

IPM CRSP Program Advisory Board Meeting
June 15, 2006
Day 1
Meeting Minutes

Present: Winfrey Clarke, George Norton, Thomas Schwedler, Bob Hedlund, SK De Datta, Don Plucknett, Larry Vaughan, Larry Olsen, John Dooley, Maria Elisa Christie, Robert Kenny, Debbie Francis, Miriam Rich.

Welcoming Remarks

8:30 am. SK opens the meeting by welcoming everyone and having everyone introduce themselves.

First item of business: elect another member to the board. SK asks Winfrey to chair the board meeting.

The move is seconded by Tom and Larry Olsen.

SK reads welcoming remarks.

Don Plucknett: New IPM CRSP: Improving Lives Worldwide

Don Plucknett presents: *The New IPM CRSP: Improving Lives Worldwide*.

Don describes the regional programs in his presentation.

Copy of presentation will be put on web site.

Discussion: these programs are *regional* in nature, although they may mention a specific country.

Larry Vaughan: The New IPM CRSP: Global Themes

Larry Vaughan presents: *The New IPM CRSP: Global Themes*.

Discussion: question about impact assessment, technology transfer and how programs were evaluated. (Norton:) We learned a lot of lessons in first phase about how to do tech transfer. Combination of partners and methods used that have contributed to our success. Each country is different—it's necessary to figure out who the players are there. How to do testing at village systems level. How do you link to other types of methods—this is something we are looking at. Focus on getting associate awards is important.

Clarke: rationale for associates award—missions didn't know what was going on with the CRSPs in their countries.

SK: Key consideration: will this project create impact?

Larry: We're at a point where all of the proposals had a letter from the missions. The missions didn't have a say in what the priorities were. But it's now a serious communications issue with us. We encourage PIs to cultivate the associate relationship. Our task is to keep pushing that with the PIs. Local people in these countries are very supportive. The mission directors rotate out.

10:15 – 10:45 am: Break.

Robert Kenny: Technology Transfer, No-Cost Extension

Robert Kenny presents: *Technology Transfer, No-Cost Extension*

(Some interrupting discussion:)

Dooley: We need to give our partners some expectation as to how our invoicing works.

Larry: Yes, we're considering doing a separate financial manual. We do need to add something about promptness and our expectations regarding that.

Dooley: This is a very crucial piece.

George Norton: Anticipated Impacts

George Norton presents: *Anticipated Impacts*

Handout: Tomato IPM Farmer Baseline Survey

12:05 – 1:30 Break for lunch

Discussion

Questions re survey

Question re tomato survey (Norton's handout). Do these countries have extension agents? Yes.

Question re farmers being leery of filling something out. How does one get around that?

Norton: It seems to work. We don't ask them, "What's your income?" We ask them, "What did you earn from ground-nuts?" You come at it backwards.

Q: How's the sample determined? You pick your villages, then pick the people in the villages. You get a list of names, take every 3rd name, for example. We wanted something that was per-urban—it's a different perspective.

Q: Same type assessment for all of the regional projects, all global projects? Getting good cooperation? Yes. Sometimes have to do a PA to figure out some of the issues that you may not have thought of. E.g. getting a loan—that being tied to getting pesticides.

Q: Do international things have to go through an IRB review? Norton: Can't do anything until we get an MOU. We follow their rules. Some countries have special rules—we have to follow those, and then Virginia Tech rules, as well as USAID rules.

Q: Lots of emphasis on impact assessment—how do our strategies compare to the strategies of other CRSP programs? Hedlund: Difficult question. Lot of “turkey consciousness.” Impact assessment done by IPM is a lot more scientific, and sound. Valid. More-so than what I've seen.

Q: You gave a good summary of the old CRSP—can you give me a list of 3 lessons learned that you think will impact the new? Plucknett: the participatory approach. The work is much more in partnership, more relevant. Then adding on to that, the impact and socioeconomic impact also going on was pretty convincing. This really is a paradigm for this kind of research. When fully implemented, really provides a development pathway. This is an organized way of doing this. The team is problem-identifying and problem-solving with the farmer being a part of it. This process enlists a lot of people who otherwise wouldn't be involved. E.g. extension agents, women.

