

# IPM CRSP Teleconference Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2010, Conference Room B, OIA Building  
Virginia Tech  
10:00 am

Present: Muni Muniappan, SK De Datta, Ed Rajotte, Karim Maredia, Mark Erbaugh, George Norton, Sally Miller, Sue Tolin, Mike Hammig, Maria Elisa Christie, Jeff Alwang, Don Mullins, Bob Hedlund, Larry Vaughan, Debbie Francis, Miriam Rich

Absent: Sam Kyamanywa, Wondi Mersie, Kitty Cardwell, S. Wood

## **1. Welcome and Opening Remarks – SK De Datta**

SK De Datta opened the teleconference call by welcoming everyone. He reminded everyone that this is the fourth phase of the IPM CRSP. There is not likely to be a possibility of getting a non-competitive extension. If and when the IPM CRSP is re-competed, we need to have a chance to win it. To do so, we'll need to be able to show some impactful results. Secondly, De Datta reminded everyone about the importance of financial management. It is important to spend out and not to leave a huge pipeline.

He further reminded everyone that each PI can now access their own balance at any time. Each PI should be able to know if their burn rate is commensurate with their annual workplan. He again noted that it is important that we have solid impactful results. Because we have done well in this regard so far, we have been re-funded.

Mark Erbaugh asked how hard and fast it is that the contract will end in five years. De Datta responded that it is important to ask, "Will IPM still be relevant at the end of this project cycle?" Given the nature of USAID, we cannot take it for granted that the IPM CRSP in its present form will be there.

Erbaugh followed up with another question: This year, the pipeline issue was not going to be as germane or fundamental as it has been. Is that only for this year? De Datta responded that that was a fairly accurate assessment. "This year," he said, "we'll be a little more considerate," but it's important not to go completely lax on that [the pipeline issue]. Debbie Francis concurred, and said, referring to the previous phase, that not all of the PIs have all spent out, and that the ME will decide how to allocate what's left over from the prior phase, after all the sub-awards have been closed. De Datta added that if the PIs did not spend [everything] by March 31<sup>st</sup>, the ME will it pull back and re-allocate.

## **2. Program Overview – Muni Muniappan**

Muni Muniappan noted that the last TC meeting was held on Mar. 23, 2009 in Portland, Oregon. The minutes from that meeting have been circulated.

On July 6, 2009, he reported, USAID released an RFP. A panel met on Aug. 25-26, 2009 and gave input on these proposals. The results were communicated with the PIs. Six regional projects and five global themes projects were approved and were to be implemented.

Muniappan noted that this year [2010], he attended the planning meeting for the South Asia project; he visited the project in Cambodia; and last week, he attended the planning meeting in Honduras. Larry is currently attending the project planning in West Africa.

### **3. Impact Assessment – George Norton**

George Norton spoke about his project and reminded everyone that his purpose is to make sure everyone has an understanding of what everyone else is doing. The impact assessment project, he said, is responsible for making sure there is impact assessment across all projects. “We are working on baseline surveys so that we can know what farmers are doing now. We will follow up in the fourth year again. Our focus is on adoption. We budget out the practices and packages, then what we’ll do is gather information on prices and quantities. We’re also doing a sequence of in-depth studies.”

Norton noted that one can’t do a baseline in every country every year with only \$10,000. What they’ll be doing, he said, is sequencing. They’re doing it in Ecuador now. In the West Africa site, they’ve already done a baseline. They’re trying to get gendered answers as well. East Africa is being done in June. And, as regards South Asia, they have visited Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.

Tolin asked where the \$10,000 was coming from. Norton responded that it was from regional projects and said that he has a grad student on his own global theme allocation.

De Datta asked about the number of people impacted by the work of the IPM CRSP. Norton responded that we will have to ask people to do as good a job as they can to estimate the USAID indicators. He said that Muniappan would help monitor this. He also noted the importance of recording everyone, doing a complete job. “In South Asia, you work with NGOs and extension agents. They aren’t part of the project, but we trained them and they are training people; we put their numbers in our impact.” It’s important to talk to your partners, he reminded people.

### **4. Plant Virus Diseases – Sue Tolin**

Sue Tolin reported that her activities this year have been mainly getting the project set up. She has 19 countries, so that’s a lot to cover. They have collaborators in Guatemala, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. As regards East Africa, she hasn’t heard anything from Erbaugh. She said she would appreciate it if regional directors would work through her. “We’re interested in working on regional mechanisms for reporting viruses. Some of my co-PIs are concerned that they’re not getting credit. We have worked with Sally [Miller]’s diagnostic global theme. We went to their meeting in Guatemala and have been working together well.”

