21 May 2007 USAID/AquaFish CRSP Meeting Minutes
USAID Offices, 1325 G Street Bldg., Ste. 400, Washington, DC USA

Attendees: **OSU AquaFish CRSP Management Team:**
- HE  Hillary Egna, CRSP Director
- JB  Jim Bowman, CRSP Outreach & Capacity Building Coordinator
- KW  Kara Warner, CRSP Communications & Publications, Scribe
- DB  Dwight Brimley, CRSP Business & Office Manager

**Lead US Principal Investigators:**
- JD  Jim Diana, The University of Michigan
- BP  Bob Pomeroy, University of Connecticut Avery Point
- KF  Kevin Fitzsimmons, University of Arizona
- BS  Bill Steiner (for Maria Haws), University of Hawaii Hilo
- RB  Russell Borski, North Carolina State University
- KQ  Kwamena Quagrainie, Purdue University

**Lead HC Principal Investigators:**
- RB  Remedios Bolivar, CLSU, Philippines
- WCS  Wilfrido Contreras Sanchez, UJA Tabasco, Mexico
- YY  Yang Yi, Shanghai Fisheries University, China (AIT until June)
- AH  Ambrocio Mojardin Heraldez, UA Sinaloa, Mexico
- SN  So Nam, IFReDI, Cambodia
- CN  Charles Ngugi, Moi University, Kenya

**USAID Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO):**
- HR  Harry Rea, USAID/EGAT/NRM/Water Team

**Invited presentations by USAID:**
- Tim Miller, Water Team Leader, EGAT/NRM
- Susan Thompson, Senior Policy Advisor, EGAT/AG
- Gary Enders, Consultant to USAID
- Joyce Jatko, Bureau Environmental Officer, EGAT
- Tim Resch, Environment Advisor, AFR
- Victor Bulleen, Bureau Environmental Officer, LAC
- Julie Swanson, Education Program Specialist, EGAT/WID

0830  HR  Welcome, Introduction to CRSP and USAID
- HE  Welcome, Introduction of OSU personnel, US PI and HCPI attendees

0845  HE  Goals of meeting, itinerary review, reference to fluctuating goals of USAID and the need to set some touchpoints for our CRSP. Emphasis on working as a group on this cooperative agreement rather than 25 “competing” sub awards as in previous CRSP(s).

New award: timeline of AquaFish CRSP award from USAID, review of Request for Proposals (RFP), NSF-based technical review that took place, top tier only were moved on to this phase of USAID review (new to CRSP). Discussion of new way USAID handles approving countries to be worked in; adding a country is not automatic and requires approval; country spending needed for reporting purposes from sub awards. Finalist revisions are due 06 June. (Show of hands – about 40-50% said they could have the entire proposal revised by 06 June; HE said first in would be addressed first, but that everyone has until 13 June to submit) Emphasis was made on crosscutting themes from program description. Discussion of best aspects of proposals from RFP context; weak points were
gender issues from most proposals. >50% of budget to be dedicated to Host Countries (HC) was nicely complied with. No lead US Principal Investigator (PI) salary support on proposals (exemption for summer if overseeing CRSP grad student). 35% match from US Institutions. Countries awarded reviewed. Topic areas from RFP were reviewed, each investigation under topic areas to be coded for M&E system. Average investigations per proposal (initial, unrevised proposals) were six; average proposal was $393,000.

Review of distribution of funds in our cooperative agreement (to be discussed later). Changes from ACRSP discussed (fewer projects, HC, committees, etc.); encouraged ACRSP PIs to serve as mentors for those new to CRSP.

0920  Miller  Team Leader for “Water Team” @ USAID. Welcome from USAID, review of AID interest in water resources.

0925  Thompson (Agriculture Office, Senior Policy Advisor, EGAT Bureau). Gave presentation on Agency Policy Guidance and Reporting. AID is guided by a Foreign Assistance Framework (handout matrix), Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA). Target beneficiaries on handout #3 (focus for proposal revisions). Our sub awards are reporting at the element/sub element level (within program area of agriculture). Involvement of National Resource Management (NRM) group.

