

Report on Planning and Inception Meeting of the One CGIAR Initiative on Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems 31 May – 2 June 2022, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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Published by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture

August 2022

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ABC	Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT
Africa RISING	Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation
ATA	Ethiopia Agricultural Transformation Agency
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSISA	Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia
DEED cycle	Describe, Explain, Explore and Design cycle
EIAR	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research
GDP	Gross domestic product
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
MELIA	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment
MFS	Mixed Farming Systems
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations
SI	Sustainable intensification
SI-MFS	Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative
SIAF	Sustainable Intensification Assessment Framework
UNFSS	UN Food Systems Summit
WP	Work Package

Objectives of the Planning and Inception Meeting



SHARED UNDERSTANDING

Create a shared understanding of the Initiative amongst implementing institutions.



LAY THE GROUNDWORK

Lay the groundwork for in-country planning meetings to follow by defining priority activities, geographies, and 2022 implementation plans.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clarify partner/team member roles and responsibilities.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Discuss, agree, and confirm activities in relation to the Initiative Gantt chart, plan out roles and responsibilities in relation to contributing members for each Work Package among the different entities.



PLANNING

Discuss and agree on important Initiative-wide implementation arrangements necessary to achieve set goals at Work Package and in-country levels across collaborating entities.

Day One: Unpacking the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems

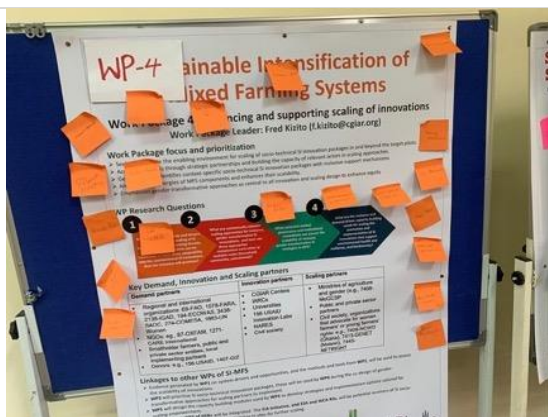
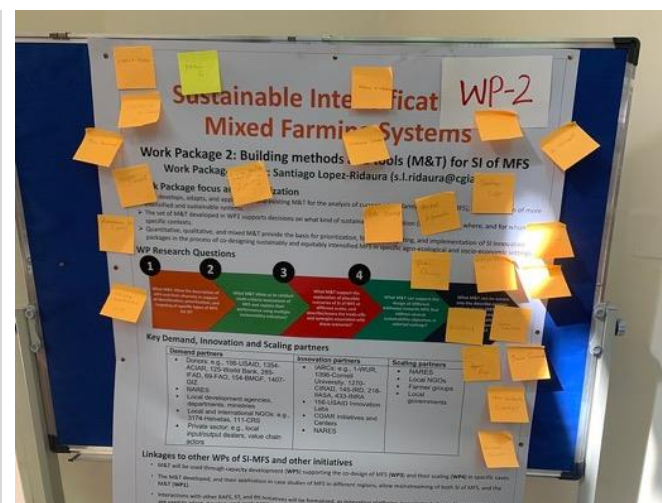
Participant introductions/Speed Networking exercise

Through a facilitated, but fun exercise; participants got a chance to introduce themselves and provide insight into their contributions and interests in the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative (SI-MFS).



*Select photos from the informal and formal participant introduction exercise.
Photo credits: Apollo Habtamu and Paul Karaimu/ILRI.*

A key output from the facilitated participant introduction exercise was the identification of the Initiative Work Packages of interest for participants. Photos below indicate the interest in each of the WPs at the start of the meeting.



Work Package posters with sticky notes containing participants names to show the Work Packages they are involved in. Photo credit: Jonathan Odhong/IITA.

Introductory and opening remarks

Speaking during the opening of the event, Dr. Namukolo Covic, ILRI Director General's Representative to Ethiopia, welcomed the participants and made introductory remarks outlining the value of the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative. Below are key points from her introductory remarks.

- - - - -

"The State Minister, for Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture, Prof Eyasu Elias was supposed to be with us today and sends his regrets. The Deputy Director for EIAR will join the deliberations tomorrow. Dr Martin Kropff, CGIAR Global Director for Resilient Agri-Food Systems is with us today. Distinguished colleagues.

Distinguished guests, all protocols observed:

The SI-MFS Initiative aims to provide equitable and gender-transformative approaches to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers who engage in mixed farming systems across the world and in six countries that include Ethiopia.

- **The potential for this initiative to contribute to Ethiopia's national goals on food security, nutrition, health, and sustainability should not be underestimated.**

If the evidence that is generated is well positioned to inform policy and program decisions - not only by government but also by diverse food systems actors who seek to promote better food security, nutrition, health and doing so sustainably.

Ethiopia has made much progress over the last two decades in alleviating hunger as reflected by reduction in the proportion of the population that is affected by undernourishment or not having enough calories to meet their needs.

