

Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH)
Planning and Management Committee (PMC) Meeting
CIAT, Hanoi, Vietnam
March 21-22, 2018
Summary of Action Items

Introduction

Members of the A4NH Planning and Management Committee (PMC) met with the Program Management Unit (PMU) for two days at CIAT's regional office in Hanoi. The day prior to the meeting, CIAT coordinated presentations and tours showcasing A4NH research activities in Vietnam. Copies of the presentations and all meeting materials are saved [here](#) in the A4NH TeamSpace. Four members of A4NH's Independent Steering Committee (ISC) attended the PMC meeting as observers. A list of participants can be found at the end of this summary. John McDermott, A4NH Director, chaired the meeting.

Action Items

This document summarizes the action items from the meeting by the general topics discussed.

SESSION 1. Collaborations in A4NH Focus Countries: Three Examples

SESSION 2. Reflections on A4NH Country Coordination

In A4NH focus countries, A4NH wants to more effectively collaborate with national partners plus CRPs and CGIAR Centers on ANH research. In the first session, PMC members heard three case studies looking at different aspects of in-country collaboration – joint research for development with national partner; engaging with national institutions in supporting their strategic ANH initiatives; and better coordination of our research across FPs and with other CGIAR research. The second session allowed for a discussion between country coordination teams and the PMC members on how they could work more effectively together.

There was discussion about the benchmark site model that is being implemented by the Vietnam country team for primarily food systems research relevant to FP1, with an openness to expand with activities complementary to other flagships. There is not any intention in A4NH to use the benchmark site model across all four focus countries. However, how this is working in Vietnam was quite interesting and the team was encouraged to consider publishing the process and progress to date in a working paper.

The second area of discussion was around the importance of cross-country analysis, not only for FP1 that is using a focus country approach, but also for A4NH overall. One way to document what is being learned in a systematic way would be to include this in the A4NH work plans.

Actions

- Document carefully and systematically the lessons from the country teams

SESSION 3. Policy Working Group Strategy and Action Areas*

The A4NH policy working group compiled an initial draft strategy that was discussed in October 2017. This session focused on how the policy working group currently functions. They meet virtually at least quarterly. They request flagships report policy work to the policy working group in its early stages. The virtual meetings are used to review progress on policy work across A4NH, share new developments relevant to joint policy work, and suggest syntheses pieces or communication strategies. The policy working group could also assist with resource mobilization efforts around policy engagement, particularly for cross-flagship issues.

There were some suggestions that instead of relying on work that is self-identified, perhaps some of the information could come from MARLO. Following discussion, it seemed better to keep the flow of information from the flagships to the policy working group. The policy working group does not need an inventory of all policy work, just the ones deemed important enough to mention by the flagships.

Another part of the discussion focused on whether or not the policy working group should focus on dissemination of existing and new policy research tools. In the end, it was agreed that this is the key function of the cluster of activity called 3C, led by Namukolo Covic, in FP4. This point could be clarified in the policy working group memo. More thought needed to be done on how 3C shares and disseminates the existing tools – like HANCI, stories of change approach, systematic mapping of policy landscapes – and new tools within countries. A platform for sharing what tools exist needs had not yet been agreed upon.

Actions

- Clarify in the policy working group memo the role of 3C in documenting and sharing policy research relevant tools and resources
- 3C leadership should propose a platform for sharing tools for discussion through the policy working group and with PMC

** Stuart Gillespie joined virtually for this session.*

SESSION 4. Planning and Reporting for Years 1 and 2

Amanda Wyatt reviewed the new common results reporting indicators, which will be reported on starting with the 2017 Annual Report to the System Management Office (SMO). The outline for the new outcome case study (a new component of the annual report template) was also reviewed. The indicators are more or less finalized, however the SMO has not finalized the disaggregates or the guidance. Amanda focused on the six indicators that fall under 'sphere of control':

- Number of innovations
- Number of formal partnerships
- Number of participants in CGIAR activities
- Number of people trained
- Number of peer-reviewed publications
- Altmetrics

