

CSDI End-of-Project Stocktaking Exercise



Final Report

In collaboration with:





CSDI End-of-Project Stocktaking Exercise

[GCP/INT/048/ITA]

Final Report

In collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Environment and Territory

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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This document is the result of a participatory end-of-project stocktaking exercise carried out by the project GCP/INT/048/ITA *Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative* (CSDI), with the active involvement of project staff, partners and stakeholders at the global, country and local level. It draws on the overview of main stocktaking findings that was distributed to workshop participants in September 2011, enriched by updated data, insights from workshop discussions and additional information collected in 2012.

The stocktaking process was in fact a collective endeavor by different members of the CSDI working group, under the guidance of Mario Acunzo, CSDI lead technical officer.

This final report was prepared by Marzia Pafumi, CSDI research and M&E assistant, with the support of Federica Matteoli, CSDI project officer and Vanessa Vertiz, assistant for Latin America. A special thanks goes to Elisa Finocchiaro, Luca Servo, Fiona Foster and Corine Quinn who contributed to the monitoring and analysis of outreach data, and to Mario Acunzo for the final revision.

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INTRODUCTION

Project Background

Addressing the impact of climate change on natural resource management, small farmers' livelihoods and food security requires facilitating rural stakeholders' and institutions' access to knowledge and information, as well as increased people's participation in development processes. Planned communication activities are central to this task.

Communication for Development (ComDev) is an approach that combines participatory communication methods and processes with a variety of media and tools, ranging from rural radio to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). It has been promoted in the last thirty years by FAO and is presently applied to enhance the resilience of rural communities to climate change while improving their livelihood options.

In 2008, FAO and the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory jointly launched the **Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative (CSDI)**, an inter-regional project aimed at promoting ComDev as a means to improve adaptation to climate change, sustainable natural resource management, and food security. The overall objective of the CSDI project is to develop, test and implement communication strategies, services and tools to support sound environmental practices for sustainable rural development. The expected outcomes are:

1. innovative applications of ComDev strategies, tools and services to sustainable natural resource management and rural development in selected countries; and
2. improved capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management both at the national and international levels.

Project beneficiaries and stakeholders include: national research and extension services; communication centers and networks; development programs and institutions; NGOs, farmers, indigenous peoples, rural communities and their grassroots organizations in developing countries. To reach its audience at the global and local level, the CSDI project strategy focuses on:

- a) normative and networking activities to enhance ComDev capacities and partnerships;
- b) support to field activities in pilot sites and technical assistance to selected projects.

In the past four years, CSDI has developed ComDev strategies and services in selected countries (i.e. Bangladesh, Bolivia, Congo, Jamaica and the Caribbean region) focusing on strengthening rural knowledge and enhancing local institutions' capacities in this field.

The aim has been to strengthen and upscale communication services in support of climate change adaptation, NRM and food security in the context of national agricultural and rural development policies and to make the results available to the international community. Furthermore, CSDI has supported the implementation of communication platforms, virtual consultations and publications to enhance dialogue and knowledge exchanges at the regional and global levels.

The project comprises a coordination unit based at FAO Rome, composed of one lead technical officer, one project officer and three project consultants. Country focal points (CFPs), national staff from partner institutions and consultants support the project in the selected countries.

Objectives of CSDI Stocktaking

CSDI has been working since 2008 at multiple levels and in different agro-ecological contexts, dealing with complex issues related to climate change and food security, such as livelihood adaptation, disaster risk reduction and agricultural innovation, through an integrated ComDev approach. The experimental nature of the programme, addressing emerging themes in different regions with a strong demand orientation, has allowed piloting out, testing and validating approaches and methodologies to face new agricultural challenges. For this reason, the review and systematization of CSDI results and experience is considered of major importance, as it constitutes a learning opportunity for the project, the donor and partner institutions. Furthermore, findings of this exercise could be of interest to FAO units, field projects and communication practitioners at large.

In consultation with the donor, FAO and the project management agreed to carry out a participatory end-of-project stocktaking exercise as a mean for evaluating project outcomes. It allowed to collect the views of the main actors involved and to validate data collected through the monitoring system. Different stakeholders actively participated at the global and local levels, including CSDI staff based at FAO headquarters, the country focal points, concerned national institutions, farmers organizations and communication networks. This participatory approach was meant to look at the CSDI project under a qualitative lens and to create a space for dialogue and joint assessment of project achievements.

The objectives of the exercise were the following:

- stocktaking of project experiences and results;
- eliciting and systematization of lessons learned;
- assessment of project approach and strategy;
- identification of opportunities and constraints, failure and success factors, for the achievement of project outcomes;
- formulation of recommendations and proposals for project continuation;
- identification of elements to further promote the project institutionalization at global and country level.

Stocktaking Process and Methodology

The stocktaking process was initiated in 2010 and managed by the CSDI coordination unit, which availed itself of the collaboration of two international M&E and ComDev consultants. The preliminary step was the set-up of a **project-wide M&E system** to ensure consistent planning and monitoring of activities at the national, regional and global level. In a view of achieving a full ownership of the stocktaking exercise, the coordination unit consulted with concerned institutions and CSDI focal points at the field level, who also ensured the involvement and participation of relevant project stakeholders in each country, from partner institutions to local organizations, as well as end-users.

The **stocktaking study** addressed the experience and results achieved by the project at the global level, three country case studies were carried out by national consultants in close collaboration with CFPs and partner institutions in Bolivia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Jamaica, to

document and assess activities and outcomes of project field pilots. Furthermore, in order to collect local stakeholders' feedback, CSDI focal points organized **validation workshops** in each country, inviting relevant actors and institutions.

As part of the process methodology, the two M&E and ComDev consultants designed a **stocktaking workshop** to discuss the study findings, share lessons learned, provide recommendations and identify opportunities for follow-up. Representatives of the country project components and institutional counterparts joined the members of CSDI coordination unit in this two-day workshop at FAO Headquarters in Rome, from 12 to 13 September 2011.

Drawing on the results of the stocktaking process, the project shared relevant findings with the project donor during a **Steering Committee** (Rome, September 14, 2011). CSDI experience was also presented later the same month at the **FAO Expert Consultation** on "Communication for Rural Development: meeting today's agriculture and rural development challenges" organized in collaboration with IFAD, CTA and IICD (FAO, 2012a).

The full process, which led to the consolidation of the present report, is summarized below:

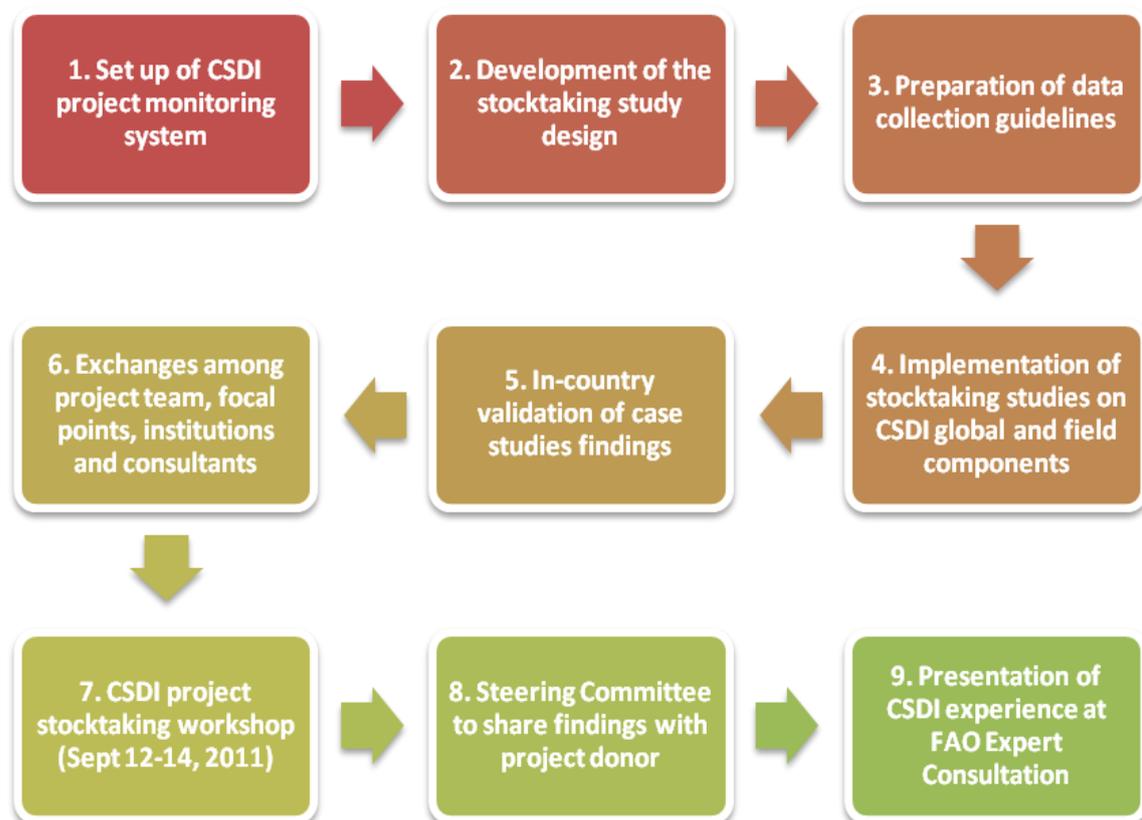


Figure 1. Steps of the stocktaking process

The CSDI end-of-project stocktaking is primarily a qualitative study that reflects a process-oriented project. Methods used for collecting and analyzing information included:

- Review of project literature and selected written materials
- Analysis of monitoring data
- Critical review of a sample of project services and products in the light of ComDev theory and practice

- Focus group and/or individual interviews to project stakeholders
- Analysis and systematization of stocktaking findings
- Discussions and validation workshops, involving the coordination unit team, country focal points, representatives of national counterparts and other stakeholders.

The detailed study design, including evaluation questions and activities developed to address the research topics for both global- and country-level case studies, is found in **Annex 1**.

PART 1. CSDI IN ACTION

1. Project Design, Rationale and Strategy

FAO and the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Territory jointly launched the **Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative (CSDI)** in 2008 to strengthen efforts in the applications of ComDev to sustainable development policies and programs, as well as to food security and rural livelihoods. Responsible for project execution has been the FAO ComDev team based in the Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension (OEK).

The overall project objective has been to develop, test and implement communication strategies and tools to support sound environmental practices to improve livelihood adaptation to climate change, sustainable natural resource management and agricultural development among smallholders and rural communities.

This section presents CSDI's vision of change¹ and an overview of the project design and implementation strategy, as outlined in the Project Document (ProDoc) and subsequently refined in the course of the project life.

1.1 Rationale and Vision of Change

CSDI's impact statement envisages that the design and implementation of effective ComDev strategies and tools will significantly contribute to the adoption of sound practices for sustainable rural development.

The rationale behind this vision is elaborated in the ProDoc as follows:

The increasing demand for information, knowledge, skills, and participation puts the need for planned communication initiatives at the centre of the development initiatives. Knowledge and information are essential to improve food security, sustainable NRM and rural development, but to be useful they must be effectively communicated to rural communities in formats and languages they can readily comprehend.

Nowadays, there is an increasing recognition of the strategic role and of the potential of communication as a cross-cutting issue in development, as well as of the role of the new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to promote sustainable economic and social development. Furthermore, ComDev can help in bridging the rural digital divide which is recognized as a limiting factor to achieve sustainable rural development. (CSDI, 2007)

During the design and implementation of its operational strategy, the project has progressively narrowed the focus from NRM and rural development at large, to put more emphasis on climate change adaptation (CCA), an issue already mentioned in the ProDoc.

¹ The vision of change is an ideal image of what the end-of-project situation would look like, a statement that orients the work of the project. It must be stressed that demonstrating the degree of concretization of the vision of change and/or the project's impact is empirically difficult, especially in short-term projects like CSDI.

Since 2009 the project has established an intense and continued collaboration with FAO's Inter-Departmental Working Groups on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, and has been networking with a set of international institutions and organizations dealing with such issues. In sum, the concept of climate change being a major threat to sustainable agriculture and food security has strongly permeated the project, particularly its global component.

A project milestone in this sense was the *Third International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change*, held in Dhaka in February 2009 (CSDI, 2010a) followed by the first internal project meeting (CSDI, 2010b). The meeting was an opportunity for CSDI staff and collaborators to initiate a joint reflection and evolve project insight to conceptualize more precisely the role of ComDev services for climate change adaptation.

Later on, the **CSDI flagship publication** *Collaborative Change: A communication framework for climate change adaptation and food security* (CSDI, 2010c) set the tone and conceptual framework for the project. Four elements were identified as essential for promoting concerted action to face climate change and food security related challenges:

1. Embrace a people-centred policy framework supportive of the rural poor and people's livelihoods, and increase investments in agriculture;
2. Increase the resilience of food production systems to climate change challenges;
3. Support climate change adaptation, mitigation, technology development, transfer and dissemination;
4. Increase efforts of international cooperation on researching developing, applying, transferring and disseminating improved technologies and policy approaches.

The paper makes reference to the *Sustainable Livelihoods Framework* (SLF) and, within it, to working with the most vulnerable, as central to a *Community-Based Adaptation* (CBA) approach to climate change. The different communication dimensions that ComDev can support are summarized as follows (p.28):

- Educational communication
- Policy communication
- Participatory communication
- Organizational communication
- Advocacy communication
- Conflict management communication
- Risk communication

Therefore CSDI's vision was to combine the different communication functions into ComDev strategies and plans of action for **promoting community-driven responses to climate change**. This set a concrete foundation for the project field activities, although at country level several other topics, such as agricultural innovation or research-farmers links, offered more suitable entry points for ComDev services.

1.2 CSDI Project Design

To trigger the change envisioned - that effective ComDev strategies and tools will make a significant contribution to sustainable rural development - the project identified two operational results, or project outcomes (see figure 2).



Figure 2. CSDI project outcomes

From a M&E expert analysis, it emerged that CSDI's project outcomes match several features of a good intermediate result statement: relevant to project's vision, clear in formulation, logically related to each other and potentially achievable with project resources and timing.

To achieve the above outcomes, the strategy originally presented in the CSDI ProDoc was the following:

The project will support the application of ComDev to natural resources management and climate change in selected countries focusing on:

- 1) strengthen the capacities of local institutions, extension services, NGOs and other service providers in planning and implementation of communication strategies and services for natural resource management;*
- 2) assessing the institutional linkages required to mainstream communication approaches and services into environmental and development policies;*
- 3) develop a model for a broader application of the experiences gained to other contexts.*

This viable and cautious agenda is firmly rooted in FAO's long-lasting ComDev experience. In other words, CSDI project would start from developing local pilot experiences to strengthen capacities and assess the possibility of mainstreaming ComDev into national agricultural and NRM policies. Based on this **learning-by-doing process**, the project would develop a normative model, to be shared and adapted for application to other contexts.

Taking into account additional specifications coming from the requests for collaboration of member countries and FAO departments, CSDI articulated a more detailed description of outputs and activities in the project logical framework² (see table in the next page).

² Logical frameworks are based on the assumption that the implementation of activities will lead to the production of outputs, and the latter to the achievement of outcomes, that altogether will contribute to making more or less real the expected impact.

| CSDI LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | |
|---|--|
| Output 1.1 Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>1.1.1 Stocktaking exercise of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices related to environmental communication services in developing countries.</p> <p>1.1.2 Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programs and selection of pilot sites.</p> <p>1.1.3 Preparation of National plans and updating of the project strategy and detailed workplan for implementing pilot activities in selected countries.</p> <p>1.1.4 Design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities to document and validate environmental communication strategies and services.</p> |
| Output 1.2 Environmental communication strategies, plans and tools implemented in at least 3 countries | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>1.2.1 Participatory communication appraisals and strategy design in support of natural resources and rural development programs in at least three pilot areas.</p> <p>1.2.2 Implementation of the communication strategies and plans for sustainable NRM and rural development in selected areas (see 1.2.1).</p> <p>1.2.3 Feasibility studies and workshops for the scaling up of pilot experiences.</p> <p>1.2.4 Documentation, monitoring and evaluation of the communication plans, tools and lessons learned at the field level.</p> |
| Output 2.1 Improved knowledge and skills on environmental communication | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>2.1.1 Production of documents, case studies, guidelines, training modules, multimedia materials on communication approaches, methodologies and tools applied to environmental services in different agro-ecological and development contexts.</p> <p>2.1.2 Studies on best practices, institutional frameworks, policies and laws related to environmental and communication services.</p> <p>2.1.3 At least three intensive training courses in environmental communication to be held in the project areas.</p> <p>2.1.4 Series of workshops and training events on communication, rural livelihood and environmental services for policy makers, field workers, institutions, NGOs, community based organizations.</p> |
| Output 2.2 Environmental communication projects and initiatives designed and promoted | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>2.2.1 Technical assistance to selected countries, and environmental and development programs in the design of communication projects and initiatives.</p> <p>2.2.2 Two consultations on lessons learned on environmental communication policies and services.</p> <p>2.2.3 Preparation of guidelines (e.g. a framework and an operational model), for designing environmental communication services.</p> |
| Output 2.3 Strategic partnerships and environmental communication platforms implemented | <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>2.3.1 Support to at least three multi-stakeholder regional thematic platforms to share knowledge and provide support on communication strategies, best practices and environmental services.</p> <p>2.3.2 Advocacy and policy dialogue through fora and information activities involving local stakeholders, governments, development agencies, donors, etc.</p> <p>2.3.3 Identification of potential partners and mechanisms for cooperation.</p> <p>2.3.4 Design and launching of a partnership program for the expansion and sustainability of project activities.</p> |