Tolin reported that the sub-projects are mostly set up and that they are still working on some. She also noted that Naidu Rayapati is planning a trip to India in July; at that time, they’ll be having a workshop on viruses. They will have a larger meeting later on. Their objectives are: documenting the prevalence of virus diseases; putting informational packages together on the viruses; the ecology of the viruses; combining diagnostics and detection; demonstrating that it does work. Other major objectives are: cooperation with regional projects, bringing in virus management, and participating with host countries.

She remarked that in looking at the beneficiary list, she finds it difficult to see how the global theme can really put in numbers.

Rajotte commented that Rayapati was having a virus workshop in July. Tolin said yes; they're combining the 3 regions. Erbaugh asked how it was being financed. Tolin responded that the regional projects fund travel and per diem for participants; the global theme projects will handle actual workshop costs.

#### **5. IPDN – Sally Miller**

Sally Miller began by reporting that she has had a number of objectives that she plans to accomplish in the IPDN. She had a planning meeting in March in Guatemala. She said she is working closely with virus global themes. They came up with some prioritization. There is not nearly enough money to do everything they would like to do. They were told to expand with less money. They identified TNAU as their hub. They probably won't go too far out of Southern India. As far as interacting with the two other Asian sites, they will have to be somewhat limited. Their objectives will be to reassess the diagnostic capacity, to run the surveys, to be in contact with the virus global theme project. They will need to expand the IPDN. They will include the centers for excellence. Almost all the other trainings were supplemented with other funding. They will do some diagnostic assays in partnerships with other organizations like IITA. They have done some evaluation and modification of their web portals for institutions that have low bandwidth. And, they have developed a spreadsheet where they can put that information.

She is also writing their standard operating procedures. They'll work closely with regional programs, looking at package recommendations.

Muniappan asked if she was planning to send one of the scientists to participate in the Southeast Asia planning meeting in July. Miller said that it was Melody Putnam, but that she hasn't heard back on what the progress with that was. Mike Hammig said that it was in the works.

#### **6. Gender – Maria Elisa Christie**

Maria Elisa Christie noted that she has been working a lot on this project with all six regional programs. She has broken it down into equity, capacity, and research. Of the six regions, three have gender coordinators who she has worked with in the field. For Central Asia, she has worked with two gender representatives who came here two weeks ago. She stressed that it's very important for her to be able to communicate with all of the coordinators at once.

In East Africa, she'll be going to a workshop that Erbaugh is doing. He has a capable person there. In West Africa, they won't have a workshop since they had a workshop there last year. They will follow up on that. In Southeast Asia, she'll be at Hammig's meeting in July. Irene Tanzos will be there, as will Alifah Lestari.

She was invited to South Asia, along with Norton and Miller. They have not yet figured out how to have the workshop. The current snag right now is where the money will come from. How do you get enough money to be able to do something?

In Latin America and the Caribbean they had a full gender team meeting.

Karim Maredia suggested having a train the trainer event in Blacksburg.

Christie said that it was not clear to her how much time she would have to do a workshop in Southeast Asia. De Datta asked what the money problem was in South Asia. Christie responded that it's just that there are three countries, and it's not clear. The host countries don't understand the money has activities attached to it.

Norton noted that there are two things that cost money: the workshops and the baseline surveys. Christie said that the money from the first year has to be saved rather than be absorbed into other activities. Norton said that right now, the budgets are already budgeted. You can't add in something new now.

Maredia noted that the two faculty members were very pleased with the workshop that Christie did. And, they appreciated the support.

Christie said that if the \$10,000 is spent in-region, then that works.

Maredia noted that the whole gender topic is new for Central Asia.

#### **7. Invasive Species Program on Parthenium – Wondi Mersie**

This report was not made, because he was in Ethiopia and could not participate in the conference call.

#### **8. Central Asia – Karim Maredia**

Karim Maredia said that they haven't launched their project in the region yet. He plans to go to Central Asia on May 29<sup>th</sup>. It will be him, Muniappan, George Bird, and Walter Pett. They will go to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. But in Kyrgyzstan, there's a political problem. So, they're only going to go to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

They'll be working with wheat, potato, and tomato. Wheat is a staple crop. They are going to have small group team meetings, and demonstrate their packages. It's a launch meeting. As they are identifying and setting up, they are moving forward on the graduate training. They got 16 applications for three Ph.D. positions. One each for wheat, potato, tomato. These individuals are in the process of taking TOEFL and GRE exams. This is all new to their culture. Michigan State will grant the degrees. All of the matching support came in the form of fellowships.