De Datta: This is the only global IPM project which has all 3 land-grant missions deeply embedded. Knowledge-generation, education piece, and technology transfer. Very comprehensive, global project. Very unique.

Vaughan: The centrality of impact assessment, the impact of gender. These are things that were conceived of even from the beginning. Proving points that have shown to be on target. No matter how much or how little money you give host country institutions, they tend not to spend it. People who are passionate about research do a lot of work for little. It provides grad students for US professors for publication. Provides motivation to keep going. Even though the effort to comply with rules, etc. is enormous. What they're getting out it is even more than the money. It's the opportunity. The ability to collaborate with other institutions even in their own country. In West Africa, the new WA program, from a local to a regional program—they have 9 countries, one country is outside of their group, they are working with them. We've given them a concrete example and a reason to collaborate. The opportunities for collaboration outweigh the monetary.

Q: I hear about the leverage. I've not seen a quantitative analysis. Have you seen any such thing? De Datta: this concept of IPM CRSP is completely unique. It's an entire office/university enterprise. Dooley: But we are not doing a good job of quantifying. Norton: True—we probably don't do a good enough job of quantifying. People do it because they like that they are linked into the scientific system beyond their local countries.

Plucknett: I reviewed Guatemala, was amazed at the number of groups involved with that. Remarkable. A lot of people were collaborating because of the success of the program. Enlistment: this is very important. One thing that's important is the way that it starts: it starts with a stakeholder meeting. Then you have a participatory appraisal. This continues. Then you have a solid base for the socioeconomic analysis. It works well.

New Business – SK. De Datta

1. Recommendation of EEP members

Discussion of review at the end of 5 years. Hedlund: Question will be: will IPM continue to meet the priorities of USAID. It's a loophole. I believe the 2008 review should occur well into the year. We want to look at the accomplishments and potential as late as possible. Award didn't being until 05, and it took a year to do the sub-awards. So by 08, that's only 2 years.

It will be an EEP that is nominated by the ME. In the new CRSP, it's likely that USAID will select the EEP.

De Datta: We will come out with a slate of nominations; we will seek USAID's concurrence and approval. We will keep the board informed electronically. But at the same time, if you all know of good scientists—we welcome your input.

Hedlund: Criteria: senior scientists who are not at all involved in the CRSPs.

Looking for: entomologist, weed scientist, and economist.

2. Budget Summary – Debbie Francis

Two handouts:

Summary Budget Information: IPM CRSP LWA

Summary Budget Information: IPM CRSP No Cost Extension

Debbie reviews handouts.

Discussion of indirect cost rates.

De Datta: We should make language clearer about the indirect cost rates.

Hedlund: You haven't done yourself a favor of showing your match. Some funds don't have to be matched. If you don't show it, we don't know it.

Hedlund: Winfrey's right: You gotta get those figures out there on a wider stage. There's a lot of criticism out there about the funding. All of a sudden, up to 60% of the program is salaries.

Norton: We do need to document that. Cuz we don't take overhead on host countries. We need to advertise that.

Clarke: I've sat through these discussions on BIFAD, CRSP mgmt can eloquently say all this, but you need to show it—put it in there. They are convinced now, you've said it so much—the training aspect. You need to demonstrate those kinds of things.

De: What we are not taking over on host country money, show this as part of our matching. I'm not sure the contract officers would buy that.

Question of what kind of foregone overhead you can show.

De: We won't take overhead for host country.

Clarke: OK, but you need to show that.

Question of what will count with OSP.

Dooley: we're living in a political world—we must show what is allowable within the office of sponsored programs. Give attn to other resources that are leveraged. This group needs to have that information. An additional sheet that shows leveraged resources.

Norton: Can we gather info on that as much as possible?

De: We'll discuss this internally.

Hedlund: You need to be creative in seeing what you can do (to spend the money). There are things you can be creative about.

Q: re Associate Award money. LWA award was competed under USAID rules—open competition process. Q: what about conflict of interest? Hedlund: It's part of competed award. It was USAID's idea.

Schwedler: This is actually a lot clearer and cleaner than a lot of other federal agencies.

Vaughan: Issue of transparency from the Mission side. Every proposed associate award goes through Bob.

