

Agenda

4th RALF Steering Committee Meeting
Sunday, March 19, 2006, 2:30-18:00
Intercontinental Hotel, Pamir Hall



Participants:

MAAHF:

H. E. DM Mohammad Sharif*
H. E. DM Mostafa Jawad
DG of Extension, Dr. Fazluddin Fazl
DG of Research, Dr. Aziz Osmanzai
DG of Planning, Mr. Nasratullah Akbarzad
DG of Alternative Livelihoods, Mr. Saboor Shairzad

DFID:

Mr. James Medhurst
Ms. Anthea Kerr
Mr. M. Essa Shamal

ICARDA:

HQ's:

Dr. Magdy Madkour, A/Director General, International Cooperation
Dr. Adel Aboul Naga, Senior Advisor, Research for Development
Dr. Asamoah Larbi (P.I. for Project 01-11)

ICARDA-Dubai

Dr. Ahmed Moustafa, Regional Coordinator

ICARDA-Afghanistan

Mr. Abdul Rahman Manan
Dr. G. M. Bahram
Dr. Najib Malik
Dr. Javed Rizvi
Mr. Farid A. Sherzai

MAAHF Advisor (Observer):

Mr. Michael Allen

MRRD Advisor (Observer):

Mr. Jorgen Hansen (SSPSRL)

Invited Guests:

Dr. Nabi Hussein, Ministry of Counter-Narcotics
Mr. Baqi Omari, Ministry of Counter-Narcotics

Mr. M. Latif Rasouli , DG of Media and Publications, MAAHF

Mr. Asef Rashid, Advisor to Research Dept, MAAHF

Dr. Ashraf Naimi, Advisor (Master Plan), MAAHF

Mr. Khalil Rahman, Aid Coordination Advisor, MAAHF

Mr. Ehsanullah Ehsan, AVRDC (World Vegetable Centre)

* DM Sharif is currently in Mexico

1-Introductory Remarks

Dr. Magdy Madkour and Dr. Adel Aboul Naga

H.E. DM Mostafa Jawad

DFID

2-Review of the Draft Agenda

3-Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 25, 2006

4-Action Items from Previous Meeting:

-DM Jawad: In future, even if a particular MAAHF Dept Head is not a member of the Steering Committee, he should be invited.

Action: Malik to take note

-RALF to develop contacts with Ministry of Counter-Narcotics:

Action: Malik

-Forum on Microfinance: RALF to facilitate/organize a one-day Discussion Forum involving the various stakeholders such as MAAHF, MRRD, MCN, MISFA, AKDN, ARMP, BRAC, NRI (P.I. for Project 01-08), DFID and ICARDA:

Action: Malik and Pound(NRI)

-Symposium on Medicinal Plants

-The proceedings of the presentations will be posted onto the RALF

Website

Action: Malik

-Second RALF Projects Workshop (Theme: Markets, Market Processes, Marketing)

-The proceedings of the presentations will be posted onto the RALF

Website

Action: Malik.

-The multi-layered communication strategy developed for RALF should be circulated to all Steering Committee Members of MAAHF as well as the Project P.I.'s

Action: Malik

-MAAHF Members to comment (even if in Dari or Pushtu) on the Draft Communication Strategy and return their comments to Program Management.

5. **Mid-Term (Output to Purpose) Review of RALF**
 - a. The Terms of Reference
 - b. Consultant undertaking the “Review”
 - c. Review period
 - d. Planning for Field Trips
6. **Planning for Next RALF Workshop (Theme: Impact)**
 - a. Timing
 - b. Organization/Contents
7. **Discussion on Draft Communication Strategy**

Email Addresses for Steering Committee Members

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Minutes

4th RALF Steering Committee Meeting
Sunday, March 19, 2006, 14:30-17:30
Intercontinental Hotel, Pamir Hall



Membership:

MAAHF:

H. E. DM Mohammad Sharif*
H. E. DM Mostafa Jawad**
DG of Extension, Dr. Fazluddin Fazl**
DG of Research, Dr. Aziz Osmanzai**
DG of Planning, Mr. Nasratullah Akbarzad**
DG of Alternative Livelihoods, Mr. Saboor Shairzad
DG of Media & Publications, Mr. M. Latif Rasouli

