointly. NARS in the region are being trained and now actively manage their own information in PRISM in a regional context.
- ➢ The additional classifications for specific domains and undertakings of the organizations or networks. This will be done for IPM, forestry and water management.
- ➢ For various users the information will be made available off-line on CD-ROM for off-line search by a broad constituency that is not yet fully on-line.

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