

CPWF-BFP-Karkheh Impact Pathway Workshop Report

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Main Findings

The discussion during the workshop suggested that there is an urgent need for better coordination and project follow up amongst the projects in the basin. The group recommended that the Basin Coordinator in conjunction with the Project Focal Leader⁵, take on a greater leadership and facilitation role. Many times people mentioned the need for more meetings within and between projects. The projects commonly face difficult institutional and scaling up challenges that are best tackled commonly.

There was a much greater degree of discussion between the Karkheh projects than encountered in the Volta or Mekong Basin workshops. This reflects that Karkheh is a smaller basin and the projects have a much higher degree of interdependency. Although this brings its own challenges it also means that CPWF research in the Karkheh Basin is more likely to achieve high-level integration. The fact that a group made up of one person from each project was able to develop a problem tree for the whole basin bears testimony to the will and potential for good integration.

Introduction

On 1st October 2005 Phase 1 of the *CPWF Impact Assessment Project (IA Project)* began. It is a part of the Basin Focal Project (BFP) Initiative and will work in the Volta, Mekong and Karkheh basins. Phase 2 will work in the remaining basins. The project is lead by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT – Spanish Acronym).

The IA project focuses on carrying out ex-ante (future) impact assessment for the Challenge Program on Water and Food (CPWF) projects in the basins. The basin-specific focal projects (Volta, Mekong, Karkheh and São Francisco) focus on more fundamental questions about the extent to which water can influence livelihoods and poverty, and as such are carrying out a different sort of ex-ante impact assessment.

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The IA Project aims to help the CPWF gain a better appreciation of the existing and potential impact of research on water use in agriculture to justify current and future funding. At the same time the IA project aims to help CPWF projects gain a better understanding of how and what impact they hope to attain, and to pilot a monitoring and evaluation approach that both fosters and tracks progress towards achieving impact.

The IA project has three components:

- 1) Ex-ante impact assessment of CPWF projects based on the construction of impact pathways;
- 2) Analysis of the potential extrapolation domain (potential for scaling out and scaling up) of selected project outputs;
- 3) Scenario analysis that extrapolates the impact of selected high-potential research outputs to the global level.

The workshop deliverables are:

1. Inputs for developing the project impact pathways models, including the construction of project problem trees, timelines, vision of success, and network maps;
2. Agreement on next steps required to produce the project impact pathways models and impact narratives.

After the workshop the IA Project will work with the project staff to develop:

1. Project impact pathways models and impact narratives (within 4 months).
2. Project ex-ante impact assessment based on quantifying the impact pathways models (by end of year).

Project impact pathways are: (i) the causal chain of events and outcomes that link outputs to the goal; *and* (ii) A network map that shows the relationships between project implementing organizations, boundary partners and beneficiaries that are necessary to achieve the goal. After the workshop, the IA project will work with the individual projects to develop **project impact narratives**. A project impact narrative is a document that describes the project's rationale. It describes the outputs, outcomes, assumptions, links and relationships shown in the project impact pathway. It weaves together the chain of outcomes with the evolution of the partner relationships (shown in the network maps developed as part of the impact pathway). It is quantified and substantiated by literature and expert opinion as far as possible.

The Karkheh Basin Workshop

In preparation for the workshop, we sent each project a problem tree derived by us from their respective project documents. Between two to six participants attended from each project (see Participants List, Annex 1). The participants are shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Workshop Participants

The structure of the workshop followed the Road Map shown in Figure 2.