The proportion of the population that is undernourished reduced from 47% in 2001 to 14% in 2016% and then started edging upwards to 16% in 2019.

- **No doubt this is likely to have increased because of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

These reductions in the proportion of the population undernourished are in part due to increases in production of staples in the country. But productivity levels are still low and much improvement is needed.

While the proportion of the population affected by undernourishment prior to 2014 had been reduced quite impressively, the reductions in stunting, an indicator of chronic malnutrition, has been at a much slower pace, in part due to poor diet quality.

- **Prevalence of stunting for children under five years old reduced from 58% in 2000 to 37% in 2019.**

Diet diversity has consistently been low in Ethiopia limiting achievement on reducing chronic malnutrition such as stunting.

- **Micronutrient deficiencies are also highly prevalent.**

The situation has been such that the Cost of Hunger Study done in 2009 shocked the nutrition community with the estimate that Ethiopia was losing 17% of its GDP annually due to undernutrition.

Imagine what that value would be if other forms of malnutrition like overweight, obesity and diet related diseases like high blood pressure diabetes and some cancers were included.

- **Simply put malnutrition is costly to any country, let alone, Ethiopia.**

This brings me to the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems - the initiative being launched today. You will recall that I started my remarks by saying,

- **'The potential for this initiative to contribute to Ethiopia's national goals on food security, nutrition, health, and sustainability should not be underestimated**

... if the evidence that is generated is well positioned to inform policy and program decisions not only by government but also by diverse food systems actors who seek to promote better food security, nutrition, health and indeed doing so sustainably.'

In the proposal for this initiative my attention was drawn to the following statements:

- **That - This Initiative aims to provide equitable, transformative pathways for improved livelihoods of actors in mixed farming systems through sustainable intensification within target agro-ecologies and socio-economic settings.**
- **That - SI-MFS will achieve this goal by deploying locally viable socio-technical sustainable intensification (SI) innovation bundles that will maximize synergies and minimize tradeoffs between the systems' biophysical and social components.**
- **That - Your work is predicated upon CGIAR innovations, tools, and approaches from various thematic specializations, including agronomy, livestock, aquaculture, soil, and water management, mechanization, gender, and socio-economics.**

The mixed farming systems you wish to inform, are therefore, well poised to address the challenges I have articulated earlier because:

- **Mixed farming systems can improve productivity and help to address hunger as measured by the proportion undernourished.**

- **Mixed farming systems can increase production diversification and contribute to better diet quality by diversifying the food basket at household level - be it from own production or from better access from the market as a result of improved livelihoods.**
- **Mixed farming systems will offer opportunities for sustainable intensification and could leverage regenerative and agroecological principles for better soil health, and even, perhaps minimizing the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides...**

would that not be nice!

I want to finish my remarks as I have done for the other initiatives by challenging you.

Last year (2021) I was privileged to have had extensive engagements in the UNFSS process, in Ethiopia, Global and Africa continental levels.

(For Ethiopia the MoA was the convenor, MoH was the co-convenor, and the ATA was the coordinating Secretariat.)

As part of the UNFSS process last year, 2021, Ethiopia developed a Food Systems Transformation Pathway with six clusters of intervention areas. All are relevant to the initiative we launch today. These include

1. **Cluster 1:** Ensuring availability and accessibility of safe and nutrient dense foods
2. **Cluster 2:** Sustainable and equitable consumption of healthy, safe and nutrient-dense diets throughout the life cycle
3. **Cluster 3:** Integrated policy and systems to promote Agricultural transformation
4. **Cluster 4:** Enhancing digital technology and innovation throughout the food system
5. **Cluster 5:** Access to markets, market information, infrastructure, and specialization
6. **Cluster 6:** Managing and mainstreaming risk and protecting the poor

The challenge I leave you is **to explore entry points for the evidence you will be generating from this initiative to contribute to the transformation agenda the country has set.**

I wish you fruitful deliberations, Thank you!"

One CGIAR Resilient Agri-Food Systems Overview

Presenter: Martin Kropff, CGIAR

Dr Martin Kropff, Global Director, Resilient Agri-Food Systems (RAFS) CGIAR, gave an overview presentation about the reformed One CGIAR, its research orientation and the Resilient Agrifoods Systems research theme.

What is cooking in the Work Packages

Light touch presentations from each work package (WP), showing: What are the key activities they will prioritize in relation to promised outputs/deliverables? Who will be working on each WP team? Which countries do they intend to prioritize? Current state of each WP.

Work Package 1: Status, trends, and future dynamics of MFS

Presenter: Francis Muthoni, IITA

Key points

- MFS involves growing crops and rearing livestock.
- MFS can be classified into broad groups based on ecology and production orientation.

Potential linkage with other initiatives

- WP1 will provide empirical settings, demand specification and data for development and application of methods and tools (M&T) in WP2.
- WP1 will apply M&T developed in WP2 for characterization and foresight of MFS.
- Evidence generated by WP1 on system drivers, constrains and opportunities in MFS's, will be applied for context-specific targeting of SI bundles in WP3 and to guide scaling of SI innovations in WP4.
- Knowledge gaps identified in WP1 will be help assessment of capacity development needs for global actors and guide their investment in capacity building on MFS in WP5.