As foreseen in the logframe (Activity 1.1.3), after an overall assessment of needs and opportunities and the selection of pilot sites for implementation of project activities, the strategy was updated and the complexity of project activities was summarized into three main lines of action, as follows:

- a) *normative activities* consisting in the systematization and diffusion of “approaches, best practices, training materials and policies on the application of ComDev to NRM and CCA”;
- b) *field components* comprising the development of a national communication plan in support of local needs (Bolivia), two communication action plans (Congo, the Caribbean), and the delivery of technical assistance to other selected projects; and
- c) *partnerships and networking* at country and global level, also within FAO and including virtual platforms.

Later on, this strategy was reformulated in an attempt to clarify it and to stress the crosscutting efforts carried out by CSDI’s different components to promote knowledge sharing and capacity development in ComDev. The value-added of this revision is also communicational, as the rewording avoids FAO jargon (e.g. “normative activities”).

The following is how CSDI presents its strategy in project showcases such as the website and the flyer:

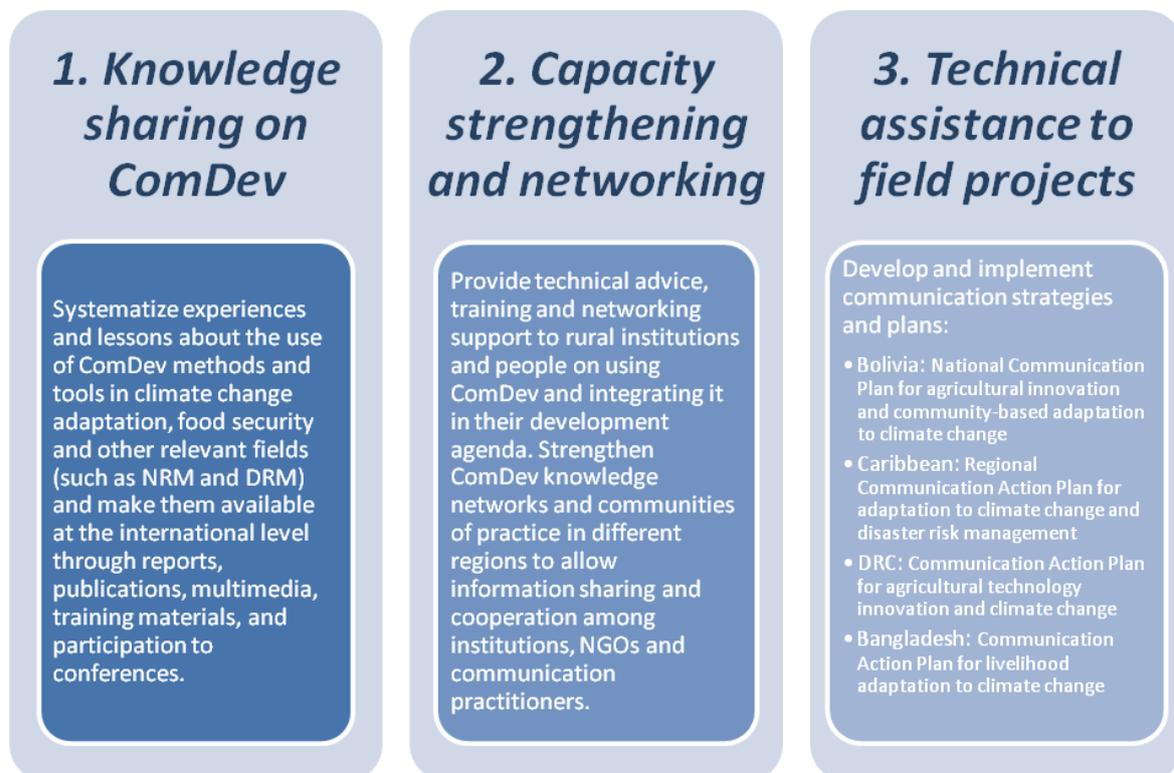


Figure 3. CSDI project strategy

1.3 Implementation Strategy

Once approved, the project went through a start-up phase for the selection of pilot sites and the formulation of a detailed work plan, including the identification of field activities. Linked to the experimental nature of the project, this initial flexibility allowed for **bottom-up planning** based on consultations and feedback from local institutions, development programmes and rural communities.

During this inception phase, three field components were identified with a demand-driven approach and taking into consideration elements for success and the comparative advantages for FAO. **Criteria for country selection** included:

- Possibility to pilot test the approach in different regions (Latin America, Africa, Asia)
- Official request for technical assistance by national governments or institutions
- Existence of ongoing efforts/experiences in the field of ComDev for NRM and CCA
- Relevance of development issues to be addressed in the field of ComDev applied to climate change adaptation, agricultural innovation or disaster risk reduction
- Diversity of agro-ecological contexts as a richness
- Readiness and commitment of the participating countries (willingness to mainstream ComDev and/or to co-finance activities)
- Interest of the donor

FAO legacy in participatory development and Communication for Development in specific countries was an important factor among those considered. For example, countries like Bolivia, Peru, Cambodia, Egypt, Malawi or Syria had been preliminarily identified as potential candidates because in the past they had successfully applied ComDev to natural resources management with FAO assistance.

The Government of Bolivia was the first that officially requested project assistance for the design of rural communication services at country level, in connection with the establishment of the **National Institute for Agricultural and Forestry Innovation (INIAF)**. As a result, the project formulated a National Communication Plan allocating a total amount of US \$ 580,000.

A second request was addressed to the project by the **Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC)**, University of West Indies, Jamaica for assistance in the field of communication for disaster risk management in agriculture. This led to the selection of the Caribbean region as second field component, with an overall budget allocation of US \$ 120,000.

Finally, the third pilot site was identified in the Democratic Republic of Congo to support agroforestry activities of the **National Agricultural Research and Extension Service (INERA)** with the formulation of a communication plan for a total amount of US \$ 220,000.

It is worth noting that assistance was also provided to the Government of Bangladesh for the formulation of a full-fledge FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) on *“Enhancing Rural Communication Services for Agricultural Development through Rural Radio”*. The project, implemented in close collaboration with the **Agriculture Information Service (AIS)** of the Ministry of Agriculture, started later in 2010 with a budget allocation of US \$ 457,500.

Participatory needs and opportunities assessments were undertaken in each of the field components in order to identify key agricultural and environmental programmes/institutions to support. Site-specific plans of action were developed and subscribed by the governments of the participating countries. The project strategy and overall detailed workplan were subsequently finalized.

A project Steering Committee was established between FAO, the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Territory, and representatives of the participating countries, to monitor the implementation of project activities both at the national and inter-regional level and to encourage a learning-by-doing process that would generate lessons learned and policy recommendations.

2. The Global Component

In addition to providing technical assistance in ComDev in selected countries, CSDI project strategy focused on the production and exchange of knowledge resources at the regional and global levels. This was intended to make the results of pilot activities available, but also to enhance networking and strengthen capacities in ComDev for climate change adaptation, food security and other relevant aspects of rural development. In particular, one major task of the project at the global level was to contribute to the positioning and mainstreaming of ComDev in the international debate on community-based climate change adaptation.

This section deals with the work of the CSDI global component and the contribution given to the overall project by the team based at FAO headquarters, in the Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension (OEK).

2.1 Main Activities and Results

CSDI coordination unit includes the lead technical officer, a project officer and three ComDev, Knowledge Management and ICTs for Development specialists working as project consultants. This Rome-based team has been directly responsible for:

1. coordinating project activities and providing technical backstopping to the work of country components;
2. developing and managing a project-wide monitoring and result assessment system;
3. documenting and sharing project experiences through publications and outreach activities;
4. positioning the topic in FAO and in the international agenda;
5. supporting communication platforms to strengthen regional capacities;
6. creating partnerships at global and country level;
7. establishing linkages and collaborations within FAO, with other technical units and thematic working groups;
8. providing technical assistance to other projects; and
9. developing a sustainability and follow-up strategy.