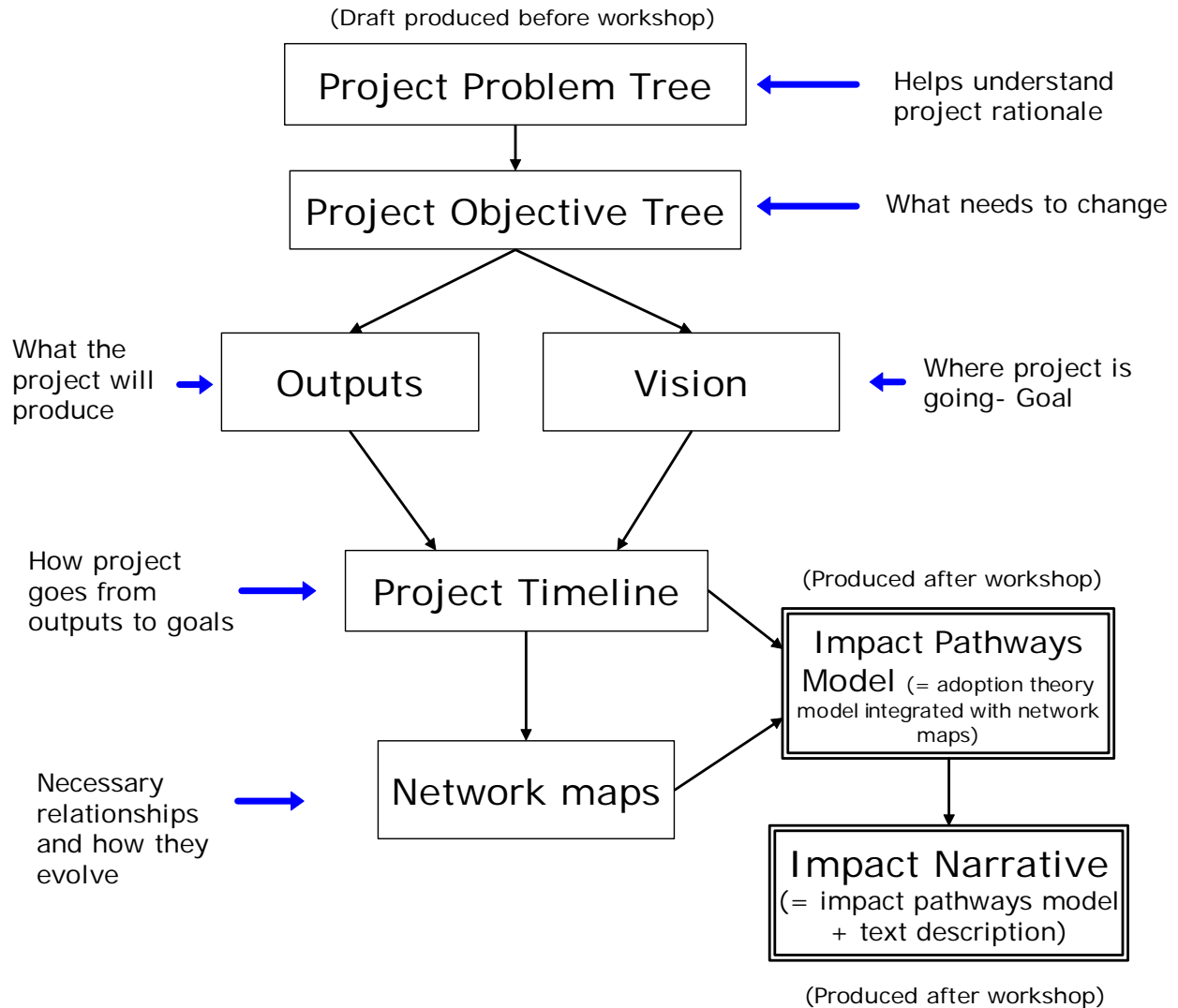


Figure 2: Workshop and Process Road Map

Participants began by modifying their problem trees (sent to them before the workshop) and then presented them in plenary (Figure 3 as an example).