Work Package 2: Building methods and tools (M&T) for SI of MFS

Presenter: Santiago Lopez, CIMMYT

Key points

- WP2 develops, adapts, and applies new and existing M&T for the analysis of current mixed farming systems (MFS), and the design of more intensified and sustainable systems.
- The set of M&T developed in WP2 supports decisions on what kind of sustainable intensification (SI) might work where, and for whom, in specific contexts.
- Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed M&T provide the basis for prioritization, foresight, targeting, and implementation of SI innovation packages in the process of co-designing sustainably and equitably intensified MFS in specific agro-ecological and socio-economic settings.

Key messages

- Systems M&T at different levels needed (i.e., field/herd, farm, community/landscape, sub/national, regional/global) and need to be articulated.
- M&T need to be actor-centered (i.e., farmers, farmer organizations, extensions systems/ departments of agriculture, policymakers, etc.) to support their decision-making under a systems perspective for SI.
- M&T (and data collection protocols) will need to be developed/adapted to fit specific contexts and to embrace the different impact areas of One CGIAR
- Coordination needed with other initiatives and with One CGIAR MELIA to fetch synergies and avoid duplication.

Work Package 3: Participatory co-design of MFS with evidence-based, validated SI innovation packages

Presenter: Aymen Frija, ICARDA

Key points

- To focus on participatory design, implementation, critical reflection, and monitoring of approaches and interventions for SI-MFS.
- Assesses demand and refine SI options through data from a network of pilot areas.
- Generate strong evidence that promotes adoption and highlights aspects contributing to update of SI options for MFS.

Key messages

- Data collection under WP3 need to be discussed with MELIA (to avoid redundancies) and WP2 who will be the main users of our datasets. Other issues related to the best way of collecting qualitative data was also discussed.

- Urgent need to discuss the priorities for the implementation: what are the priorities? Seasons which will start shortly? Packaging of innovations, which is key concept for this initiative? Etc.
- Site selection is still not clear in all countries.
- Which participatory platforms/approaches are we going to adopt in each country, and how much space country leaders need to have in this regard (vs centralized approaches for cross-countries comparison)?
- What will be the scope of the piloting, what and how much trials and demonstrations? Knowing that it is always difficult to pilot system packages.

Work Package 4: Advancing and supporting scaling of innovations

Presenter: Fred Kizito, IITA/ABC

Key points

- Strategic engagements for indigenous knowledge
- Supporting the use, digitization, and archiving Information for scaling
- Building resilience for community adaptation
- Scaling user-centric SI for risk informed planning
- Amplify crucial voices for vulnerable groups
- Behavioral change adaptation
- Strengthening local governance, gender-equitable resource rights, and inclusive approaches

Key messages

- Need for joint discussions on how different entities contribute to WP4 at inception meeting.
- Ascertain the key geographies where WP4 will be implemented in close collaboration with the other WPs during inception.
- Discuss with WP5 on how to link up during formulation and design of the digital platform.

Work Package 5: Capacity building for MFS design and analyses

Presenter: An Notenbaert, ABC

Key points

- Capacity development for MFS design and analysis
- Capacity development for MFS design, analysis, and scaling?
- Builds capacities of CGIAR and other researchers, governments (local and national), donors, farmers, and local partners (NGOs, private sector).

Key messages

- Capacity assessments need to include assessment of gender capacity
- Interlinkages with other WPs need to be discussed in more detail.
 - Example: “Partnerships and networks” – listed as an output in WP5, but core to WP3 and WP4.
 - Example: WP4 plans a digitized platform linking to the Regional Scaling Hubs with training modules.
 - Capacity development in general vs. capacity development specifically focused on “systems approach”.

Unpacking the cross-cutting work streams

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment (MELIA)

Presenter: Hope Webber, IITA

Key points

- Contribute to measuring the initiative’s impacts.
- Increase the initiative’s capacity to track the progress of its outputs and outcomes as stated in the results framework.
- Increase the effectiveness accountability and reporting of the initiative to One CGIAR and donors in collaboration with One CGIAR System (Portfolio Performance Management Unit).
- Contribute to managing midterm reviews and final evaluation in collaboration with the One CGIAR Evaluation Advisory Service.
- Contribute to supporting the initiative to reflect and adapt the full and WPs TOCs based on the results obtained on annual basis.