The discussion focused on understanding the internal systems the different managing partner institutions have to provide data for each of the indicators, including potential disaggregates (e.g., number of participants

in CGIAR activities who were between 16-24 years old). In general, managing partners agreed they could provide data for all the indicators, however data for many of the disaggregates were probably not available. There were no major concerns about the outcome case study template, but there were concerns about what the expectations from the SMO were for requesting quantitative estimates in an outcome case study. If the outcome case study is designed to tell how our next users have changed knowledge, attitudes, and practices as a result of CRP research, it seemed like the template was asking us to report on the 'outcomes/impacts' achieved by the next users. For example, if World Vision takes up an A4NH innovation and incorporates it into ag-nut programming in xyz country, that's the outcome we would tell in an outcome case study. The PMC were less comfortable with an expectation that the quantitative dimension in this example should be how many WVI beneficiaries/clients/participants have adopted the innovation because of the burden it puts on partners for this information. It starts to blur the boundaries on what 'outcome story' we are telling. Lastly, the PMC encouraged Amanda to provide guidance on annual reporting as early as possible.

The 2018 POWB was circulated to PMC members for review the Friday before the Hanoi meeting and a few clarifying questions on sources of some of the information and where it could be found in MARLO were answered. The PMU will submit the POWB to the SMO on April 3.

Actions

- Amanda will communicate the PMC's concerns about the outcome case study template to the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Community of Practice, who are facilitating communication with the SMO.
- Instructions and timelines for annual reporting will be communicated to the PMC in April and saved on TeamSpace and in the MARLO Resources for A4NH Users folder on Dropbox.

SESSION 5. Update on IFAD's Research to Impact Grant to A4NH

James Garrett updated the PMC on the IFAD Research to Impact grant, which began in September 2017 and will end in March 2022. The initial focus, which is called Component 1, is to develop case studies describing key clients (international development agencies working in nutrition and agriculture) and their use of research. James will reach out to A4NH researchers to document how they understand their clients' needs and what they understand about these organizations. In Component 2, which will start in 2019, a light call for expression of interest will be circulated to A4NH managing partners to fund small pieces of work. Another stream of the grant is devoted to shaping and communicating evidence on what programs and designs work best, along the lines of operational guidance.

Discussion in the meeting focused on looking for ways to link this grant to A4NH's other engagements with IFAD and avenues to link A4NH country teams to relevant groups in IFAD.

This session was primarily for information sharing; no action items were identified.

SESSION 6. Performance Assessment and Operational Management

John reviewed with the PMC a draft outline of how A4NH will assess the quality of research for development in the CRP. The discussion included questions on the classifications in the RACI chart (e.g., some ISC members

questioned that they were truly ‘accountable’ for all of the items where they were listed) and the areas that were being assessed. Some suggestions were that the assessment should (i) be based on research products (as opposed to activities or plans/proposals) and (ii) include areas related to cost-effectiveness, quality of partnerships, and research training (e.g., the MSc grant scheme, which relates to both sustainability and capacity building and seems to tell the story of effectiveness). Other suggestions were to invite representatives from the private sector to review this document and see if it would be acceptable for their purposes and defining more clearly what is meant by research. For example, some programs that have a very regular blogging process find that it increases the effectiveness of their research, even if blog posts in and of themselves are not considered research. Lastly, Bioversity and ICRAF are setting up a joint database that tracks performance of their partners with a set of well-defined indicators, like timely delivery and financial reporting quality. The measurement or criteria in the A4NH document were not apparent so perhaps some ideas could be borrowed from this database.

Other concerns were about time. PMC members did not want to see researchers undertake this self-assessment annually because it would take time away from research. For managing partners involved in several CRPs, could John coordinate this exercise across other CRPs so that a common set of information could be collected that satisfies the ISC criteria. John mentioned he had consulted with documents from RTB, but he could bring this up at the Science Leaders meeting in June in Montpellier.

Actions

- PMC members should consult with colleagues and send John comments on the quality of research for development document by May 18 to update the document for discussion with other CRPs in Montpellier the first week of June.