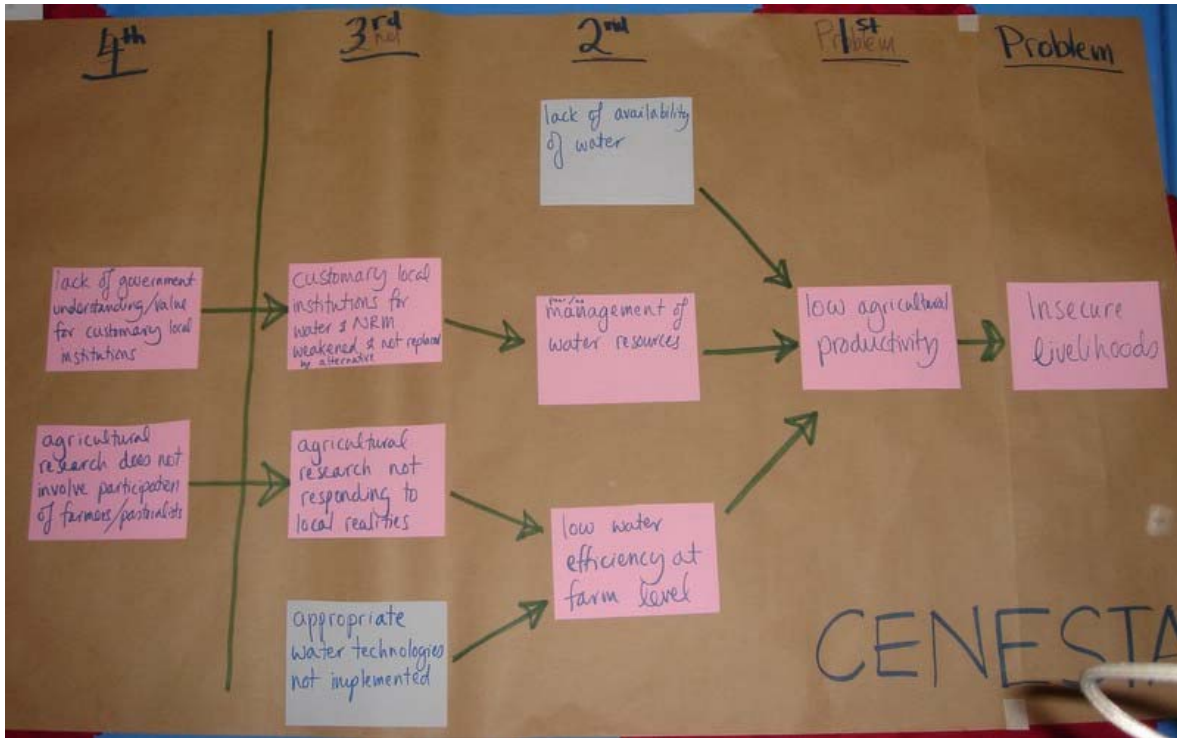


Figure 3: CENESTA’s problem tree drawn in the Workshop

Participants then converted their problem trees into objective trees by converting the problems into outcomes that solve the problems (Figure 4 as an example).