Linkages with other initiatives

- Asia Mega Delta
- Transforming Agri-food Systems in South Asia
- Transforming Agri-food Systems in West and Central Africa
- Excellence in Agronomy
- Transforming Agri-food Systems in East and Central Africa
- Delivering genetic gain in farmer’s fields
- Portfolio Performance Management Unit
- Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

Gender integration in the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative

Presenter: Gundula Fisher

- Taking it back on how gender was conceptualized in the proposal, challenges like population growth, land pressure, soil degradation, climate change, etc., may deepen existing social inequalities and even create new ones in resource access and labor burden.
- The proposal addressed how can we reach the SDGs 1, 5 and 10, reducing inequalities.
- Gender and social inclusion work in the initiative: How can we understand and address these inequalities.
 - WP 1: Key drivers of change taking account of social inequalities
 - WP 2: Methods and tools to describe, explain and design equitably intensified MFS
 - WP 3: Options to improve equity through gender transformative innovation bundles
 - WP 4: Enabling environment and scaling gender transformative innovation bundles
 - WP 5: Building capacity of all actors in inclusive, participatory, gender-transformative

Communications and Knowledge Management in the Initiative

Presenter: Jonathan Odhong, IITA

Key points

- Enhance the Initiative's external communication (informing and engaging with its stakeholders)
- Contribute to translating initiative outputs into outcomes and getting knowledge into use
- Enrich intra-initiative learning, interaction, and exchange
- Facilitate capturing, organizing, and disseminating research products and outputs; and
- Ensure that the Initiative stays lockstep with the broader One CGIAR goals.

Linkages with other initiatives

- Embedded into the One CGIAR Communication and Outreach task forces that are contributing to the broader strategy.
- Providing support for other One CGIAR Initiatives.
- Vastly experienced global team with background in other bilateral projects that provide a sound springboard for delivering a vibrant CKM for SI-MFS

Scaling readiness

Presenter: Aymen Frija, ICARDA

Quick wins in Nepal

- Baseline data, gender barriers in MFS, refine and identify key innovations. Partners involved: Department of Agriculture and Livestock
- Ethiopia: Three sites (CIMMYT, ICARDA, IWMI, ABC, IITA) forages seeds scaling, feed forage innovation
- Barley and lentil collective action including feed formulation and crowdsourcing tool, community seed production and access, sheep fattening/forages, mechanization.
- Baseline and characterization, curate available data for refined characterization of the system, climate resilient water management, solar irrigation, joint constraint analysis for adoption.

Quick wins in Ghana

- Baseline and characterization, stakeholder consultations, gender barriers, co-refine and prioritize innovations.
- IITA: mulch, cowpea living, vegetables, cereal legume strip cropping, fertilizer management for maize, maize leaf stripping, etc. Already for scaling.

Quick wins in Malawi

- Sites: Dedza, Mblaka, Mangochi, Zomba, Machinga, Nkhotakota.
- Conservation agriculture (CA), double-up legume systems, iron-rich beans, baseline data, interlinkages with WP4, WP5, WP2.

Quick wins in Bangladesh

- Sites: Patwakali, Rangpur, Niphamari
- Baseline data, co-refine and prioritize innovations, rice straw for cattle feeding, testing diff rice-based systems and forage crops, manure management (promising but maybe not ready) cattle fattening feed systems, feeding maize as forage for livestock feed.

Quick wins in Laos

- Sites: Northern/southern Laos (specific sites to be selected)
- Tools development for selecting agroforestry species, baseline data, co-refine and prioritize innovations
- Forages integration in different systems, seed systems, Linkage with CIAT Cassava Program, maize systems, linkages with WP5, WP2, gender

A look into Work Package interlinkages

Presenter: Santiago Lopez, CIMMYT

See: [Presentation by Santiago Lopez](#) and poster on [Interlinked Work Packages of the SI-MFS Initiative](#)

Matters arising from the discussions

1. What is missing or not clear?

- How is the work on the ground actually happening? Am I setting my own deliverables that feed in the overall WP or initiative deliverables? Or are we working together/teamwork? But who is in which team?
- Who reports to whom?
- Who is accountable?
- Who is responsible?
- Baseline in MELIA
- Chronology
- Who will implement WP3 and WP4?
- Cross-cutting issues
- Linkage between the WPs 1, 2 and 3 still not clear
- Value chain approach missed
- Site coordination is needed
- The linkage between WPs
- Sequence and dependance activities within WP
- Country coordination is missing

2. How do we make it happen?

- Determine the linkage at the start and review them regularly
- Country level planning
- People skills mapping
- Sub-regional hubs
- Review if these plans are working (internal DEED)
- Avoid silos between WPs
- Regular update meeting
- Structured discussion across the WP
- Move from co-development of methods and tools to understand tradeoffs and synergy

3. Any specific partnership needed to ensure such interlinkage?

- Stakeholders mapping needed.
- Strategic partnership with a local authority.
- Need detail work plan and timelines, tasks allocated to people for each WP.
- Intra-initiative communications need to ensure how the outputs link to other WPs.
- Bring on board business models that allow for identifying market partnerships and opportunity that create demand for SI-MFS. E.g., IWMI work in Ghana on private sector.

- Creates incentives for the social-technical innovation bundles as a result of markets.