Many of the activities undertaken are multifunctional and contribute to more than one strategic objective. As an example, the regional platforms supported by CSDI to strengthen local capacities in ComDev have, at the same time, been instrumental to share knowledge on the project experience, increasing its visibility and outreach.

1. COORDINATING AND BACKSTOPPING PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Besides developing the project design and strategy, the coordination unit has coordinated CSDI activities in all aspects. In particular, it has supported the work of the country components with technical assistance, administrative support, regular coordination meetings and communications. Members of the Rome-based team have been dedicated to monitor and support the activities of

the field components, liaising on a daily basis with national institutions and project focal points in Africa, Caribbean, Latin America and Asia.

The coordination unit has played a key function in backstopping project activities through field missions, provision of constant advice and technical support, preparation and revision of technical documents.

2. MONITORING AND ASSESSING PROJECT RESULTS

Another key task of the coordination unit has been the development of a project-wide monitoring system. In 2010, with the advice of a M&E expert, the existing procedures were revised and a common set of tools was devised to ensure consistent planning and monitoring of project activities at the national, regional and global level. In response to CSDI need of ensuring a continued follow-up to the delivery of particular products on a short term basis (quarterly), and to assess whether the project is generating the expected changes in the medium term (biannually), the new monitoring system included two components:

- Process Monitoring, i.e. the continued follow-up of the delivery of specific products contributing to the implementation of project log-frame activities; and
- Result Assessment, focusing on biannual progress towards log-frame output and outcomes.

The coordination unit produced the *Monitoring and Result Assessment Guidelines* (CSDI, 2010d – included here as Annex 2) covering both the conceptual aspects and operational rules of the M&E routine, including hints on informatics support. The guidelines were circulated among CSDI teams to introduce the new system and serve as a trouble-shooting reference during the implementation. Basic monitoring tools included a process monitoring Excel spreadsheet, tailored to each component's workplan, and standard reporting templates in the three languages. The latter have been used by focal points in Bolivia, DRC and Caribbean to document the activities carried out, the progress achieved and the main problems encountered on a monthly and quarterly basis.

Ongoing information was recorded, but also retrospective data drawn from previous reports and monitoring notes were progressively included in the database, so that project activities have been covered since the inception with an acceptable level of accuracy. The new system helped to improve coordination and the efficiency of each component. In addition, it facilitated the collection of compatible and reliable monitoring data, to make sense of the real achievements in view of the project stocktaking exercise.

3. SYSTEMATIZING AND SHARING PROJECT EXPERIENCE

The CSDI project has worked to develop a conceptual framework but also to document lessons learned from field experience on the use of ComDev methods and tools applied to climate change adaptation, food security and related issues. In fact, CSDI normative work has been mainly conducted by the global component, in charge of the preparation of most project documents and publications, including technical papers, case studies and reports, as well as manuals and training materials. In some cases, these documents have been produced at country level with the supervision and quality control of the global team.

The following list provides more details:

➤ **Conceptual framework**

Collaborative change. A Communication Framework for Climate Change Adaptation and Food Security [2010] - in English, French and Spanish

➤ **Reports**

1. *La Comunicación para el Desarrollo ante los Desafíos del Cambio Climático, Manejo de Recursos Naturales, Gestión Del Riesgo y Seguridad Alimentaria. Memorias de una consulta virtual* [2010]
2. *Advancing Adaptation through Communication for Development. Proceedings of the technical session on Communication, 3rd International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change* [2010]
3. *CSDI Expert Meeting and Virtual Consultation on ComDev for Climate Change Adaptation* [2010]
4. *Indigenous Peoples' Communication for Development. Collaborative Efforts towards Self-determined Sustainable Development* [2010]
5. *Diagnóstico de Experiencias, Servicios, Capacidades e Iniciativas en Comunicación para Innovación Agropecuaria y Forestal y el Desarrollo Rural en Bolivia* [2011]

➤ **Case studies**

1. *PLATICAR: Comunicación para el Desarrollo aplicada al sistema de innovación tecnológica en Costa Rica* [2008]
2. *Communication pour le développement de la diffusion des technologies agricoles et forestières au Bas Congo* [2010]
3. *Institutionalizing Communication Services for Agricultural Innovation and Rural Development in Bolivia* [2010]
4. Bolivia country study for FAO OEKR paper *Facing the challenges of climate change and food security: the role of research, extension and communications institutions* [2010]
5. DRC country study for FAO OEKR paper *Facing the challenges of climate change and food security: the role of research, extension and communications institutions* [2010]
6. *Comunicación para la Innovación y el Desarrollo Rural en el ANMI-PNA del Municipio Yapacaní* [2011]
7. *Comunicación para la Innovación y el Desarrollo Rural en el Área Piloto San Ignacio de Velasco - Chiquitanía* [2011]
8. *Comunicación para la Innovación y el Desarrollo Rural en el Municipio de Yacuiba* [2012]
9. *Sharing Indigenous Knowledge in NRM. Study on Local Knowledge and ComDev in the Amazon* [2012]

➤ **Technical papers**

1. *Communication Assessment and Action Plan for the LACC Project in Bangladesh* [2009]
2. *Comunicación para el Desarrollo en la Innovación Agropecuaria y Forestal* [2011]
3. *Espacios Locales de Concertación en el marco de la Estrategia de Innovación del INIAF* [2011]
4. *The Role of Information and Communication Technologies for Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change* [2011]

5. *La Comunicación en la Gestión Territorial, el Cambio Climático y el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas* [2011]
6. *Communication Assessment and Action Plan for the Caribbean Region* [2012]

➤ **Published articles**

1. *Tendencias y desafíos de la comunicación para el desarrollo rural en América Latina: la experiencia de la FAO* in 'Comunicación para el Desarrollo: una herramienta para el cambio social y la participación' (UNESCO, 2010)
2. *La "comunicazione per lo sviluppo". Una risorsa per favorire l'adattamento delle comunità locali ai cambiamenti climatici* in 'Il continente verde' (Cresti & Touadi Eds., 2011)

➤ **Guidelines and manuals**

1. *CSDI Monitoring and Result Assessment Guidelines* [2010]
2. *Estrategias y Planes Locales de Comunicación para la Innovación y el Desarrollo Rural. Metodologías y herramientas en apoyo a los servicios de innovación productiva y de desarrollo rural* [2011]
3. *Tecnologías y prácticas para pequeños productores agrícolas, pecuarios y forestales. Gestión de la plataforma información y contenidos TECA-Bolivia* [2011]
4. *Comunicación y Uso de la Radio en la Gestión del Riesgo de Desastres y la Adaptación al Cambio Climático* [2012]

➤ **Training modules and guides for trainers**

5 *Módulos de Conocimiento y Comunicación* (MCC) including multimedia supporting materials and instructional videos developed in Bolivia on:

- Pasture Management for Dairy Cattle
- Direct Sowing
- Water Harvesting for Diversified Crops
- Forage Conservation
- Operational Guidelines for Local Negotiations

4 *ComDev Modules for Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean* with related manuals for facilitators on:

- Using ComDev for Audience Research
- Scripting for Instructional Video and Power Point
- Basic Video Production and Camera Skills
- Digital Editing Skills

Moreover, the project supported the production of 1 **photobook** '*Lo que la tierra nos da*' (FAO, 2012b) and 4 **short videos**:

1. *Communication Pathways* [2010]
2. *Los Caminos de la Comunicación* [2010]
3. *Communiquer pour Changer* [2011]
4. *Bolivia - El legado para la Seguridad Alimentaria* - also with English subtitles [2011]

All these resources have been distributed in hard and soft copies, as well as compiled in a **CSDI multimedia resource kit** on an electronic data storage device. They have also been presented or made available at international conferences and events.