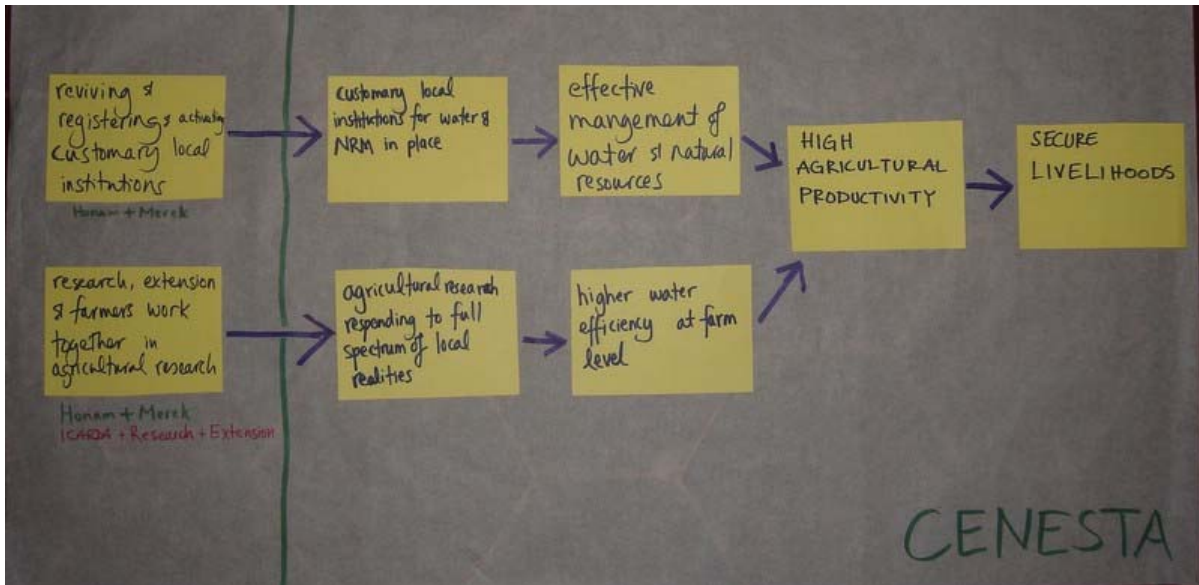


Figure 4: CENESTA’s objective tree

One person from each project worked to generate a problem tree for the whole basin (see Figure 5).



Figure 5: Problem tree for the CPWF research projects in the Karkheh basin (Water Productivity, Livelihood Resilience, CENESTA and Basin Focal Project)

Participants then listed their project objectives followed by a visioning exercise (See Box 1) based on the following:

“You wake up two years after the end of your project. Your project has been a success and is well on its way to achieving its goal. Describe what this success looks like:

- What is happening differently now?
- Who is doing what differently?
- What have been the changes in the lives of the people using the project outputs, and who they interact with?
- How are project outputs scaling out and scaling up?”

Box 1: Example of a project vision – Livelihood Resilience

Overall Vision: What is happening differently now?

“Iran agencies practise integrated and participatory strategies to sustainable manage and develop dry mountain watersheds”.

Who is doing what differently?

Farmers (Merek & Honam):

- Improved capacity to articulate needs
- Increased adaptive capacity (adoption of alternative options, capacity to experiment with new ideas)

Research (Provinces and Tehran):

- Increased experience with participatory approaches
- Better understanding of livelihoods and ecosystem interactions in dry mountains

Extension (Provinces):

- Increased capacity to support farmer experimentation and provide market info
- More demand driven extension

Executive sector (Provinces and Tehran):

- Making more use of integrated watershed principles for implementing watershed management plans.

Policy makers & planners:

- More receptive for holistic planning approaches for dry catchments
- Agricultural policy in Iran has more consideration for agricultural diversification options

All:

- More intense and productive interactions F-R-Ext-Exec sector

What have been the changes in the lives of the people using the project outputs, and whom they interact with?

- Increased livelihood resilience to cope with stresses.
- Farmer community-based organisations more able to interact with service providers.

How are project outputs disseminating?

- Extension, Farmer-to-Farmer extension, Implementation by the Executive Sector, Visitors to Karkheh picking up new ideas

What political support is nurturing this spread? How did that happen?

- Karkheh network (?)
- , Individual champions in different agencies.