HE  NRM does occasionally request info from CRSP.

1015  Swanson USAID Gender Integration presentation. Differentiated between sex and gender, equity versus equality, equitable (fair) versus equal (same). Addressed questions/comments from some attendees on gender inclusivity in proposals:

BP  women involved by way of surveys to households (no additional questions).

KQ  reviewer comments related to how women would be involved in investigations (need better details).

KF  reviewer comments requesting strategies for female involvement

HE  Requested Julie Swanson to send her comments to herself and HR regarding gender inclusivity for proposal revisions.

1130  Jatko, Resch, Bullen  Environmental Impacts presentation (see handout) and discussion; 22 CFR 216, ADS 204

1200  All  Lunch Breakout group discussions of environmental compliance by region.

0115  HE  US PI from each group to update others on project vision for development impacts

BS/AH  Expanding bivalve production on pacific Mexican coast, dangers from bacteria, etc. have been and are a concern. Improving oyster management and reducing risks related to contamination and consumption.

KF/WCS  New species and tilapia culture in HC. Alternate feeds, seaweed culture. Preventing movement of effluents from hatcheries to environment.

KQ/CN  Main driving force is income generation for small farmers (from subsistence fishing to income-based). Secondary interests are land diversification, increasing production of non-threatened baitfish for use in Lake Victoria fisheries.
RB Increased incomes in Philippines, tilapia feed alternatives (reducing fish meal), poultry bi-products, alternate feeding strategies to produce larger fish @ reduced costs, milkfish production efficiency, sustainability of polyculture in Philippines and Indonesia (especially in regions devastated by tsunami).

BP/SN Using low value “trash” fish more in human consumption, alternative protein sources for trash fish’s other uses, traditional and modern consumption of fermented fish (health safety, tracking trade to other countries).

JD/YY In China, waste handling of effluent/life cycle products of shrimp, shrimp culture sustainability, stocking of reservoirs (risk to biodiversity). In Nepal, sport/commercial fish production and income generation for farmers.

HE Noted similarities among projects. Comments?

BS Internal components of projects to human health

YY Overlap within countries (two projects in Mexico, two in Vietnam)

KF Ecological footprints of shrimp work (Vietnam) and polyculture (Indonesia)

RB Using podcasting to get (tilapia) info to small farmers, would like to work with other groups to get input

JD Correlation of biodiversity topics across projects (protecting native/indigenous species)

0200 HE Leads discussion of project vision regarding peer group training.

BS Introduced metrics for deliverables, outcome mapping and M&E system (allows testing at different stages of process involved in implementation of ideas/plans).

       Counting indicators, desired outcomes.

KF Putting together partnerships (government agencies, NGOs, etc.) – most HCs have groups looking for partnering opportunities with those possessing the knowledge base of CRSP. Vendors may also be open to providing CRSP with donations.

KQ Working with multiple institutions, multiple disciplines, even though different countries have different politics and different problems, the emphasis on income production for small farmers is universal. Continuous communication is important.

RB Their gender inclusivity strategy involves incorporating women senior PIs, who are the best role models to have to bring more women into science/extension work), links with organizations with strong records of gender integration, preliminary surveying to include on-farm trials with female as head of household, getting women to workshops/training. Monitor projects continuously (including negative impacts on women).

BP Regarding outreach and dissemination (o&d), lots of approaches ensure o&d (manuals, workshops, participatory research, etc.), as does inclusion of extension officers and communication specialists. Using local languages further support o&d.