Dooley: What are we doing with the PIs who have the regional projects to encourage their hustling? What can we do to incentivize the PIs to develop a partnership with the local missions?

Hedlund: One of my jobs is to encourage this from USAID's standpoint. This is why we like them to keep me informed—I can tell the missions. The real incentive needs to be to get them to tell me where they're going and when.

Dooley: For each of these programs, there's the possibility of an addtnl \$5M investment. If this is not achieved, it sends the message what we're doing is not valuable.

De: But you can't use federal dollars to lobby.

Clarke: The idea is that the missions don't know what the CRSP is doing.

Dooley: We need to make sure that those who are leading these projects are capturing the opportunities.

Hedlund: timing is critical, and who you talk to at the mission.

Norton: My experience: most of the PIs do go to the missions.

Schwedler: Is there a way of having an associate award outline? You have a single handout sheet that all the PIs get. They're made aware of it; it's very clear. It has Bob tied into the process.

Norton: Part of the problem is that we do notify when we're going to a country, but we don't say enough about what we're going to do.

Vaughan: response to question re strategy—what strategy we have: the travel authorization forms we've been using don't give a lot of space to explain why we're going. So we've added more lines to allow people to type that in. We are asking Program Leaders to write a statement—this can be circulated to the mission. We aren't like private contractors who may have a permanent presence in the country. We need to identify new opportunities. What we're trying to do behind the scenes is identify needs that we don't have resources for.

De: I'm concerned about over-emphasis on mission involvement; I want to make sure that PIs get the message that you don't drop something you said you'd do. I just want to make sure that we have a balance. The mission is interested only in that particular country. We need to not forget that professors have other priorities. One can forget that this is a contractual arrangement.

3:20 – 3:35 Coffee Break

3. Discussion and Approval of the POPs Manual – Larry Vaughan

Vaughan presents. This POPs manual harmonizes with the SANREM POPs manual. This is a manual in process.

Go through page by page and allow for changes.

One thing: invoicing is scantily covered. The irregularity of invoicing.

Page by Page Review of POPs Manual

P. 1. No comment.

P. 2. Hedlund: New CRSP Guidelines at the office of OAA and the General Counsel's office wanted to clarify that an MOU is exactly that—not a binding agreement. Doesn't commit any institution to any resource allocation. This wasn't all that clear in the POPs. It's not a legal document.

Hedlund: Whether VT is going to continue with all MOUs or whether sub-awardees will.

Need language to clarify that.

We have templates.

De: There have been a lot of MOUs written at Virginia Tech, but ones that are just signed by an individual professor are not legal; have to go through our office.

Dooley: Hedlund has changed simple edit—change govern to enabled. Are you asking for additional clarification?

H: Clarify that different from old CRSP, it's responsibility of the institution.

V: "An MOU is not a binding agreement and does not commit USAID or a lead institutiton." Include this text.

Dooley: Or make a reference to MOU as defined by the CRSP guidelines.

Schwedler: Spell out terms the first time. In addition to acronym list. EGAT, NRM. Consistency of editorial stuff. Move list of acronyms to front, possibly.

H: Need additional language per GC.

Olsen: Who is this document to be used by? De: Users. Olsen: So don't refer to another document—put it here, so the user doesn't have to refer to something else.

V: Yes, inasmuch as possible, we want to spell out the rules.

P. 3 De: Review it annually—shouldn't be binding.

Clarke: 2nd paragraph: These are site visits? Yes.

H: On MOU, the opportunity for missions to be a co-signatory is very important.

P. 4 V: We added TraiNet.

H: The issue of visas is a big issue. When people are senior scientists and are coming to a meeting to present, and have to go through all this—no, people aren't putting up with this. This is a big issue. Hasn't been resolved. I think AID needs to go through its general counsel office and get this to apply to trainees only.

Dooley: We need to have some verb to precede that. Process TraiNet. Facilitate TraiNet.

P. 5 No comment.

P. 6 No comment.

P. 7 No comment.

P. 8 Clarke: I don't see the frequency of mtgs. Francis: Annually.

V: The Board will try to meet face to face once annually? Whenever face to face is not possible, will conference call?

Dooley: Strike "try."

De: Will try to have 8 members on the Board.