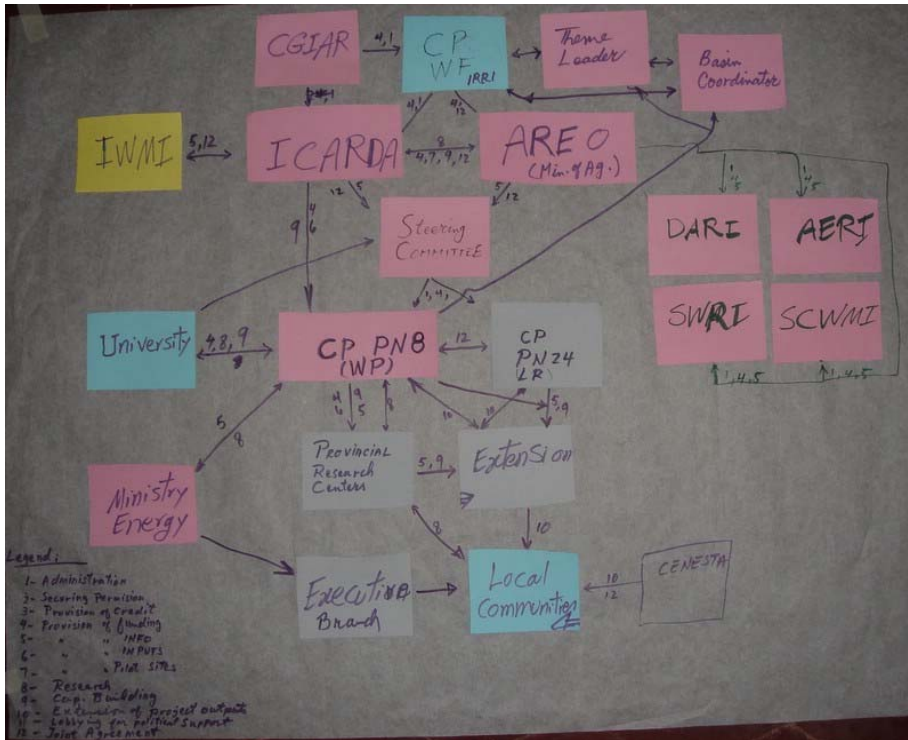
After presenting the project visions in plenary, the participants went on to develop a timeline of events and outcomes that explains what has to happen to achieve their visions (Figure 5).



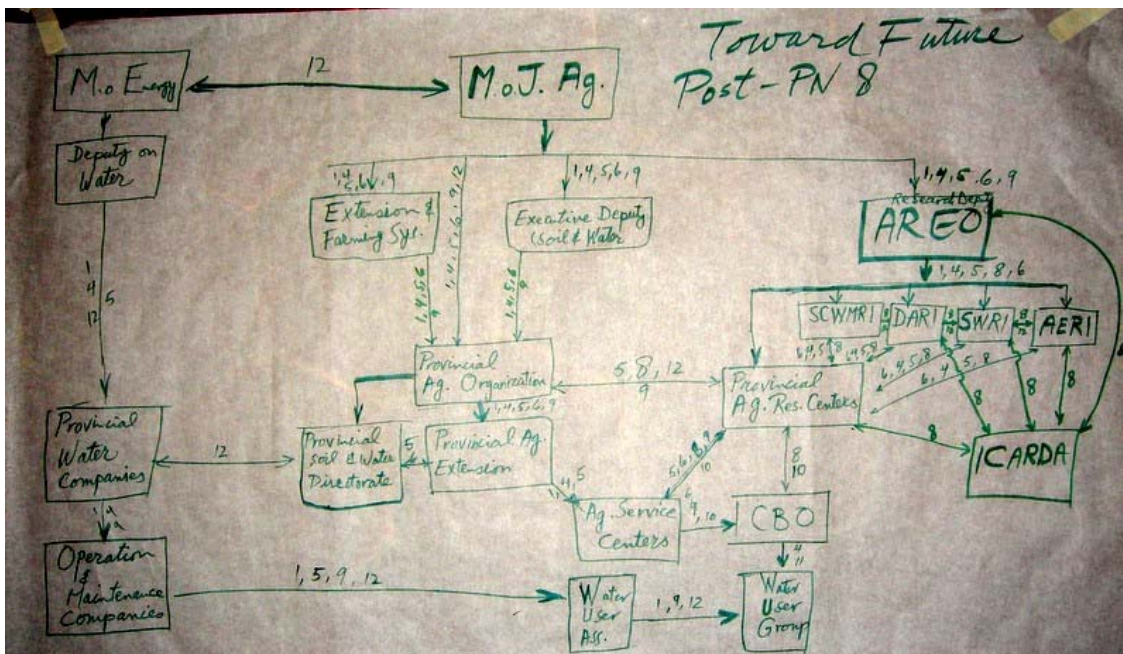
Figure 6: Example of a Project Timeline – Livelihood Resilience

The project outputs, vision and timeline are input into the development of an impact pathways model.