DFID:

Mr. James Medhurst
Ms. Anthea Kerr
Mr. M. Essa Shamal*

ICARDA:

Mr. Abdul Rahman Manan
Dr. Najib Malik
Dr. Javed Rizvi
Mr. Farid A. Sherzai

MAAHF Advisor:

Mr. Michael Allen

MRRD Advisor (SSPSRL):

Mr. Jorgen Hansen*

Invited Guests:

Dr. Magdy Madkour, A/Director General, International Cooperation
ICARDA-HQ

Dr. Adel Aboul Naga, Senior Advisor, Research for Development
ICARDA-HQ

Mr. Ehsanullah Ehsan, AVRDC (World Vegetable Centre)

Mr. Bert-Jan Ottens, Profound/Novib

Mr. G. H. Haideri, Dept of Environment, MAAHF

Dr. Nabi Hussein*, Ministry of Counter-Narcotics

Mr. Asef Rashid, Advisor to Research Dept, MAAHF**

Mr. Khalil Rahman Aid Coordination Advisor, MAAHF**

* Unable to attend

** Were called to a meeting by Minister Ramin at short notice

1- Introductory Remarks

On behalf of ICARDA-Afghanistan Management Committee, Malik welcomed the Steering Committee Members and the invited guests (senior

management from ICARDA-HQ, Dr. Magdy Madkour, Dr. Adel Aboul Naga and RALF Project Partners) to the 4th Meeting.

Madkour:

- Welcomed the opportunity to participate in the meeting
- Pleased to see that the RALF Program has developed linkages with many institutions

Aboul Naga:

- Alluded to the fact that he had been involved, as a member of the “Project Review Panel”, in the development of the RALF Program including review of Project Proposals.
- The Program has made a great deal of progress and he is optimistic that it will achieve its goal
- The key limitation of the Program is that it is too short: Only 2 years for the field implementation of the projects.
- He hoped that there will be extra time, if not extra money, to extend the implementation.

Kerr:

- Welcomed the opportunity to interact with MAAHF, ICARDA-HQ as well as the implementing partners. Kerr emphasized the:
 - Coordinating research projects
 - The Master Plan
 - Search for other resources from other donors

Medhurst:

- Looking forward to see the impact of the program.

2- Review of the Draft Agenda

- The Draft Agenda was accepted, no new items were added.

3- Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 25, 2006

- Kerr advised the following changes to the Minutes:
 - P. 2: Look back at the design of the Projects when MAAHF had the opportunity for input and plan on how to carry it forward along with other implementing partners.
 - P. 3, Item 5a: Malik to follow up with CNTF on funding opportunities. Ensure that the IP's are aware of the funds. Action: Malik
 - Allen: Find out if funds could be accessed through the MAAHF Action: Allen

-Kerr: Can we do joint programs? There is flexibility.

- P. 3, Item 5b: Kerr advised that there is a need to elaborate on what has been done to strengthen ties with MAAHF Provincial Centres. Action: Malik
- Malik will revise the Minutes incorporating above comments.

4- Action Items from Previous Meeting:

- a.-As a follow up to DM Jawad's advice regarding participation of other MAAHF department heads, since communication and knowledge dissemination will be of utmost importance to RALF from now on, the DG of the Media and Publications Dept of MAAHF, Mohammad Latif Rasouli, is kindly requested to serve as a Member of the Steering Committee and take an

active role in communication of the research results to the farming community.

b-RALF to Develop Contacts with Ministry of Counter-Narcotics: In process (ongoing).

-ICARDA-RALF attended the MCN ALP functions on September 3, 2005 and January 26, 2006.

-Malik and Sherzai also attended the “**Civil Society Alternative Livelihoods Working Group**” meeting on March 16, 2006th. The CSAL Working Group is intended to link directly with Government working groups, including the MCN and consultative groups such as **Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS)**, etc.

-RALF to follow up with CNTF on funding opportunities.

Action: Malik

- RALF to follow up with informal linkages with key agents of change in MCN

c-Funding Opportunities Other than CNTF:

Kerr: RALF to follow up not just with CNTF but also with USDA as they support the Capacity Building at Kabul University.