Norton asked if part of the deal was making sure that he [Maredia] has a team. Maredia responded yes. For wheat, there's ICARDA, a local university, and a local NGO, (each one is teamed with each of these things.) Then, the gender work is moving forward. They have three people coming from Central Asia to do a workshop.

Kyrgyzstan is still part of the program; it's just temporarily out because of political problems.

#### **9. Southeast Asia – Mike Hammig**

Mike Hammig said that they are adding another country, but they have no more money! The country is Cambodia. He went there in April, along with Muniappan and Bob Hedlund. USAID

people are interested in what's going on in this country. We are still in the process of deciding who the collaborators will be from Cambodia.

The project in Indonesia is “seamlessly going forward.”

In July, they are holding a regional workshop in Indonesia, with Cambodian and Filipino participants. Christie will be there to meet with gender people. They are hoping to get some momentum started. Following this generalized regional workshop, they will have an IPDN workshop for individuals particularly interested in that area. Melody Putnam, a diagnostics scientist at Oregon State, will be coming out for that.

In the Philippines, they have already done quite a few baseline surveys.

The Cambodia part is the most up in the air. They are very interested in working with us. The opportunities there are strong. Hammig said he is going there the week before the workshop. When they met with the USAID people in Pnom Penh, they looked to the ceiling and said, “What can you do with that small amount of money?” So we have to try to be as efficient as possible. It's a struggle to have a good impact in a short time.

Erbaugh asked how they made the decision to go into Cambodia. Hammig said they were told it had to be incorporated. It is part of USAID's food security issue.

#### **10. South Asia – Ed Rajotte**

Ed Rajotte said that “What we're all hoping for is that the food security initiative, Feed the Future, will provide more money!” He noted that Miller, Norton, Doug Pfeiffer and Muniappan have each given a hand in South Asia. Pfeiffer will manage India, and Norton and he [Rajotte] will manage the whole thing. He made a trip this winter and shmoozed with USAID people and re-formulated their relationships.

As regards cucurbits, tomatoes, and eggplants – package tests are going into the fields now.

Christie has picked a person from Tamil Nadu to be a regional gender person.

“All of our countries are food security countries,” he said. India is supposed to be a hub.

He also noted that he has a student coming from Nepal. Norton said that he has an American going over to Nepal for thesis work. Rajotte said that Ohio State, Penn State and Virginia Tech all have grad students going over.

#### **11. West Africa – Don Mullins**

Don Mullins noted that they have been asked to focus more, so now they're working in three countries instead of five. And, they picked up Ghana. As regards tomato, they are continuing to develop the package.

Potatoes are in limbo. They are working on a new cropping system with cabbage. They're preparing to have a major workshop for 24 people to discuss the cropping system they're proposing to work on.

They did a major workshop last year with Christie. They have gender people in place now.

They have a new biotechnology building at the Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER) centered around plant disease diagnosis. As far as IPDN and Tolin's activities, he said, they are coordinating with them.

One of the reasons they're having a meeting in Mali is to bring people together. They also have had several associate awards. They expect to be able to coordinate some of that activity. Long-term, they want to develop capacity.

Finally, Mullins said, they are working closely with their hosts.

### **12. Mark Erbaugh – East Africa**

Mark Erbaugh reported that for their main event in the new phase, they had a kickoff meeting in December. They had 17 participants at that meeting. They have regional coordinators for all the other global themes. At the meeting, they developed their year one workplans.

Prior to that, Miller and Erbaugh were in Kenya to discuss IPDN. In Kenya, they were at a lab affiliated with the agricultural research institute KARI.

In April, they had a two-day workshop on using grafting, high tunnels, etc. They had 44 attendees: 26 men, 18 women.

They now have someone with them by the name of Dave Kraybill. He is working at their new research site in Uganda. He is working on tomatoes and scotch bonnet peppers. They want to put into place a proper baseline survey, so that that can be followed up in 2-3 years.

They plan to have another regional meeting in June.

USAID produced a fact sheet that had a notice in it regarding their work.

They have a woman from East Africa coming over to Ohio State this fall to work on impact assessment.

In general, in Kenya, the collaboration with KARI is moving forward. The issue is to identify and retain a socio-economic impact assessment person. The problem is retaining good social scientists.

Also, he noted, some locations are not close to the capital city, so that increases logistical costs.