Day Two: Planning for implementation

Recap and observations from day one

Presenters: Mateete Bekunda (IITA) and Gerrie van de Ven (WUR)

See: [Feedback presentation by Professors Gerrie Van de Ven and Mateete Bekunda](#)

Key points

- Challenges: a three-year program is too short to realize all the proposed changes/innovations in farming practice. Need to link with achievement from previous programs e.g., Africa RISING, CSISA and SIMLESA.
- Concerns: overlap between Work Packages and who will manage the cooperation which WP is driving the system and what/is there chronology in WP implementation?
- Suggestions: develop case studies to address the process and to unpack the specifics of the mix crop-livestock systems.
 - Need to simplify messaging/concept of the initiative to make it understandable to outsiders.

Work Package-based group discussions

See: [Background/introductory presentation by Fred Kizito](#)

Key points

- To discuss as a team what the respective contributions from each entity are for each Work Package.
- Identify contributions from the cross-cutting work streams to the work packages and what is the WP contribution to the cross-cutting work streams?
- Propose sites where work will be done and collaborating partners.
- Identify interlinkages that the proposed activity has to other Work Packages.

Comments from Kizito's presentation

- How will the initiative link with others working in similar sites?
- Need to ensure sustainability of interventions and the question of M&E for the initiative not clearly presented.
- Response: SI will be based on the five domains of sustainable intensification.
- Question on how to address integration across centers, initiatives, and countries.
- Can invoice between centers if it is below USD100K.

Outputs and points for note from the Work Package-based group discussions

Filled templates from the group discussion by the Work Packages

- [Work Package 1](#)
- Work Package 2
- [Work Package 3](#)
- [Work Package 4](#)
- [Work Package 5](#)

Highlights for Work Package 1

- Thinking on how to coordinate on outputs and focal points across countries and linking with other Work Packages.

Highlights for Work Package 2

- The level of tools and methods applied are assessed well. We have 32 of them, where, and at what scale they have been implemented.
- Methods at all scales are available
- Most related to mixed farming systems so they go beyond the farm level.
- A lot of farm criteria etc.
- Toolbox to be filled and shared.

Highlights for Work Package 3

- Quick wins in Ethiopia: Communication on scaling approach – seed production for forages, cereals, and legumes.
- Quick wins in Malawi: Conservation agriculture, doubled-up legume systems, iron-rich beans, Site characterization baseline, stakeholder's characterization.

Questions and comments for WP3

- Comprehensive and interesting ideas collected.
- Opportunities for bundling disciplines.
- What about the holistic approach to bring in social sciences to bundle in a social technical manner as promised in proposal.
- The existing entry points e.g., work in Ghana and Malawi on social technical bundling should be capitalized on and as gender team seek out opportunities in each country for technical bundles. But we cannot do this with all the technical innovations displayed. Need to work in an interdisciplinary team.
- Interdisciplinary work to be strengthened in the WP3. To be done and coordinate across centers. Gender team to/should review plan to see where weaknesses are.
- Within each country different countries involved. Identifying thematic leader (institute) in each country needs further consideration

Highlights for Work Package 4

- Reworked the activities
- Focused on getting agreement on activities for clarity. Is linked to WP1.
- Comms: Digital platform

Highlights for Work Package 5

- Training manuals? Output 4
- Comms: Capacity development needs/strengthening

Country-based group discussions

See: [Background/introductory presentation by Santiago Lopez-Ridaura](#)

Outputs and points for note from the country-based group discussions

Filled templates by each country-based discussion group on the decisions reached.

- [Output from Malawi discussions](#)
- [Outputs from Ghana discussions](#)
- Outputs from Ethiopia discussions
- [Outputs from Nepal discussions](#)
- [Outputs from Lao discussions](#)
- [Outputs from Bangladesh discussions](#)

Highlights for Ethiopia

Sites: Lemo, Jimma and North showa

- Innovations: existing ones from Africa RISING to be scaled, engage stakeholders
- Partners: stakeholder launch/engagement planned for July
- Can offer legacy data from projects e.g., Africa RISING to WP2 in the next 12-18 months
- Comms needs could be data curation and systems of tracking changes in MFS
- Capacity development needs: build knowledge of systems, practical and implementation needs on how to scale seed systems and inputs recommendations. E-learning modules to be build. More expertise in participatory engagement methods and strengthen capacity of partners/actors involved in scaling innovations. Partner with local universities.

Highlights for Bangladesh

Sites: Two sites in north and south chosen based on potential of impact and existing initiatives.

Partners: national and regional partners

- Activities: rice straw for cattle feeding, testing rice-based systems and forage crops, cattle fattening feed system
- Quick wins: include rice and maize stover management, testing of different rice-based cropping systems, cattle feeding systems.

Highlights for Nepal

Sites: Surkhet, Jumla, Lamjung

- Potential innovation: cover multiple water use systems, small-scale mechanization, green fodder production, collective farming/gender transformative farming systems (bundling) etc.

- Main packages will be WP2, WP3 and WP4.
- Partners: Government partners on agriculture and livestock, Department of Water Resources and Irrigation (DWRI), Prime Minister Agriculture Modernization Program (PMAMP), NGOs.