SESSION 7. Finding and Promoting A4NH Datasets

The PMU has not collected information from partners about datasets linked with A4NH research and as a result there is no list of A4NH datasets or central place to point people interested in accessing the datasets. Having such a list would be useful for many reasons, but most immediately, it could help us identify existing datasets that could be used for further analysis on equity-related issues. Devesh Roy explained that the PMU will be conducting an inventory of datasets linked with A4NH research over the course of 2018. A draft of the questionnaire was shared and discussed with the PMC. The intention is to identify both all the datasets associated with projects within the A4NH portfolio from 2012 to present and their status. Resources from the PMU will be available, on a case by case basis, to strengthen managing partners’ capacity to compile and make data sets available for secondary analysis and comparative studies.

With support from IFPRI’s Communications and Public Affairs division, a sub-group on IFPRI’s Dataverse has been set up for A4NH: <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/A4NH>. The idea is that this would be the online central space for datasets associated with projects within the A4NH portfolio from 2012 to present. In many cases, the datasets themselves won’t be found here, but some basic metadata about the dataset with a link to where the actual data is housed on the web. At the time of the Hanoi meeting, there were already 19 datasets listed in the A4NH Dataverse.

During the discussion, Devesh clarified the nature of the exercise and took suggestions for simplifying the questionnaire and who from the partners were best positioned to complete the questionnaire. In general, there was agreement that several of the fields in the questionnaire could be pre-filled from information the PMU has and that perhaps each partner has a contact point for data requests with whom the PMU could liaise.

Actions

- Revise the data inventory process memo and questionnaire
- Devesh will update the PMC on the timeline in a subsequent meeting

SESSION 8. Equity Implementation Plan for 2018-19

In 2017, A4NH commissioned an external review of equity issues in A4NH research. Based on this review, the PMU – with input from the PMC – have prepared an implementation plan for integrating equity into A4NH research during Phase II. During this session, flagship leaders (or their representatives) described some potential priorities for equity research they could use the \$15,000 (from the PMU’s budget) for in 2018. All of the flagships recognized that they could equity considerations within some of the assumptions in their theories of change and perhaps this exercise would help the teams prioritize research questions that could be pursued during Phase II.

For FP1, Inge has approached Jennifer Twyman from CIAT to assist FP1 with their review of their impact pathway with an equity lens and they intend to identify 1-2 MSc students to help her. FP1 is interested in looking more at how to engage youth in food system innovations and have started discussing the idea with Jim Sumberg from IDS on developing a conceptual framework to describe the importance of this issue, frame it, and identify what literature exists. FP1 is developing a suite of indicators for food systems diagnosis and intend to pay special attention to equity with some dedicated indicators. Once identified, they will be applied in analyses in the four focus countries. FP1 was encouraged to consider ethnic minorities in the food systems analysis and broader work as this is a gap.

For FP2, there will be a systematic effort to assess equity relative to theories of change as they review and update the HarvestPlus M&E system. One new stream of work of interest is in exploring inequalities in nutrient consumption, such as the assumption that nutritious foods are more likely to be given to men and boys in a household in several contexts. They will also review planned work in 2018, such as the Zn-rice adoption study in Bangladesh with an equity/equality lens.

For FP3, they will consult with gender experts at ILRI to define priorities. The perceived challenge they face is not in understanding or characterizing equity issues, but designing interventions that actually change inequities. FP3 is also interested in exploring youth in their research.

In FP4, in several evaluations they are getting better data on coverage of the interventions and looking at which population groups are being missed (ethnicity, geography, different stages of the life course). There will be a piece in the next Global Nutrition Report by Stuart Gillespie on nutrition and power.’

For FP5, equity expertise will be consulted in LSHTM, for both qualitative and quantitative analyses. One particular interest in vector-borne diseases in landscapes is to use scenario, visioning analyses to see how

different stakeholder groups, including marginalized groups, view desired future change. F5 will also consider equity in their agriculture-health spatial data initiative and consider analyses of disease/equity driver hot-spots.