In Tanzania, things are "pole, pole," which is Swahili for "moving ahead." There are contractual start-up issues. It seems that legal affairs people have gummed up the works.

Tolin said that she needs someone from his [Erbaugh's] group. She wants to know when he is going? June 20<sup>th</sup>? She asked that he send her an e-mail about that. The Ministry of Agriculture in

Jamaica is willing to help with the pepper germplasm. Erbaugh said to give him the pathway and he'll make it happen.

### **13. Latin America and the Caribbean – Jeff Alwang**

Jeff Alwang reminded everyone that this project focuses its work in Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic.

Last week, he had a meeting in Honduras. There has been no problem at all in their coordination. But there is a problem with newer sites. Ecuador and Honduras are more mature. The Dominican Republic and Guatemala are fairly new.

A big challenge has been the movement towards packages. As regards the IPM package – they had a good strong debate about language. “Package” doesn't sound right. They're looking at a menu of alternatives. How much diagnostics should they mix in with IPM types of research? The maturity continuum helps them, he said. They're well along the way of developing IPM packages. E.g., potato and naranjilla packages, and ones for the Andean fruits in Ecuador.

In Honduras, their research partner, FHIA, has done a bunch of silo research rather than working across disciplines. But Alwang said they pushed them hard in the last meeting.

They are much more at a lower stage in the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. Nonetheless, they have accomplished a diagnosis of key problems.

### **14. Updating PERSUAPs in the New Proposals – Larry Vaughan**

Vaughan reminded everyone that we are in a new phase. With the new technologies may come new chemicals, new microbials, new agents. He reminded people that it would be good to review in their PERSUAPs what products have been authorized. Make sure things aren't slipping through the cracks. Update with host country collaborators. Make amendments to the PERSUAPs. “We live and die by the reputation we have,” he said. “It's good now.” Within the next two weeks, he urged everyone, look at your former PERSUAP and current workplan, and note any inconsistencies that need fixing.

Erbaugh asked that he send everyone an e-mail to that effect; “We can then send this to our regional coordinators.”

Hedlund said that everyone needs to renew the PERSUAPs. And, he said, there has been a lot of talk about baseline surveys. Ask yourself, “What data can I use from the previous five years of the CRSP?” Norton said that there are baselines we're drawing on, e.g. in West Africa, for tomato. They're going to start with that baseline. They're trying to keep a similar set of questions. In Bangladesh, they had 96 questions. But we're trying to get that down so that one can get it done in an hour. “What are their perceptions of their pests? Are they adopting things that we've had in previous phases?” Some countries are new and they haven't had a baseline yet. One needs to do a baseline every 4-5 years.

Hedlund said he just wanted to make sure that the information wasn't being forgotten from the previous five years. Norton agreed. “Identifying practices adopted is how you track adoption,” he

said. “We are trying to track the gender side as well, this time. The latest version of the survey has gender-disaggregated responses.”

De Datta asked Christie if she has interacted with Thelma Paris of IRRI, and noted that she has so much experience in the whole region. Christie said that she wants to. “Twenty percent of the gender funds have been earmarked for networking,” she said, so she plans to use her. Norton added that as regards gender, after the workshops are done, the trickiest part is to tie research to particular packages. That’s the crux of where it gets difficult.

Christie noted that the funds are really for capacity-building and research. The question is, “How do you take gender into account to achieve technology x?”

Hammig noted that they have a very strong gender person in Indonesia. She is not highly educated, but has been doing this work since the late 1980s. She doesn’t have the credentials, but she does the work.

Muniappan had a question for Tolin and the other regional PIs. We need to extend control methods developed from one country to the other, he said. In Guatemala, for example, some testing is being done on screening tomatoes resistance for virus diseases. Tolin responded that this is definitely something they can organize information on, but they don’t have the money to do the trials. They would like to be able to work up models that each site can use. Norton said that part of it is seeing if you have exactly the same strain of the virus in each country. Tolin said that when you’re looking at the package, it’s important to get all the information together. One has to work within the germplasm system. Tolin asked Miller if the Horticulture CRSP addressed this; whether screening for resistance to virus and other pathogens could be regionalized. Miller said she has not seen a lot of that kind of coordination.

#### **15. Annual Report, Graduate Students, Data Collection on USAID Indicators – Muni Muniappan**

Vaughan began by noting that USAID has asked the ME to do a PERSUAP in Lebanon, and to do the travel in the first week of June to allow the Mideast mission to do the award. Rajotte said he has someone in Lebanon right now. Tolin said she also has someone in Lebanon. De Datta told them to send these people’s coordinates to Larry. Hedlund said USAID wants this done by June 22. Vaughan said that right now, Mike Mulvaney is doing PERSUAPs for SANREM. He has come up to speed on 216 environmental regulations.