P. 9 Program leaders *are* members of the TC. 13 members.

Norton: In terms of new TC chair: it's a bit odd to have the current chair nominate the new chair. Usually you pick a nominating committee—they pick the chair. De: Why doesn't the ME do that? Good point.

V: No term limits to TC chair?

P. 10 Clarke: question re fees and compensation. Schwedler: How about "will offer"?

H: "The IPM CRSP may pay an honorarium to an EEP member." V: will be offered. De: External member of EEP can be paid.

Dooley: under EEP, "TC members receive no compensation for their services, but external TC members may receive an honorarium for their services."

TC expected to meet once a year. Take out physically.

Clarke: The TC will meet once a year either face to face, via conference call, or via video conference. Additional conference calls or electronic meetings may be held.

Clarke: Could you add a clause "to carry out its responsibilities as listed."?

H: What about "reviews annual reports"? What should be the primary job of the TC? I would put more emphasis on a review of what's gone on than on reviewing the workplan.

V: Annual reports are due Nov. 30th.

De: TC reviews and recommends, doesn't approve. But there has to be some approval board.

H: The CTO does not approve the workplan – not required any more. Some entity needs to approve it. Can have USAID blessing.

De: TC reviews and recommends, and CTO will approve it (per proposal).

Norton: 1 face to face meeting – useful comments. H: esp since have global themes.

H: You ought to be able to budget for 2 meetings.

Dooley: I think the language is OK. We ought to be able to trust that it (?) will operationalize the intent of the board.

V: We need to add a section on workplan approval.

P. 14 Environmental policy of USAID.

P. 15 No comment.

P. 16 De: With the new thrust of USAID, if you show **huge pipeline**, they will question. Stronger language of enforcement. Be helpful for us to operationalize it.

Norton: I think we need it cuz in previous phase we had a problem. Now it will be even worse.

Schwedler: Real imp that it's spelled out in an award document. You will be expected to spend this amount by such and such a time.

Dooley: We could recapture anything beyond 10%. If you carry over anything beyond 10%, we may recapture. I'm concerned about the "Requests for carryover beyond 10% should be made in writing 30 days. . ."

Clarke: Say on a case by case basis.

Dooley: Bottom line: That paragraph needs to be re-written to be more clear.

Schwedler: Whatever is in the subaward is what our people are going to have to live by.

De: How about, "According to our subaward, this is our policy."

P. 16 Olsen: Pipeline—add, "not been expended or encumbered by USAID."

Debbie explains pipeline analysis form.

Dooley: We need to be clear with this.

Pipeline describes funds that have been expended but not invoiced.

H: Obligated or expended, but not yet invoiced.

Dooley: explains by means of visual. Pipeline funds *are* encumbered.

Dooley: Strike first sentence. Strike word “these.” Core funds that are committed to workplan-driven activities. Take out “USAID consider sthem pipeline.”

P. 17 No comment.

P. 18 No comment.

P. 19 Kenny: There is a certain flexibility purchasing within country with 935.

P. 20 Schwedler: Invoicing: is there language in the subawards that dictates how the invoicing is to be done? Francis: Yes.

P. 21, 22, 23, 24 No comment.

P. 25 Clarke: Is there a page limitation on reports? V: That’s never been a problem. De: Let’s put in 30 days.

P. 27 V: Host country and regional collaborating institutions – Bob mentioned we should have that list.

Group approves document with understanding this will be done, by country, not by project.

H: The question we get asked is, “What is the CRSP doing in Mali or Bangladesh?” If you’ve got a list by country, that helps us answer this question. We might have to think of some sort of table. V: The online reporting system should answer that.

Dooley: I do think it’s important that we include a list by country, of the hosts.

On p. 30, List all of program leaders as members.

Dr. Hobbs is Dean/Extension Administrator, School of Agriculture

Larry Olsen: North Central IPM Director.

Bobby Moser: also needs to be changed.

P. 32 H: We discussed the subaward and overhead thing. We should make sure that’s clear.

Schwedler: These need to be in concert with . . .(?)

V: No higher than the equivalent of 30% direct cost. (??)

Schwedler: This needs to agree with what's in the RFP.

Clarke: Let's look at the rest of this first thing in the morning.

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.