Highlights for Laos

- Focus on poultry and livestock systems, in two provinces each in the north and south.
- Entities: ABC-forages, linking with the cassava program and Bioversity; IWMI, to be confirmed, leading agroecology work. CIMMYT looking at maize systems in northern region.
- Linkages: with agroecology, cross-learning with southeast Asia region (SAPLING and Nature+), cassava agroforestry, feed also. Also, rational input use.
- Partners: national partners, NGOs, research institutions, private and academic institutions.
- Capacity development needs: linking with WP5 on capacity needs assessment, target actors to involve in capacity development activities.
- Next month: a coordinated intro of CGIAR portfolio to the government.

Highlights for Malawi

Sites: Dedza, Mbalaka, Zomba etc, sites where Africa Rising has worked in. Most of the sites do not have livestock. But Mchinji and Mzimba chosen because they have livestock. Others chosen because of ongoing regional initiatives.

- Potential innovations: Mainly informed by work done AR: CA, doubled-up legumes, and other validated technologies. Others: ruminants, mechanization.
- Partners: NGOs, universities (LUANAR etc) and collaboration with other initiatives.

Highlights for Ghana

Sites: Wa - West, Savelugu, Nadowli, Bongo, Kasena-Nankana, Tolon, Kumbungu

- Activities: Baseline characterization and stakeholder consultations, cowpea living mulch, fertilizer management in maize, solar irrigation for vegetable production
- Partners: Universities, Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), DDA, National Agricultural Research (NARS), Savanna Agriculture Research Institute (CSIR), NGOs, farmers

Participant views about loose ends after work package-based and country-based group discussions

- Is understanding improved?
 - No. Some things are clear, e.g., what and where we want to work. The how remains a big gap in the detailed implementation also in terms of the timelines and integration between Work Packages is weak or non-existent.
 - It is a good beginning, but confusion remains. Suggests that Work Package leads to work with country teams to decide on the details and see if can bring country directors on board.
- The timeline for activity implementation is still not clear. The work plans are still not in linear manner, not clear how bundling will be done, it is siloed at the moment.

- Social innovations need common understanding between entities and Work Packages. Linkages between these also need further consideration to make them work on the ground. Prioritization of issues in countries is needed.
- What do we mean by systems thinking and how can we help the different people in the room better prioritize what to focus on? A key capacity development need. Can those who better understand the term or have done it before helping the others?
- How do demands between different WPs work? The chronology is also important on how to get things on the ground and do it right.
- Increasingly better understanding of the initiative and how to work with partners. There is better synergy between WPs. But we tend to not be results framework oriented. We are not perhaps looking at the targets and need to think about that. How do we better complement with each other?

Day Three: Looking forward into Initiative implementation

Recap and observations from day two

Presenters: Jacques Wery (L'Institut Agro) and Michael Apamaku (Independent Consultant)

See: [Feedback presentation by Jacques Wery and Michael Apamaku](#)

Key points

The initiative can make significant contribution to:

- SI of MFS
- Systemic approaches for the analysis and design of Agricultural Systems at farm and landscape level
- At local level (case studies) and global (country, Global South)
- Scope for clearly defining criteria to determine successfulness of the SI of MFS
- What are the challenges and constraints to SI-MFS? Could these be surveyed?
- Access to technologies for enhanced production
- Market information and access Land tenure systems, etc.

Is there scope to develop a strategy to guide implementation of SI-MFS?

- Three-year is short for SI-MF initiative.
- Linking the results framework with the market economic indicators enables the scientist to link the drivers, development of the tools, determination of the pathways, engagement of policymakers, etc.
- There is scope for an expanded role for livestock within SI-MFS
- With higher level of integration of livestock, there are opportunities to link SI with the public health research agenda.
- A constraint to implement SI-MFS is land tenure systems
- How may we tap into indigenous knowledge as a basis to reinforce learning, influence policy, and maximize impact of SI of MFS?
- The predominant strategy vs. climate change is adaptation; can we expand the SI-MFS portfolio of climate-smart strategies to encompass activities in climate mitigation?
- Key donors are supportive.
- Need to show that systems research is operational to deliver in a three years' time
- The only initiative with a WP dedicated to systems M&T and a WP dedicated to capacity development in agricultural systems transformative pathways.
- Risks of "Systems CRP syndrome" is high but opportunities for success are there if some aspects are considered from the beginning.

- An attempt to bring back systems thinking and systems design into the One CGIAR Agenda
- Applied to the most complex systems in agriculture (MFS in family farming).
- The project is in itself a complex system : WPs are clear but too many interactions to manage (simplify, prioritize, plan).
- Project, WP and case study management need a system's framework adapted to SI-MFS-DEED-SIAF defined, shared and fine-tuned to each case study.
- With integration of all sustainability dimensions, entry points (component innovations), social/gender components and M&T.
- Cannot wait for it to start stakeholders' engagement in case studies but systems framework needed for data collection, M&T selection, and use/users.
- Need enough skills and resources dedicated to operationalization of systems approaches in the project.