4. POSITIONING THE TOPIC IN FAO AND THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

From 2008 to 2011 CSDI organized and participated in nearly 20 international conferences, events and seminars addressing Communication for Development, climate change, food security and related issues:

- 7th and 8th sessions of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, where CSDI supported a special event on ComDev for NRM and CCA (New York, Apr 2008 and May 2009)
- FAO/AMARC Workshop (Santa Cruz, Apr 2008)
- High Level Conference on Climate Change and Food Security (Rome, Jun 2008)
- CTA Seminar on Climate Change Implications for Sustainable Agriculture (Ouagadougou, Oct 2008);
- IFAD ClimeTrain (Rome, Nov 2008)
- 3rd International Workshop on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change where CSDI organized a technical session on Communication for Development (Dhaka, Feb 2009)
- Open Space on the role of FAO in Climate Change (Rome, Jul 2009)
- 4th and 5th International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change (Dar es Salaam, Feb 2010 and Dhaka, Mar 2011)
- FAO Climate Change Days (Rome, Jun 2010)
- AMARC 10th Global Conference (La Plata, Nov 2010)
- CF-6 Conference on Open Learning (Kochi, Nov 2010)
- Agricultural Meetings at UNFCCC/CTA (Cancun, Dec 2010)
- 1st and 3rd Knowledge Share Fair (Rome, Mar 2009 and Sep 2011)
- AMARC Caribbean Regional Conference (Port-au-prince Haiti, May 2011)
- FAO Expert Consultation on Communication for Rural Development (Rome, Sep 2011)

The dissemination of CSDI knowledge and information products was also part of a full-fledge **Outreach Plan** developed and implemented by the coordination unit, including the use of ICTs and social media, with the following objectives:

| OBJECTIVES OF CSDI OUTREACH PLAN | |
|---|--|
| a) knowledge sharing, visibility and effective outreach | 1. Promoting CSDI inside and outside FAO |
| | 2. Supporting and promoting knowledge sharing from and among experience in the field |
| | 3. Getting actively involved into the debate in the global scenario |
| b) foster cooperation and partnerships | 1. Perceive the orientation of the global agenda |
| | 2. Identify new possibilities for effective collaboration |

CSDI target audiences include FAO technical divisions interested in NRM, climate change adaptation and food security, CSDI field components and associates, national institutions and external audiences potentially interested in ComDev and participatory approaches for their

programs. To reach the different target groups, the coordination unit has used several communication tools:

1. CSDI **website** (www.csdinitiative.org) is online from January 2011 to share publications, methodologies and activities developed by or related to the project, and to give it more visibility. It is accessible in three languages and features articles, a blog, the newsletter and a repository of documents that have totalled over 23,500 downloads. Two years after its launch, the website had received 8,600 visits by more than 5,300 unique visitors. Users are primarily FAO employees or visitors from the US and UK, but people from project pilot countries such as Bolivia and Bangladesh also frequently visit. As shown below, the amount of traffic on CSDI website has steadily increased since the second half of 2011, possibly in connection with the use of facebook, twitter and the newsletter.

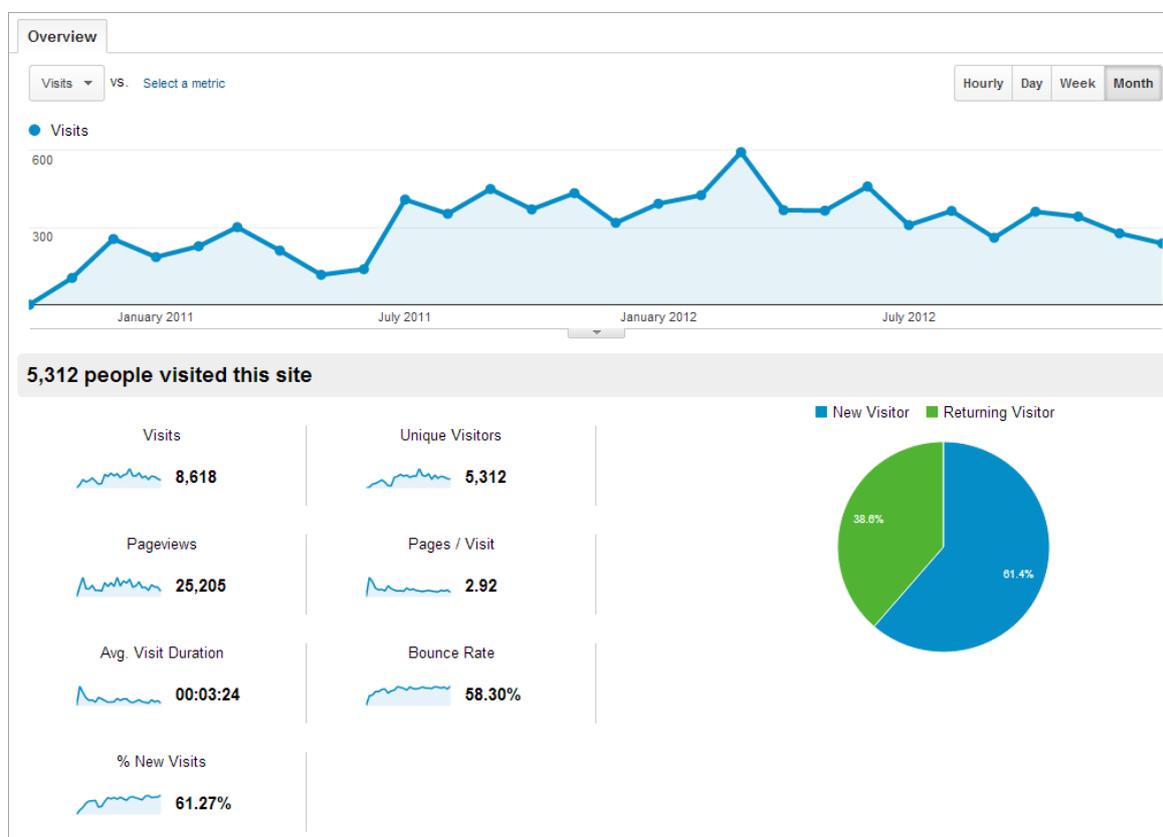


Figure 4. CSDI website audience overview

2. The **Blog** under CSDI website domain was opened for CSDI staff to deepen periodically an issue or an event from a more personal point of view, keeping chronological track of them and allowing readers to leave comments and ideas. While the blog is published through the website, people rather comment or share the posts through facebook and twitter.
3. The **Twitter** account [@FAOcsdi](https://twitter.com/FAOcsdi) was set up and has been regularly used since early 2011 to get easy access to the information that interests the project most, and to share instantly project activities, articles, news and updates. CSDI tweets are primarily in English, but are often re-tweeted in Spanish or French. Followers come from around the world, from Bolivia to Nepal, and have rapidly grown (they more than tripled over one year, from June 2011 to June 2012) to reach the current number of over 1,450.

Statistics show that users re-tweet CSDI content on average 4.5 times a week (CSDI's tweets are sometimes featured in online newspapers such as @puenteuno or The Biodiversidad Daily). The number of mentions reaches 4 per week, indicating popularity as the followers are engaging with specifically CSDI-related material. A pick of mentions occurred during the FAO Expert Consultation in September 2011, showing the followers' interest in this topic.