The second part of the workshop consisted of constructing network maps that show the evolution of partnerships necessary for a project to move along its timeline, and achieve its goal (vision). We asked participants to construct two network maps, one for the present and one for 2 years after the end of their respective project (See Figure 6). It is this latter network that will be achieving the respective project’s impact through scaling-out and scaling-up of project outcomes. **Scaling-out** is the spread of a project outcomes (i.e., changes such as the use of a new technology, a new strategy, etc.) from farmer to farmer, community to community, within the same stakeholder groups. **Scaling-up** is an institutional expansion, based largely on first-hand experience, word-of-mouth and positive feed back, from adopters and their grassroots organizations to policy makers, donors, development institutions, and the other stakeholders key to building a more enabling environment for scaling-out process. In other words, scaling-up is the process by which policies, norms, mental models, etc., change in such a way as to support a scaling-out (adoption) process.



(i) Now



(ii) Future

Figure 7: Example of “now” and “future” network maps – Water Productivity

We asked participants to identify the ultimate beneficiaries and prioritize the links to them as a way of identifying their project's key scaling out pathways. In the same way we asked them to identify the stakeholders that could most affect the environment for the spread of their project outputs, and prioritize those links, as a way of identifying their project's key scaling up pathways.

We also asked participants to fully describe their network maps as matrices. We will enter this information into UCINET, a program for drawing and analyzing networks. This will allow further analysis during the write up of the impact narratives.

Workshop Evaluation and Feedback

What was good – workshop in general

- Would have been more useful to have the workshop at the beginning of the project (x2).
- Excellent facilitation (x2)
- Good to have projects talk together (finally)
- Productive discussion
- The IP approach is useful for providing a holistic overview of what the projects are doing.
- It helps to develop a common approach at basin level.
- It helps to see relationships between projects.
- It is also useful for identifying project overlaps and gaps.
- Appreciated the ability to meet with other projects, and the social interaction.
- The atmosphere was good; the workshop provides a space to reflect.

What was good – network mapping

- Visualization is worth a 1000 words
- Helps explain how institutions work together
- Useful to prepare future maps
- Useful to understand institutional complexity
- Would be useful to map relationships earlier in the project
- Identifies the “power” nodes
- Useful for basin coordinator
- The future maps help identify the actors important for the sustainability
- Hard to see the critical pathways in the maps

What to change for next time

- Not necessary to do both problem and objective trees.
- Give more practical examples
- Time for the workshop is too short
- The exercises are good but the time given to them is too short

Next Steps

At the end of the workshop individual projects developed and shared their individual workplans, based on the issues that had emerged during the workshop. These are listed in Annex 2. During discussion in the workshop other action points emerged:

Networking

- The maps drawn are how the people at the workshop see them. They need to be checked more widely.
- The maps need to be living documents that are regularly updated to help with the ongoing assessment of relationships
- Maps can and should be draw at various scales, for example, between individual people, between departments in organizations, and between organizations.
- There needs to be a regular reality check on the direction of the arrows, and whether the relationships described actually exist.
- Would be useful to map relationships between people in the projects so new people can understand how the project is working.

Project and Basin Coordination:

- Develop terms of reference for projects and the basin as a whole.
- There is a need for more facilitated meetings and discussion.
- The workshop has helped the Resilience Project realize the need to more multi-disciplinary project meetings such as this one.
- There is a need for more dialogue between the KRB projects.
- The IP workshop was useful, but more discussion is needed (within and between projects).
- **The group recommended that the Basin Coordinator play a greater role in facilitating liaison** (between project and key government agencies, and among the Karkheh projects).
- Need for joint scaling up strategy for the basin
- CENESTA and BFP will collaborate on poverty mapping and basin trajectories

Development of impact pathways and narratives:

The IA project will process the workshop materials (photos were taken of all the outputs corresponding to the boxes in Figure 2) and write the first draft of an impact narrative for each project within four months. We will then work with the respective projects to produce a final product or products, taking into account both the needs of the individual projects and the CP Secretariat by the end of the year.