JD Getting students involved is easier with linkages to HC universities (than with government entities alone). Using available funds for students rather than designating to PI salaries helps. Discussed what CRSP projects can do to increase and maintain student involvement: recognize that students see education as a way out or up; student involvement in publications engenders enthusiasm in interested students/future farmers and professionals; workshops can highly motivate students; students may be supported by funds for tuition, and also for smaller purposes (like travel); movement easily and quickly through steps to bring in next group of student investigators makes process better for all involved
(particularly relates to MS students); providing lots of different roles to students involves those with different interests (students recognize the value of experience alone, not just financial rewards).

HE  Opens up topic for discussion/questions.
KQ  Coordinating multiple US institutions can involve experts that may address the variety of issues within a HC.

0315  Enders  Presenting on Standardized Indicators of Performance for productivity, policy, and trade issues (capacity building, natural resource management techniques used, number of hectares applied to investigation). Success stories (in addition to indicators) are best results. Productivity is gauged by capacity building, operations, and income yield/profit generated. Policy work is gauged through steps taken in policy reform: (1) analysis (2) dialog (3) proposal to authorizing entity (4) approval (5) implementation. Trade performance gauged by capacity building techniques employed, and measures of trade (domestic, regional, and international values).

There seems to be some confusion in the group on how to use indicators across topics, frustration about indicator partial lists and definitions, and about what data is supposed to be guessed at/approximated versus collected to fulfill indicator obligations.

HE  How much baseline data do projects need in order to fulfill reporting?
Enders  That is not clear – lots of overlap among levels of AID activities could result in duplicated data points. Narratives will help in analysis.
KF  Do templates exist to help in this process?
Enders  No. Additionally, there are continuous changes within AID and at his (Enders’) group.

HE  (to HR) How do you want indicators reported?
HR  Numbers by project, by investigation, per year
HE  Alluded to web-based reporting goals. Requested that each project consider a few indicators that fall under Natural Resource Management so that they may be addressed if requested (rather than being requested later and no framework in place to use to answer/report).

JD  Requested that if web reporting does come to be it would be handy to be able to quickly log in and update CRSP-related communications and activities (then pull down info for reporting purposes).
KF  Agreed.
HE  Acknowledged. Would like to see population information, key issues (Thompson handout #3) and sub element finance for investigations as they apply to 5.1 and 5.2 (Thompson handout #2). Redundancy can (and will) exist between both 5.1 and 5.2 for population and key issues, but not for sub element finance section.

0500  HE  Renewed discussion of advisory groups for purposes of group discussions at working dinner. Topics in program description not adequately covered in existing proposals (maximizing water and soil quality and productivity, non-GMO biotechnology, advancing IPM practices, broadening market access, improving food quality, biodiversity conservation) to be discussed, and indicators generated to measure outcomes.

0600  All  Dinner and Development Theme Advisory Panel (DTAP) discussion
groups: break-out groups discussed themes with regard to topics above and generated Outcome Indicators per AID language and objectives.

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Attendees: see attached agenda
Meeting leaders: Hillary Egna (AquaFish CRSP) and Harry Rea (USAID)
Scribe: Kara Warner (AquaFish CRSP)

0830 HR Recapped yesterday; was pleased that so many of the AID personnel were familiar with the AquaFish CRSP proposals. Stressed that AID is in process of developing new themes and methods to carry out projects (be aware of flux).

0845 HE Recapped lessons from yesterday’s meeting. Gender Incorporation: groups can work with NGOs or other groups to fulfill gender goals. Social Survey Info: needed in some cases. Metrics: need better metrics (especially with regard to gender). Environment: would like to keep everyone in low-risk groups; restrict fish transfers even within countries; follow NEPA and AFS guidelines for containment, escapement, or redesign work plan.

HR Suggested reviewing IEE/booklet Jatko distributed yesterday.

HE Continued… Impacts: ideal reporting will be web-based (primarily the responsibility of the US PI, though HCPIs will have access). Would like system to be cumulative and more real-time.

HR Stressed selecting indicators that each group can quantify and easily generate data from.