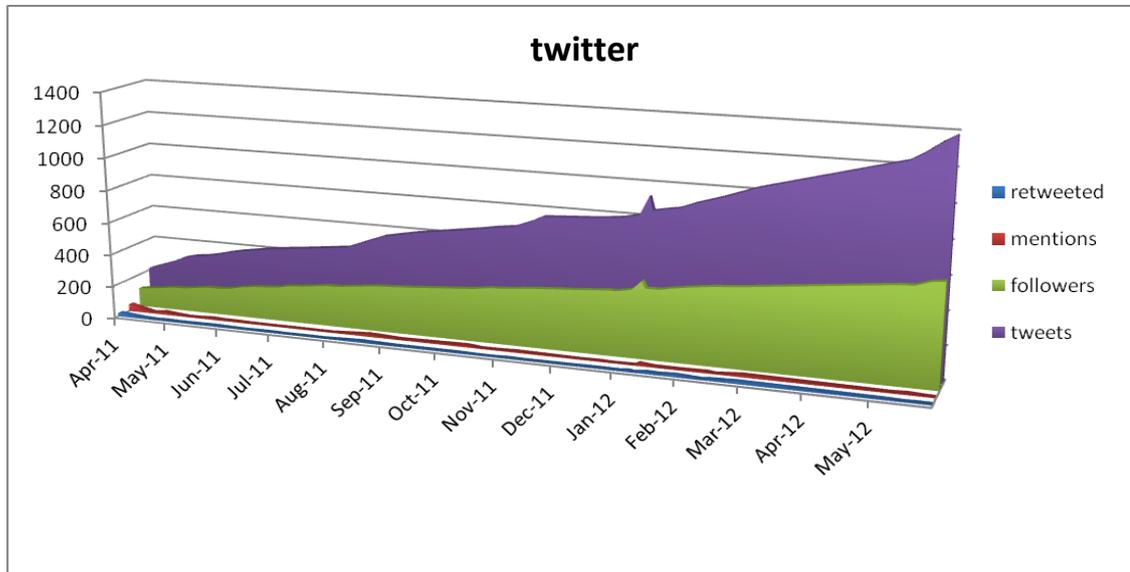


Figure 5. CSDI on twitter

4. CSDI has regularly posted on both a [Facebook page](#) and a **profile**. This has several advantages, among them it allows users to interact with CSDI as *they* choose, whether they want to show support by 'liking' the page, or have a more interactive relationship with the profile. The total number of friends and fans has gone from 80 to 335 over a span of 14 months, with an average increase of 7 new friends or fans per data entry.
5. CSDI has its own [SlideShare](#)³ account to share presentations about the project and ComDev related subjects for continued use and education. Views are constantly increasing and are already more than 12,000.
6. Besides Facebook, CSDI uses [Flickr](#), an image hosting website and online community, to share and embed pictures taken during events, workshops and trainings at the field or global level, organized by CSDI or to which CSDI participates. Currently 372 photos have been published in ten thematic sets of pictures, which have attracted around 650 viewers to further explore the work of CSDI.
7. The project has its own [YouTube channel](#) where videos about communication for development for NRM, CCA and food security are posted to illustrate the methodologies and activities promoted or directly developed by the project. The tool is used as a multi-media way to share CSDI information. Since April 2011, 33 videos have been uploaded for a total of 173,000 views (see graph below). Users favourites are the instructional videos with concrete informational content, such as the '*Alimentación de ganado tipo lechero*' tutorial produced by CSDI Bolivian component, that has by far the highest number of views, almost 77,000.

³ SlideShare is an online slide hosting service. Users can upload files in the following file formats: PowerPoint, PDF, Keynote or Open Office presentations.

8. The **CSDI newsletter** is issued bi-monthly and distributed to over 1100 email subscribers. It is also available in the CSDI web repository, from where all project publications and resources can be downloaded.
9. Three **distribution lists**, differentiated by language, have been compiled and are used for distribution of materials such as publications, leaflets, flyers and the newsletter to selected recipients.

Overall, these data suggest that CSDI's use of outreach tools, web and social media has been successful in both increasing reach and gaining interest from a wider range of people. This also reflects the ability of FAO CSDI to engage its audiences, stay connected with other users in the development sectors and be of continued relevance.

5. SUPPORTING COMDEV PLATFORMS

Through its knowledge sharing efforts, CSDI has achieved more visibility for the project itself both at the international and country level. This also served to identify good practices and strengthen existing capacities in ComDev. Adding to this, the CSDI team has been providing continuous support to regional partners for the creation and enhancement of platforms and communities of practitioners in developing countries. The platforms' function are:

- facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experiences on ComDev applications to NRM, climate change adaptation and food security;
- address local needs in ComDev for research, extension and farmers linkages;
- developing local capacities in the use of ComDev methodologies and approaches for effective environmental and agricultural practices;
- promoting linkages between normative and field activities to smooth the process of adapting communication tools to local processes;
- opening common lines of action and fostering the cooperation among the different stakeholders involved.

The platforms have fostered the reinforcement of local capacities to implement communication strategies and services, producing and sharing knowledge with a ComDev approach. To attract and aggregate interested users, CSDI has also started group discussions and organized virtual consultations. For instance, in collaboration with the Communication Initiative (CI), the project organized an expert virtual consultation on ComDev and climate change adaptation from June 8 to July 13, 2009 that opened the door for broader partnership among practitioners, researchers, institutions and donors engaged in this sector.

In particular, CSDI has supported the following ComDev platforms:

➤ [Onda Rural](#)

A collaborative effort initiated by FAO with ALER (*Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica*) and AMARC (*Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias*), Onda Rural fosters cooperation between community radio stations, local networks, development institutions and projects to facilitate access to information for the rural population in Latin America.

➤ [ComDev Asia](#)

Run by the College of Development Communication of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, in collaboration with AMARC-Asia Pacific, showcases good practices in the region and facilitates virtual exchanges among local practitioners, with a focus on ComDev applications to agricultural innovation, climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, gender equality and food security.

➤ [Plataforma de Comunicación para el Desarrollo de Centroamérica y México](#)

Hosted and facilitated by *Voces Nuestras* in Costa Rica, targets Mesoamerican practitioners to show how ComDev approaches contribute to improve livelihood outcomes, in harmony with the environment.

➤ [Plataforma de Comunicación y Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas](#)

Managed by CIDOB (*Confederación Indígena del Oriente Boliviano*) in Bolivia, the platform is dedicated to communication specialists, institutions, national and international organizations who are involved in development activities focusing on indigenous peoples' self-determination and development.

➤ [Caribbean ComDev Platform](#)

In collaboration with the Caribbean Centre of Media and Communication (CARIMAC), CDSI has developed a web-based knowledge sharing platform to make available best practices in the Caribbean region, with a particular focus on ComDev applications to climate change adaptation and disaster risk management.

➤ [ComDev Platform in the Near East](#)

Established in partnership with the American University of Beirut, this ComDev platform is meant to offer a space for practitioners in the Near East region to share experiences and access ComDev publications and resources.

➤ [Collaborative Change Communication](#)

Launched as part of a global initiative to strengthen capacities in communication for rural development promoted by FAO and the College of Development Communication of the University of the Philippines Los Baños, is a venue where development and communication practitioners can access learning resources, establish networks, engage in discussions and explore potential collaboration.

6. CREATING PARTNERSHIPS AT GLOBAL AND COUNTRY LEVEL

The virtual platforms have also contributed to the creation of a network of partners and collaborators, including universities, international institutions, NGOs, and organizations of ComDev practitioners in different regions. The project signed formal **Letters of Agreement** with the following institutions:

- Caribbean Institute for Media and Communications (CARIMAC), University of the West Indies, Jamaica - April 2009
- Roskilde University (RUC), Denmark - July 2009
- Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales (CEPES), Peru - December 2009
- College of Development Communication (CDC), University of the Philippines Los Baños - May 2010

- Confederación Indígena del Oriente Boliviano (CIDOB), Bolivia - September 2010
- Institut Facultaire des Sciences de l'Information et de la Communication (IFASIC) University of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo - March 2011

Moreover, the active participation in key international events, in some occasions as co-organizer (e.g. two editions of the International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change and the FAO Expert Consultation on Communication for Rural Development), has allowed the CSDI project not only to have a say in the global debate but also to establish or reinforce linkages with relevant international actors such as, for instance, the International Institute for Environmental Development (IIED) or the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).

7. COLLABORATING WITH AND CONTRIBUTING TO FAO INITIATIVES

An important activity implemented by CSDI staff based at FAO headquarters has been to liaise and proactively collaborate with branch colleagues and other technical departments inside the Organization, for the exchange of specific technical advice or the organization of joint initiatives. Below some examples of CSDI's contribution to the activities of the **FAO Research and Extension Branch (OEKR)**, the unit to which the project technically and administratively belongs:

- Design, undertaking and review of 3 country case studies for the OEKR paper '*Facing the challenges of climate change and food security: the role of research, extension and communications institutions*' (Leeuwis & Hall, 2010) in Bolivia, Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of Congo;
- Organization of country workshops in Bolivia, Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of Congo to validate findings of the case studies mentioned above;
- Institutional arrangements and pilot testing of the TECA platform in Bolivia;
- Support with financial and human resources to the organization and implementation of the FAO Expert Consultation on Communication for Rural Development.

In addition, the involvement in FAO thematic working groups has been fundamental to ensure professional linkages and raise awareness and interest about CSDI's work and approach within the house. As a result of the participation to the **Inter-Departmental Working Groups** on Climate Change (IDWG-CC) and on Disaster Risk Reduction (IDWG-DRR), CSDI contributed to:

- *FAO-Adapt*: organization-wide Framework Programme on Climate Adaptation;
- *Resilient Livelihoods*: FAO's interdisciplinary Framework Programme on Disaster Risk Reduction for Food and Nutrition Security;
- *Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook*.

8. PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PROJECTS

CSDI global efforts to raise awareness and advocate for the application of the ComDev approach have a clear indicator of success: the number of requests submitted by FAO departments and member countries to receive technical assistance in ComDev to support agricultural and rural development projects on the ground. In addition to the regular project activities in pilot countries, overall **12 communication strategies, components or full-fledge project proposals** have been developed under CSDI umbrella:

1. Communication strategy and action plan for the FAO project '*Livelihood Adaptation to Climate Change*' in Bangladesh
2. Full-fledge FAO TCP project '*Enhancing Rural Communication Services for Agricultural Development through Rural Radio*' in Bangladesh
3. Information and Communication component for the Italian Cooperation Project '*Fortalecimiento de los Bancos de Germoplasma Vegetal del Sistema Nacional de Recursos Genéticos para la Agricultura y la Alimentación*' in Bolivia
4. Communication component for the World Bank '*Programa Internacional de Seguridad Alimentaria*' (PISA) in Bolivia
5. Proposal for a national ComDev program to be funded by the Italian Cooperation in Bolivia
6. Full-fledge FAO TCP project '*Programa de comunicación para la innovación agropecuaria y forestal y el desarrollo rural*' in Bolivia
7. Communication strategy for FAO Emergency project on cholera prevention in isolated rural farming communities in Haiti
8. Communication strategy for the FAO TCP project '*Enhanced capacities for disaster risk mitigation in agriculture, fisheries and forestry*' in St Lucia
9. Communication strategy for the FAO TCP project '*Assistance to improve disaster risk management capacities in agricultural Sectors*' in Dominica
10. Communication strategy for the FAO TCP project '*Strengthening the national extension system*' in Belize
11. Proposal for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support projects on food security in East Congo
12. Small-scale communication project '*Rural radio element to support sustainable agricultural development*' funded by the European Space Agency and Openet Technologies Spa in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Extremely significant has been the work done in **Bangladesh**, where CSDI has been supporting local efforts to integrate ComDev in agricultural development programs, in order to reduce vulnerability and improve rural livelihoods. CSDI experience in the country started with the '*Livelihood Adaptation to Climate Change (LACC)*' project, promoted by FAO since 2007 in close

cooperation with the Department of Agricultural Extension, within the Ministry of Agriculture. CSDI coordination unit was requested to provide technical assistance in ComDev, to enhance the adaptive capacities of local communities in drought and flood prone areas of the country. The result was an ad-hoc communication strategy and action plan focused on strengthening institutional capacities in ComDev and promoting participatory learning for community-based adaptation to climate change (CSDI, 2010e).

Subsequently, CSDI assisted the Government of Bangladesh in the formulation and implementation of a full-fledge FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) on '*Enhancing Rural Communication Services for Agricultural Development through Rural Radio*'. The project started in 2010, in close collaboration with the Agriculture Information Service (AIS) of the Ministry of Agriculture, focusing on improving knowledge sharing and the provision of rural information and communication services.

The TCP involved the creation of a coordination mechanism among relevant rural actors at the national level, and the set up of a rural radio station in the province of Amtali, in the South-Western coastal district of Barguna. *Krishi Radio* was the first community rural radio in the country and since November 2011 broadcasts 8 hours daily on topics ranging from agriculture and fisheries to disaster preparedness and gender issues. It is run by a local management committee that includes government technicians and community volunteers who have been trained in ComDev, as well as radio production and management by the Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC).

9. DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABILITY AND FOLLOW-UP STRATEGY

The coordination unit has implemented a two-fold sustainability strategy to provide follow up to project endeavours at both global and national levels. Fundraising activities have been carried out establishing contacts and negotiating opportunities for collaboration with potential donors such as, among others, the European Commission. Likewise, CSDI has collaborated with FAO regional and country offices to support their strategic prioritization and medium-term development planning, in an effort to mainstream ComDev in the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

As a result of these sustainability efforts, several proposals for full-fledge communication projects or specific components have been formulated at country level. Among them, FAO has funded a six-month TCP in Bolivia '*Programa de comunicación para la innovación agropecuaria y forestal y el desarrollo rural*' launched in April 2012 (US \$ 50,000), and approved a phase II for the TCP '*Enhancing Rural Communication Services for Agricultural Development through Rural Radio*' in Bangladesh, extending it until the end of 2012 (with an addendum of US \$ 70,000 to the original US \$ 457,500 budget of phase I).

In addition, the information and communication component designed for the project on genetic resources '*Fortalecimiento de los Bancos de Germoplasma Vegetal del Sistema Nacional de Recursos Genéticos para la Agricultura y la Alimentación*' in Bolivia received a US \$ 110,000 fund from the Italian Cooperation.

On the other hand, after engaging in negotiations with the European Space Agency and Openet, the project has received a fund (EU \$ 176,000) to strengthen national preparedness and initiatives

in the field of ComDev for climate change adaptation, food security and rural livelihoods in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Based on the results of the stocktaking exercise, an overall proposal for a follow-up phase of the CSDI project has been prepared by the coordination unit and presented to the Italian Ministry for the Environment and Territory, which has approved a no-cost extension of the project until June 2013.

3. The Field Components

3.1 CSDI in Bolivia: National Communication for Development Plan ⁴

1. CONTEXT

In Bolivia natural resources are affected by worsening environmental contamination due to bad management, by some sectors of the population, of land (expansion of agriculture, illegal settlement), water (excessive use of water and inappropriate use of chemical products) and air (intentional forest fires). Although a broad-based regulation exists regarding the management of natural resources, this is not enforced by the competent government agencies. In the current situation, indigenous peoples and small farmers, whose livelihoods depend on nature, are gradually increasing their level of responsibility for the care and preservation of the environment.

This issue relates directly to climate change, an emerging challenge in Bolivia, which affects temperature, rainfall, cloud cover and other aspects of climate, as a result of both natural and anthropogenic factors. At the institutional level, climate change adaptation was initially dealt with more comprehensively by the Development Planning Ministry, but since 2009 the issue has been confined to the now Ministry of Environment and Water, which integrates also forestry. On the other hand, some grassroots initiatives are being implemented with focus on adaptation, such as the World Bank Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR), or mitigation, for instance the program for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). However, the process is slow and the most common entry points continue to be water resources and agriculture, given that these areas are largely affected. Most adaptation measures so far have been spontaneous reactions to alleviate the impact of climate change, but there has been no structural response (Pafumi & Ulloa, 2010).

The present Bolivian National Development Plan *“Bolivia Digna, Soberana, Productiva y Democrática, para Vivir Bien”* identifies innovation and technology, agriculture development and natural resources management as key issues to achieve sustainable development. In this sense, in June 2008 the Supreme Decree No.29611 established the **National Institute for Innovation in Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry (INIAF)** as the medium for strengthening public strategic institutions in order to increase and improve productivity through research, transference, dissemination and communication of technologies at national level, to benefit rural producers (Pafumi, 2009).

This constituted a conducive environment for CSDI to develop, in collaboration with the Bolivian Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT), a National Communication for Development Plan to design and implement communication strategies and services in support to agricultural innovation and rural development. The project could leverage existing processes and capacity, as Bolivia has been a pioneer country in the ComDev sector where FAO has supported successful initiatives both at national and local level.

⁴ This section draws on the stocktaking case study developed at the country level by Carlos Camacho, who carried out research in La Paz and the pilot area of Yapaquí between July 6th and August 5th, 2011. Additional insights were collected during the workshop organized to validate the findings of the stocktaking study with local CSDI staff and partners from the INIAF, Carenas Foundation, CIDOB and the Ministry of Communication.

In 2008, the new-born INIAF was identified by the Bolivian government as the institution that could benefit from incorporating a ComDev component to enhance participation, dialogue and knowledge sharing among different stakeholders of the agricultural innovation system. Nevertheless, due to problems related to the start-up of the institution, it was only in August 2009 that the Bolivian component of CSDI started operating. This caused a delay in the overall project implementation.

The Bolivian CSDI team is composed by a national technical consultant, an international consultant, long- and short-term consultants hired for the production of specific products. The CARENAS Foundation, a local provider of ComDev services, has been in charge of developing field activities in the pilot areas, in coordination with decentralized INIAF offices. In addition, FAO country office has given administrative support and carried out the official negotiations with the government, particularly the MDRyT and the INIAF.

2. PROJECT STRATEGY

In the framework of the above-mentioned Plan, a national ComDev Strategy was designed that envisaged an integrated National Information and ComDev System, in order to support the INIAF in its role of leading agency for agriculture and rural innovation at national level.

The system includes three integrated services: a) Local Communication Strategies for Rural Innovation and Development; b) Agricultural, Livestock and Forest Technology Information Service (SITAF), where the repository of valid technologies for small farmers (TECA) is being developed; and c) Networks and Venues for Dialogue, which include the establishment of a national platform of ComDev stakeholders.