Conclusions

The discussion during the workshop suggested that there is an urgent need for better coordination and project follow up amongst the projects in the basin. The group recommended that the Basin Coordinator in conjunction with the Project Focal Leader, take on a greater leadership and facilitation role. Many times people mentioned the need for more meetings within and between projects. The projects commonly face difficult institutional and scaling up challenges that are best tackled commonly.

There was a much greater degree of discussion between the Karkheh projects than encountered in the Volta or Mekong Basin workshops. This reflects that Karkheh is a smaller basin and the projects have a much higher degree of interdependency. Although this brings its own challenges it also means that CPWF research in the Karkheh Basin is more likely to achieve high-level integration. The fact that a group made up of one person from each project was able to develop a problem tree for the whole basin bears testimony to the will and potential for good integration.

Annex 1: Participant List

Name	Project	Role	Organization	E-mail address
Maryam Rahmanran	Up/out-scaling strategies in Karkheh	Project Manager	CENESTA (NGO)	maryam@cenesta.org
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Keyomurs Noori	PN 24-Livelihood Resilience	Principal Investigator	Office of Eco. Res., AREO ¹	k_noori@yahoo.com
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Hamid Siadat	PN 8- Water Productivity	CP Karkheh Basin Facilitator	ICARDA	h.siadat@cgiar.org ; hamidsiadat@yahoo.com
Boru Douthwaite	BFP-Impact Assessment Proj	Workshop Facilitator	CIAT ⁶	b.douthwaite@cgiar.org
Pamela George	CP Secretariat	CP Manager	CPWF ⁷ , IWMI	p.george@cgiar.org

1. Agricultural Research and Education Organization
2. Int'l Center for Agricultural Research in Dry-Land Areas
3. Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Research Institute
4. Int'l Water Management Institute
5. Agricultural Engineering Research Institute
6. International Center for Tropical Agriculture
7. Challenge Program on Water and Food

Annex 2: Action Plans as a result of the Workshop

Up/Out-scaling Strategies in Karkheh - CENESTA

1. Review our outputs from the workshop and fill in any gaps; examine network maps of other projects to identify linkages and check that there are no misunderstandings in roles; revise our network maps to include CP Karkheh project structure; add soil and water department of Ministry to the network map; add Ministry of Energy to the network map to map relationship between CBO federations at catchment level to the Ministry of Energy;
2. Use workshop outputs to re-define project activities and timeline; send to CP (Pamela) for approval
3. Begin the mapping of the government structures and decision-making as soon as possible.
4. Consult with other partners from other Karkheh projects (including at the provincial level) to find best ways to better involve the following organizations:
 - a. Management and Planning Organization (MPO)
 - b. Extension
 - c. Ministry of Jihad-e Agriculture at provincial level

PN 24- Livelihood Resilience

ACTION	RESP	WHEN?
1. Extension involvement: SC, PTC, PTD, Provincial coordination + funds.	Francis & PC	ASAP
2. Community perspective network (incl. LLH survey & CENESTA).	Nouri	Sept
3. Annual Planning Workshop: Revisiting the IP report on annual basis, balance process/disc.	PC, PL	2007
4. Provincial coordination should get teeth, budget, action and active leadership.	PC, SC	ASAP
5. Develop strategy for inter-scale interaction at Karkheh basin (esp with BFP and WP).	PL's	Sep
6. PI economics assigned.	Francis	ASAP
7. Get Karkheh office (FRWO province) back on board.	Mir	Sep
8. Linkage with Nepal CP project (Drubha – IWMI Nepal) to exchange experience with institutional networks.	Francis	Sep
9. Get the PTD going at the communities!	Juergen, Heydarian, CENESTA	July
10. Get buy in of AREO for action research approach.	Francis + participants	30 May

PN 8- Water Productivity

1. Disseminate the results of the workshop to other colleagues who were not present here.
2. Persuade other colleagues to carry out similar exercises on their own or in small groups to become familiar with Impact Pathway concept methodology.
3. Strengthen the relations with those organizations that have greater role in helping the project achieve its goals. These include provincial water authorities (companies), agricultural service centres and CENESTA.
4. Encourage the other KRB projects to have more project meetings about achievements and problems.