HE Will not require individual indicators for reporting purposes. Use entire slate of USAID indicators but add indicators only with full group consensus. Remember that we are opting both on USAID indicators and our own indicators for development impacts (from our Program Description CA/LWA).

KQ Is gender inclusivity necessary at project level or for overall program?

HE/HR Investigation-level is terrific, but not all investigations may be necessary. Add on a couple of pages to proposal if a group thinks it needs to address these issues. Use your own judgement. The goal is to understand barriers and strategies on an implementation level, so thinking about gender integration (and inclusivity) on an investigation level might work best.

SN Different countries may not have good NGOs to work with regarding gender, but other government groups may work.

HE Emphasized that working with NGO is not required, but is a good resource (among others) if CRSP alone cannot fulfill gender inclusivity goals.

WCS Appreciated gender discussion yesterday, thought some good ideas for inclusivity came out of that conversation. Wants to get future input from other groups on organizing a “Women in Aquaculture” symposium.

0900 DTAP Group Presentations on additional CRSP-developed Outcome Indicators (see Indicator document).

1100 HE Introduced Regional Centers of Excellence (RCE) discussion:
purpose/role of RCE as integrating crosscutting themes among projects, expanding stakeholder base within regions, IEE screening support.

HR
Introduced topics of Associate Awards and core funds.

HE
OSU ME will be responsible for fiscal/administrative/technical reporting (therefore charging overhead). HE may recruit new US and HC partners for associate awards.

JD
Are proposal drafters under an obligation to accept an award if offered?

HE
Not required. But associate awardees are necessary to help fulfill CRSP’s new enhanced mission to include fisheries. HE and AquaFish partners may seek external funding/cooperations to carry out CRSP goals. Encourages sub awardees to seek their own external funding (leveraging CRSP funds – keep CRSP aware of activities).

Appointing of RCE Lead Coordinators (CRSP Ambassadors):

RB
(Asia) accepts position.

CN
(Africa) accepts position. Suggest a little extra funding would be helpful.

WCS
(LAC) accepts. Is a priority setting exercise needed?

HE
Will let leaders coordinate among themselves priorities (did not want to give extra work at this time).

WCS
Requests official letter of assignment (HE agrees).

1145

HE
AquaFish CRSP Management and Organization discussion: HE is lead PI on the CA/LWA and CRSP Director). To Hillary, those attending this meeting are AquaFish CRSP PIs (US and HC). Those participating but not present are co-PIs, collaborators, or students (plus various other monikers). Introduces management staff (JB, DB, KW). HE looking for a person to fill the (paid) role of synthesizing findings across projects, requests names/candidates for position. Charges DTAP lead (JD) with synthesizing indicators we’ve discussed (also fish production, and income indicators).

HE will post revised proposals to website for availability to each group. HE asks to have reviewer concerns (external panel, AID reviews) addressed in one intro document to revised proposals (like response in journal article review process).

Discussion of award timeline, fund availability. Upcoming program RFP/activities/meetings (see HE handout).

1230

Management presentations from KW (reporting and publishing), JB (outreach and dissemination), and DB (financials and travel). See handouts.

0145

HE
Meeting wrap-up. Requests for care in publishing (credit funding source(s) by including appropriate logos and disclaimers, ensure correct spelling and inclusion of names and organizations). Will post rules/forms/info on navigating CRSP on the new AquaFish website.

KQ
Requests to have AquaFish site more user-friendly (easier to navigate) than old ACRSP site.

HE
Acknowledged. Requested all to send in their bio and a photo to aquafish@regonstate.edu, along with any comments on website development/content. Confirmed that all in group were satisfied with proposal review/revision process, and with subcontracting process.

A round-table followed on final thoughts/comments — group member are looking forward to working with PIs to fulfill CRSP goals and achieve results; pleased to meet each other and discuss the new process in this forum.

HR
CRSP is a community – strength is in working together.