Lastly, the GEE Unit will host an equity consultation in Rome on April 23 with representatives from the Rome-based agencies and have encouraged each flagship to send a representative. This is the same week as the launch of the project-level WEAI, or pro-WEAI. James Garrett is helping the GEE Unit with event coordination. A West Africa consultation is planned as part of the ANH Academy in Ghanda and a South Asia consultation will be planned in consultation with other A4NH partners, for example with the LANSA national partners.

Actions

- Flagship Leaders need to return a terms of reference to the GEE Unit describing how they might use the \$15,000 this year to add equity dimensions to work in their flagships.

SESSION 9. AOB

On both afternoons, ISC members had an alternative schedule allowing them to meet with local stakeholders familiar with A4NH's work. They provided a brief report to the PMC members. Both afternoon meetings provided them with a lot of insights into the political climate and current context for agriculture, nutrition and health research and priority issues Vietnam. For example, food safety is such a major issue that it may be preoccupying officials and researchers to the detriment of other important issues. Efforts to modernize the agriculture sector, particularly pork, is a top priority, however, it was clear that modernizing and/or formalizing sectors does not solve all issues and oftentimes introduces new risks and officials are looking for models on how to transform a sector so that it does not marginalize certain groups of people or decrease the quality or availability of food within Vietnam. The ISC observed both openness and opportunities for building capacity and cross-country learning within the region. They also heard firsthand from partners about the influence of A4NH research. For example, ILRI's study showing that food in supermarkets is not any safer than food in wet markets and in some cases, is less safe, created quite a stir. The ISC members were also impressed at how open institutions were to partnerships, the strength of partnerships A4NH had in Vietnam, and how much partnerships they met with had internalized multi-disciplinary, agriculture-nutrition-health thinking and approaches. The other main observation was about seizing opportunities for private sector engagement and partnerships within Vietnam.

Over a dinner meeting following the end of the PMC meeting, the ISC members met and discussed the PMC's nominations for the new ISC member. The ISC agreed to nominate Mr. Pierre Ferrari, President and CEO of Heifer International, to the IFPRI Board of Trustees to consider him for the A4NH ISC. This information was shared with the PMC in their next virtual meeting following this meeting in Hanoi.

List of Participants for March 21-22, 2018

*Designates virtual participation

**Designates delegate for Flagship Leader and/or Managing Partner representative

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Flagship 1: Inge Brouwer, WUR	Bioversity International: Stephan Weise
**Flagship 2: Keith Lividini, IFPRI-HarvestPlus	CIAT: Maya Rajasekharan
**Flagship 3: Hung Nguyen, ILRI	IITA: Victor Manyong
**Flagship 4: Marie Ruel, IFPRI	ILRI: Iain Wright
**Flagship 5: Jo Lines, LSHTM	WUR: Ruerd Ruben
A4NH Director: John McDermott	GEE Unit Leader: Hazel Malapit
MEL Unit Leader: Devesh Roy	

ISC MEMBERS

Jeroen Bordewijk	Robert Paarlberg
Joyce Kinabo	Emmy Simmons

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT UNIT

Tigist Defabachew	Elena Martinez
Janet Hodur	Amanda Wyatt

COUNTRY COORDINATION TEAM LEADERS AND MEMBERS

Akhter Ahmed (IFPRI, Bangladesh)	Busie Maziya-Dixon (IITA, Nigeria)
Nazmul Alam (IFPRI, Bangladesh)	Jessica Raneri (Bioversity, Vietnam)
Stefan de Haan (CIAT, Vietnam)	Manika Sharma (IFPRI, India) *
Tuyen Huynh (CIAT, Vietnam)	Fred Unger (ILRI, Vietnam)
Pham Huong (CIAT, Vietnam)	Namukolo Covic (IFPRI, Ethiopia) *
Nozomi Kawarazuka (CIP, Vietnam)	

OTHER MEMBERS OF A4NH COMMUNITY

Chris Béné, CIAT	Riccardo Hernandez, CIAT
Dindo Campilan, CIAT	Phuong Nguyen, IFPRI
James Garrett, Bioversity International	Elise Talsma, WUR
Jody Harris, Institute of Development Studies (IDS)	Jordania Valentim, GAIN