Fishbowl discussion: Linkages between Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative with other One CGIAR Initiatives



Fishbowl session in progress. Photo credit: Apollo Habtamu/ILRI.

What synergy and linkage do you see for the SI-MFS and other initiatives?

- In Laos there is potential linkage with SAPLING, the cassava program with government
- In India great linkage can be made with nexus gain projects
- In Malawi we have strong support for SI-MFS and scaling
- Linkage and collaborations can be made with Nature+
- Inter-linkage between WP3 and WP4

What possible collaboration and challenges do you see?

- In Ethiopia we can collaborate with ILRI in livestock initiatives such as SAPLING
- Integration can be one of the major challenges. It would be good if we come up with integration model.
- In terms of data and scaling we have resources from existing ground, but we need to answer how we do it and who should do it.
- Excellence in agronomy is an area we need to work in SI-MFS.
- Budget shortage can hinder project success in some case.
- Time constraints .

What practical solutions can be made?

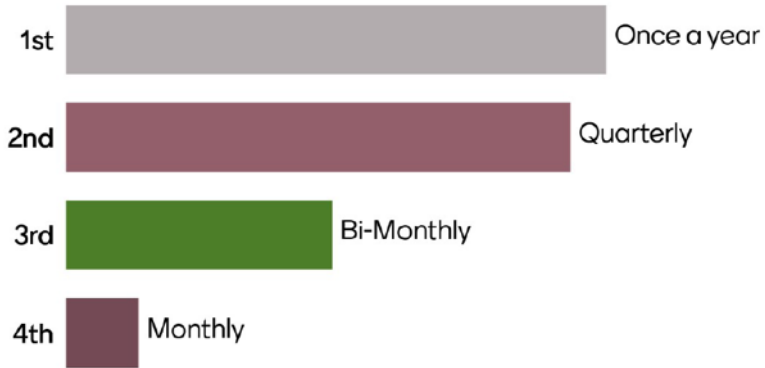
- We need to populate a metrics of countries, technology, initiatives etc. kind of exercise to help come up with pathway for integration.
- Create marketplace for science.
- Design a knowledge management that can support the integration for the initiatives.

Our way of working in the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative: Results of a Menti poll on various operational aspects of the initiative

How would you rate the overall Inception meeting in relation to understanding the work packages of the Initiative?



We propose period meetings for the entire team for SI-MFS, how often would you want us to meet as a global team?



Could you please suggest any individuals or partners who would be interested in this initiative? Please share their contact?

ATA	WFP	CIRAD Williams Dare
CRS	Kathryn Desschmark of Wageningen	N/A
No idea	GIZ	ICAR-Indian Institute of Farming Systems Research, Modipuram, India/CRISAT
GIZ	Total KandCare Malawi, trentbunderson@tlcm.com	Cirad - umr selmet
ICAR Indian Institute of Farming Sys Reseach	Many NGOs	USAID
ARARI, SARI	FAO	ATI

In Ethiopia, ATA, EIAR, Regional Research Institutes	ICRISAT	IFAD
International Development Partners	ACIAR	BioHub-Zimbabwe
Andrew Mason, AgCoTech Australia	BIRRI, BARI, BWMRI, DAE	No idea
Local academic institutions (e.g. regional universities in Ethiopia)	agmip@columbia.edu	Access Agriculture
AfDB	RCMRD SERVIR East & South Africa	Far network
Private Seed Sector e.g. Nandi/Tropical Seeds	Digital green Kebede Ayalewkebede@digitalgreen.org	andrewmasonau@gmail.com
ARARI	BARC, Bangladesh	Cirad/inra
ADB	Machinga ADD Malawi. Mphatso Gama	Association of Church Based NGOs, Tamale, Ghana
SARI, UDS	IFDC	AFD
Digital Earth Africa	kebede@digitalgreen.org	Access Agriculture
SSPING	TNC	Organized private sector
Open Geohub	Seed producers	Local Media
ATA, Universities, Farm Radio International, USAID, AICCRA, IFAD, Livestock Development Institute	Yes	Maybe
ACDEP	National partners	CSOs