-Malik responded that we are in touch with Dr. Kevin McNamara of Purdue University who is the liaison between the Faculty of Agriculture and USDA/USAID.

Allen: Now is the chance to grab the opportunity!

Aboul Naga: We have not verified the research results of RALF yet. Although the IP's have the chance to apply, we (MAAHF, ICARDA, DFID) can apply (?).

Kerr: Livestock Marketing Repor(Project 01-09)t: How do we use the results? Malik responded that “lamb fattening”, for example, can lead to new project proposals.

Aboul Naga: Good programs (best recommendations/research results) of RALF have to go through the CNTF. Evaluate the successful projects, select 4-5 potential AL's, not every one, and apply for funding, not just with DFID, but other donors. Kerr: Explore World Bank and EC Livestock and Horticulture Programmes along with ADB Agriculture Programme, the Ministry, etc.

Action: Malik

d-Forum on Microfinance: RALF to facilitate/organize a one-day Discussion Forum involving the key stakeholders such as MAAHF, MRRD, MCN and facilitators (MISFA, AKDN, ARMP, BRAC, NRI).

-Malik has contacted AKDN, MISFA and NRI. They are supportive of this initiative.

-Sherzad: Ministry of Finance and banks could also be invited

e- Proceedings of “Symposium on Medicinal Plants” and the “Second RALF Projects Workshop”

-CD's containing the proceedings of the two events were given to the participants.

-The presentations have been posted onto the RALF Website

-Allen advised that softcopies of the proceedings for the two events should be given to the MAAHF Resource Centre Action: Sherzai

f-Dari Translations of Minutes, Progress Reports: Sherzai distributed binders containing Dari translations of the following documents:

- Minutes of 1st, 2nd and 3rd RALF Steering Committee Meetings
- Tables containing Round-1 and Round-2 Projects
- 2-page summaries on each one of the 11 Projects, *as had been requested by DM Sharif*
- Six-Monthly Progress Report (January-July 2005)
- Sherzai informed the participants that the Dari translation of the Annual Progress Report (Jan 2005-Jan 2006) and the Pushtu translation of the Minutes of the first meeting are in progress. (Posr-Meeting Note: Is it absolutely necessary to prepare Pushtu translations?.It will take a lot of the dwindling resources. These documents are not supposed to be accessible to the public at large for security reasons)

-Allen advised that a copy of the Dari translations of the RALF documents should be provided to the heads of each one of the 17 departments of MAAHF, as well as MRRD and MCN. Action: Sherzai

-Kerr advised that the RALF Progress Reports should also be shared with all the key donors and key embassies in Kabul such as the Iranian and Norwegian Embassies.

-Rasouli commented that there are many advisors within MAAHF and they may not be aware of the RALF activities. Kerr suggested that if Rasouli and Allen could provide a list of the advisors to Malik/Sherzai, then a copy of the RALF Dari Binder could be provided to them.

Action: Sherzai

g- Comments on the First Draft of the Communication Strategy

-MAAHF Members to comment (even if in Dari or Pushtu) on the Draft Communication Strategy and return their comments to Program Management. Malik: No comments were received from the MAAHF Members of the Steering Committee.

-The multi-layered communication strategy developed for RALF should be circulated to all Project P.I.'s. Done.
Malik: Hardly any comments were received from the PI's on the first draft.

6. Mid-Term (Output to Purpose) Review of RALF

-Kerr advised that DFID is still looking at possibilities. It may start in late April. Malik advised that since the Presentation Day is scheduled for May 7th at ICARDA-HQ, May 5-8 should be avoided.

-Ottens commented on the TOR stating that it is still too early to conduct a Mid-Term Review of Project 02-07 (Natural Ingredients for Food, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics) as Novib and the IP's have had only 7

months of implementation. The concept of wild collection and preservation is very new. We have to train the people in collection from fragile environments. The master trainers have been trained. We want to extend our activities into 2007. Regarding the question of "Impact", the best impact is seen at Faculty of Pharmacy: Students and faculty have been trained, chemicals/equipment for analysis have been purchased, botanical identification of medicinal plants have been made (previous records have been lost).