#### **16. Workplan, APS.IPPC Joint Meeting on Aug. 6-10, 2011 in Honolulu**

Muniappan said that regarding the annual report, everyone should give him their comments and suggestions. The annual report is due Oct. 15. He also wants the workplan in a Word format, and that is due Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. He said he will prepare a template.

Norton suggested amending the regional format to include a heading that says “Interactions with Global Themes.” Muniappan agreed to put that in.

Erbaugh said that regional programs are not *reporting* to global themes, but that there needs to be discussion. Christie said she needs to know if they’ve assigned a gender coordinator, etc.



There was some discussion regarding gender inputs. Christie asked how to deal with double counting. Norton said he sees nothing wrong in reporting on both sides. Each global coordinator needs to report.

Muniappan noted that trip reports are due within 30 days after the trip has been completed. The travel matrix is due July 1<sup>st</sup>. Norton asked why it had to be so early. Why before the workplan? Muniappan agreed to change it to Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. He repeated that the travel matrix and workplan are due Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>.

Muniappan noted that reporting on trip reports is a problem. De Datta asked why we can't be more strict. We need to put some teeth into it, e.g., say that you can't take a trip until you've completed all your trip reports.

Muniappan reminded everyone of the importance of collecting data for indicators. And, he said, in-coming foreigners must be entered in TrainNet.

Muniappan also mentioned that there will be a meeting in Honolulu on Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011. It is in association with IAPPS. The IPM CRSP will have its TC meeting at that time. Norton reminded everyone that that is not the NEXT meeting, though. There will probably be two more phone meetings before that. Muniappan reminded everyone to put this meeting in their budget, though.

Rajotte asked about papers and registration, etc. for the meeting, and Muniappan responded that that information is all on the IPM CRSP website. Alwang noted that it's an expensive trip, and wondered if people could call in. It'll be \$1300 to get there from Blacksburg. De Datta agreed that he is not so sure it would be good to go. It will be looked on as a junket. Muniappan pointed out though that the IPM CRSP is having four symposia during this conference. De Datta suggested that we see how many people will actually be there, then see if it's worth it to have a TC meeting there.

Miller noted that there's still time on the APS side. It's still possible if someone wants to have a symposium from our group. She asked Muniappan to re-circulate the symposia that we're doing for a reminder. She also suggested that the IPM CRSP support one through the IPPC. Norton asked how USAID would view this. Hedlund said it would not be a problem. True, the cost of going to an away TC meeting is a lot, but everyone else is already paying something. From USAID's standpoint, the Horticulture CRSP just had its first meeting in Singapore. There was no objection to that. Other CRSPs have had meetings in Barcelona, Chile, etc. When you say "Honolulu," there's always a little red flag, but this will not be an issue.

Miller asked whether the IPM meeting would be at the beginning or at the end. Muniappan said it will be on Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>, Friday. People will arrive on the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Hedlund expressed appreciation for everyone working together.

Rajotte asked about food security. Hedlund said that "the Administrator" (Rajiv Shah, the head of USAID), has named the 20 countries. There are four in Asia, four in Latin America, and the other 12 are in Africa. "We're in good shape," he said, "we're in most of those countries

already.” The only ones we’re missing are Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia. There will be increased pressure from Washington to focus on these 20 countries. Probably all CRSP money will be categorized as “feed the future” money. Hedlund further noted that if anyone has a choice as to where to focus their efforts, it would be smart to choose these countries.

Erbaugh asked if one should raise this issue with the missions? Hedlund said each of these countries has submitted a plan as to how they will use these funds. He advised everyone that when these plans become public knowledge, it would be a good idea to get them. That will give you the best information. “As was mentioned earlier,” he said, “when we went to Cambodia, we met with the mission, and they were extremely supportive.” The amount of money coming for agriculture to EGAT varies considerably. All agriculture money will likely be food security money.

De Datta noted that he was pleased with this TC meeting. He reminded everyone that “deadlines are deadlines. We need to put some teeth into our policy.” Then he thanked everyone again.

Hedlund said that they really would like to know if anyone had a pesticide expert at their university who could take the time to go to Lebanon for a week and write a report in the first three weeks of June. It is for a farmer-to-farmer program on hydroponics.

Norton adjourned the meeting at 12:05 pm.