Next steps and way forward

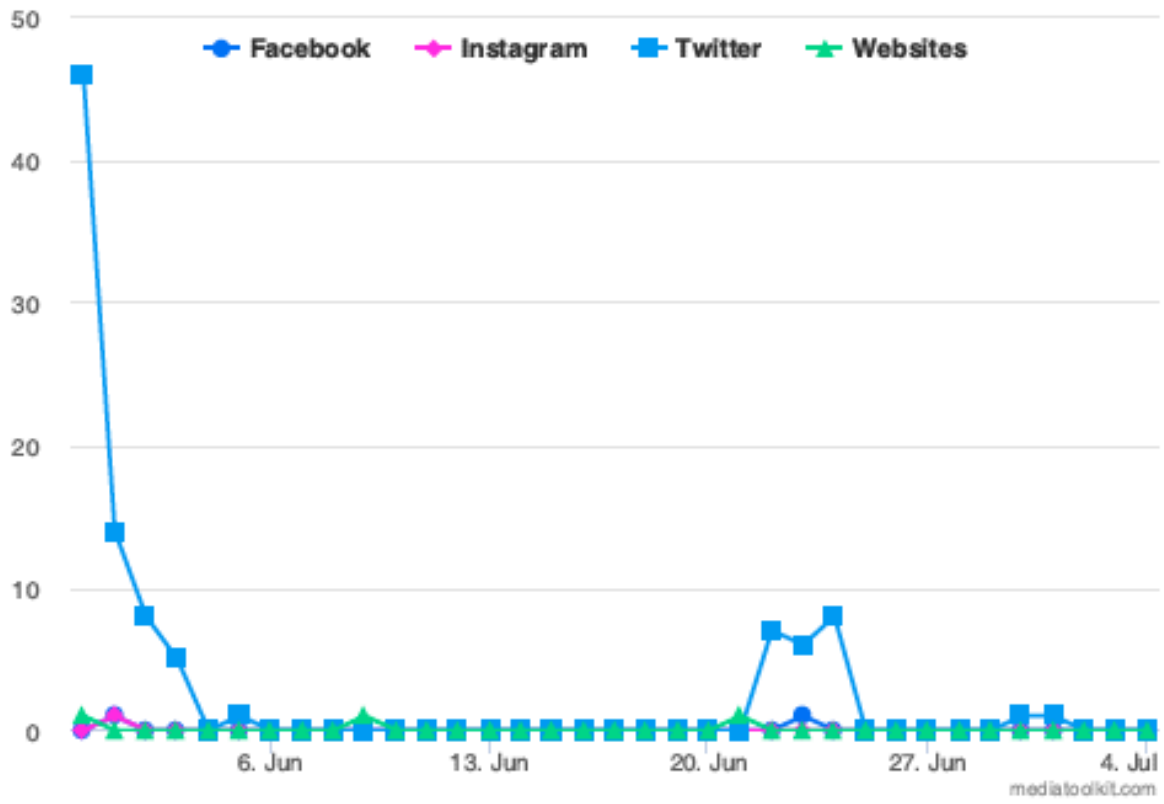
Fred Kizito gave [a presentation](#) highlighting the following next steps with regards to the implementation of the Initiative.

- Post the inception meeting, the initiative will focus on the following approaches to how it will work: (i) immediate refining of content through team discussions engagement of end users, (ii) data will be collected from multiple sources to generate raw or primary data sets and when not available secondary data will be sought, (iii) partnerships will continue to be engaged and empowered, (iv) data/information is analyzed using novel techniques and tools to produce readily interpreted outputs that can be easily understood by all our users, (v) participatory, interactive systems or methodologies that allow decision makers to ask the question “What if?”. Understanding and learning of how consequences and impact occurs is crucial.
- Key dates/milestone points for the initiative are as follows:
 - June 15: Target to finalize Gantt charts for each WP.
 - June 15: Country focal points for the initiative to finalize country matrix table developed by partners.
 - 20 June: Consolidated feedback from the Gantt chart and country matrix shared with the Initiative team
 - 30 June: Consolidated report with action points on next steps shared with the SI-MFS team
 - July – August: In-country SI-MFS launches across Africa and Asia to take place.
 - July 2022 onwards: Ongoing Initiative activities to be coordinated by country focal points in collaboration with WP leaders. There will be periodic check-in meetings in between.
 - October–November 2022: Hold a science fair on SI-MFS. This will be an annual meeting where partners will share results of work conducted. Potentially follow up on key elements to consider for 2023 planning.
 - December 2022: Produce an annual report on delivery of promised outputs.

Closing remarks

Dr. Chilot Yirga, Deputy Director-General of the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, closed the event and expressed the Ethiopian government’s commitment to the Initiative whose integrated technologies, he said, “would boost agricultural productivity and sustainable use of natural resources in the country.” Dr. Yirga also noted that the goals of the initiative match well with those set out by the Ministry of Agriculture, which is also keen on sustainable intensification of the country’s mixed farming systems and have a common goal of enhancing productivity while keeping the integrity of natural resources.

Mentions over time by source



Select photos from the meeting

All hi-res photos from the event are available and downloadable at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqizSuLk>



Participants engaged in various group discussions during the meeting. Photo credits: Apollo Habtamu/ILRI.



Aymen Frija, ICARDA (left) and Fred Kizito, IITA/ABC (right) facilitating various sessions during the meeting. Photo credit: Apollo Habtamu/ILRI.



Chilot Yirga, Deputy Director-General EIAR, Santiago Lopez-Ridaura, Initiative Co-lead, and Fred Kizito, Initiative Lead, planting trees at the ILRI Addis Ababa Campus to mark the inception of the Sustainable Intensification of Mixed Farming Systems Initiative. Photo credits: Apollo Habtamu/ILRI.



Participants unwind and have fun during a cocktail hosted on the final day of the meeting. Photo credit: Kathy Lopez/IITA.

END.