-Kerr: Get what you can get from Round-1.

Timing of the Field Trips:

-Ehsan commented that the field research can be seen in Nanagarhar within a month. The DFID consultant can see research, demonstrations, 7 greenhouses, vegetable nursery production and interact with the farmers.

-Ottens indicated that items of interest to see would be the work done in cooperation with the Faculty of Pharmacy, and maybe the field (GPS, training, botanical identification, etc.)

-Rizvi mentioned that the mint extraction plant will be up and running by late April in Nangarhar.

-Kerr advised that a table should be prepared to find out what can be seen for each project in late April.

6. Planning for Next RALF Workshop (Theme: Impact)

-Timing will depend on the DFID Review of RALF. The idea is to schedule this event after the consultant has started his/her Review.

-At least one month's advance notice should be given to the IP's. Overseas-based IP's may not be able to revise their schedules even with one month's notice.

-The Workshop will be run as a 2-day event.

7. Discussion on Draft Communication Strategy.

a-Review of the Draft: The revised draft developed with the help of Dr. Cathy Farnworth (Knowledge Management & Dissemination MP at ICARDA-HQ) was discussed but there was not adequate time to fill in the blanks in the tables.

-Kerr advised that we should all take the time to review the draft.

Action: All

b-Budget: The "budget" column should be taken out. RALF to discuss this with DFID

Action: Malik

-Question was raised about the budget of the individual projects for this purpose. Ottens responded that no budget was devoted to "communication" but that Project 02-07 is starting an "Internet Forum".

-Ehsan responded that only \$2000 has been specified for the publication of production of manuals on vegetables and legumes.

-Rizvi: Budget for communication could come out of the line budget on "operational expenses". There are things that that the individual IP's can do and the RALF Management can not do. Opportunities such as field days, personal contact with the farmers are best utilized by the individual IP's and not by the RALF Management after the fact.

-Medhurst: Communication tools do not have to be expensive (ie., posters as opposed to paid TV programs). Decide on what is the key message that we want to disseminate.

c-Accessibility:

-Shairzad: There are Districts that are not accessible even by radio, or people simply do not have the means to buy a radio. Thus, cheap receivers should be given to farmers or place a radio in the local Coop Centres so that farmers can get together and can benefit from the agricultural broadcasts.

-Rasouli: About 70% of the territory of Afghanistan is accessible by radio.

c- What can the Media and Publication Dept do ?

-Rasouli: It is important to have feed back from the farmers. MAAHF Mobile Units could go to the villages (morning or evening) and ask oral questions, but we (the Media and Publications Dept of MAAHF) should first be equipped with the mobile equipment. We have to record everything from scratch (no previous clips available) to get feedback from farmers. We did have mobile teams in the past. The way we disseminate the results depends on what is the message that we want out. Radio “Salam Watandar” has provided MAAHF with half an hour of free airtime everyday. We can devote half an hour to RALF every week.

-Rasouli: Radio “Sadaye Azadi” belonging to ISAF will also broadcast our programs free. We (MAAHF) have linkages with all other Radio/TV Stations as well. The Radio program is produced free but not the TV program.

-Ehsan: Let us hire a professional person to do all the TV recordings for the RALF projects.

-Rizvi: We have already thought of this idea. It is in a preliminary stage. We have contracted a professional producer to record a 7-minute documentary on RALF. The TV crew will go out to the field to shoot the film this summer.

-Kerr: Advised that this plan be placed on hold until there was an internal discussion as it was costing US\$1,000/minute, and there were limited resources and we should balance them against other ideas.

8. Participation of PI's at the Steering Committee Meetings

-Ottens and Ehsan commented that it is important that there is representation from the IP's. The IP's (if present in Kabul) should participate at the meetings, have a direct input and become aware of the decisions made.

-The idea of representation was discussed but it was decided that all IP's should be informed of the date/agenda of future meetings. It is not obligatory that all IP's attend the meetings but if they happen to be in Kabul and are available to attend the meeting, then, by all means, they are welcome to participate in the meetings.

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Draft Prepared by N. Malik, March 26, 2006