Figure 6. Structure of the National ComDev Plan for Bolivia (CSDI, 2011)⁵

⁵ CHART TEXT (left to right, top-down): National Communication for Development Plan
 National ComDev Strategy -> National Information and Communication for Development System
 Integrated Services: 1. Local Strategies and Plans in Communication for Rural Innovation and Development; 2. Agricultural, Livestock and Forest Technology Information Service (SITAF); 3. ComDev Platform and Venues for Negotiation.
 Capacity Development Programme in ComDev

The communication strategies for the pilot areas are based on three main components:

- a. *Participatory Communication Appraisal* - a participatory assessment to identify local problems and needs, solutions and practices (opportunities) related to production, social and communication issues in the intervention area;
- b. *Local Innovation and Communication Program* - strategic guidelines developed together with relevant local partners in response to the findings of the appraisal, with a medium term (3-5 years) projection;
- c. *Local Innovation and Communication Plans* - a planning tool to support the management and implementation of priority communication activities at field level.

3. MAIN ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Out of the total activities planned and carried out by the overall CSDI project, almost half are related to country components, of which Bolivia was the biggest one. The main contributions and achievements of the CSDI Bolivian component have been:

a. Institutionalization of a National ComDev Plan in support to rural innovation

CSDI efforts to institutionalize ComDev at national level through the newly established INIAF were successful as it was included in the Institute's Strategic Plan 2011-2015 (PEI). ComDev is referred to as a key process in support of rural innovation, promoting stakeholders' participation (particularly of farmers organizations), knowledge management and the rescue of traditional knowledge. The PEI highlights the main lines of work that the MDRyT and the INIAF are following to implement the National ComDev Plan:

- Launch of ComDev services in support to development and rural innovation;
- Implementation of ComDev strategies and local plans for development and rural innovation;
- Capacity building in ComDev for development institutions and programs, as well as farmers and indigenous organizations;
- Institutionalization of a ComDev System at national and local level.

In January 2012, towards the project conclusion, a final national workshop was held in Santa Cruz gathering relevant stakeholders to share the results of the National ComDev Plan and jointly plan follow-up activities in order to guarantee the sustainability of ComDev services within the INIAF in the coming years. It was also a venue to exchange experiences and methodologies and to promote the creation of a Communication Platform for Rural Development in the country.

b. Local Innovation and Communication Plans in 3 pilot areas

At the local level, CSDI has implemented Participatory Rural Communication Appraisals (PRCA) in order to identify needs and demands of local communities and institutions. Based on the information gathered in community consultations, ComDev Programs have been designed and implemented through Local Innovation and Communication Plans (PLICs).

The PLICs are operational tools that involve different communication resources and include participatory methodologies such as the Audiovisual Pedagogy and training activities aimed at

building technical and communication capacities at the local level, supporting two-way learning processes (see below Knowledge and Communication Modules).

This participatory process has been implemented in 3 pilot areas of the country, identified based on INIAF's priorities: Yapacaní and the Norte Integrado Region, Yacuiba, Chiquitanía. The PLICs have been developed in the framework of *Espacios Locales de Concertación* promoted by the INIAF as venues for dialogue and informed decision making. Between 15 and 30 local stakeholders participated in local consultations, including farmers organizations and small-scale producers, local governments, NGOs and media operating in the pilot area.

In addition, a fourth thematic area was identified based on institutional demand, tackling a topic prioritized by INIAF at national level and by other agricultural organizations in the Chaco region: the practice of sorghum silage in the context of forage conservation.

c. Knowledge and Communication Modules on agricultural and rural issues

The Modules of Knowledge and Communication (MCCs) are a set of systematized information and communication tools including videos, printed materials and audio tracks, developed in order to disseminate knowledge and facilitate learning processes. The MCC constitute a more tangible result of the Local Innovation and Communication Plans (PLICs) and are developed based on the principles of the Audiovisual Pedagogy⁶ methodology:

- Recovery of farmers' traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge
- Direct reference to the producers' reality and use of their own language
- Practical learning designed for smallholders and rural families
- Active participation of producers in the collective learning process
- No interference in productive activities, trainings carried out where producers live
- Use of audiovisuals to overcome literacy barriers in the transmission of knowledge
- Choice of appropriate technical information according to the different groups

Five MCCs have been developed addressing the topics prioritized in the pilot areas based on participatory and/or technical appraisals:

1. Pasture management for dairy cattle (Yapacaní and Norte Integrado);
2. Direct sowing for sustainable production (Yacuiba - Chaco);
3. Water harvesting for diversified crops (San Ignacio de Velasco - Chiquitanía);
4. Forage conservation: sorghum silage (Chaco);
5. Operational guidelines for local negotiations.

Each module includes videos, audios, booklets, guides, flipcharts, brochures and posters.⁷

d. National workshops on ComDev planning and implementation

As part of the capacity development program, between July 2010 and March 2012 CSDI Bolivia conducted 4 training workshops at national and departmental level, in collaboration with the MDRyT and the INIAF. The workshops focused on the design and implementation of local ComDev

⁶ Pioneering audiovisual education experiences were implemented in Bolivia between 1993 and 1997 with the FAO project "Communication for the Development of Latin America" (GCP/RLA/114/ITA).

⁷ MCC samples are available on the CSDI website at <http://www.csdinitiative.org/projects/modulos-de-conocimiento-y-comunicacion-mcc-para-la-innovacion-y-el-desarrollo-rural.html>

strategies and plans, to strengthen technical capacities and improve institutional services for agriculture, livestock and rural innovation, as well as on the use of the Modules of Knowledge and Communication.

Public officials from the MDRyT and the INIAF (headquarters and decentralized offices), as well as staff from 35 different institutions and rural organizations participated in capacity development activities, totalling 56 people trained, of whom 14 women.

e. Training activities at the field level

At the local level, 7 intensive training-of-trainers courses on the Audiovisual Pedagogy methodology and the application of the Knowledge and Communication Modules (MCC) have been offered to technicians, communication practitioners, extensionists and community agents. A total of 162 people, 134 men and 28 women, have been trained as *operadores locales de la innovación*, to act in turn as facilitators and use the MCC to train small producers in their local communities. This process of capacity development has involved 52 institutions and organizations of the Bolivian innovation system.

At the community level, between November 2010 and March 2012 26 training activities were implemented using the MCC. For instance, in the Norte Integrado area (including 4 municipalities and 12 rural communities) CSDI delivered 11 workshops on establishing and managing pastures for dairy cows, reaching 320 small-scale producers and field workers. Similarly, 4 workshops were offered in Chiquitania on rainwater harvesting and 8 in Yacuiba on direct seeding. Finally, 3 workshops on forage conservation were completed in the Chaco region. Across the different pilot areas, the training activities conducted by the local facilitators have reached overall 489 producers from 54 rural communities.

f. Information Repository on Agricultural Technologies TECA Bolivia

The national ComDev strategy foresees an Agricultural, Livestock and Forest Technology Information Service (SITAF in Spanish) to improve access to relevant information and knowledge in the agricultural sector by a larger number of rural communities, producers and organizations. As part of this service, the project has developed an Information Repository on Agricultural Technologies named TECA Bolivia, a platform to systematize, document and share validated agricultural practices and technologies suitable for small producers. TECA Bolivia has been launched in 2011 (<http://teca.iniaf.gob.bo>) and 30 technologies have been uploaded with the collaboration of the INIAF and other recognized research institutions in the country.

g. Project Publications and Information Materials

An interesting contribution to the production of CSDI publications has come from the Bolivian component. The following documents have been finalized:

- *Concept Paper on Communication for Development in Agriculture and Rural Innovation* - document supporting the incorporation of ComDev strategies and tools into INIAF institutional policies and operational plans for the agricultural sector
- *Facing the Challenges of Climate Change and Food Security: the Role of Research, Extension and Communication Institutions* - Bolivia country study

- *Mapping of Experiences, Actors, Services and Capacities in Communication for Rural Development in Bolivia*
- *National Communication for Development Strategy for Innovation in Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry* - result of continuous consultations, takes into account national and local needs, experiences and existing ComDev capacity to identify a series of communication services in support of climate change adaptation, food security and natural resource management
- *Local Communication Strategies and Plans for Innovation and Rural Development* - technical/methodological document presenting the process and steps to develop participatory communication appraisals, strategies and plans at the local level
- *Local Venues for Negotiation* - operational guidelines in the framework of the INIAF strategy
- *Communication for Innovation and Rural Development in Yapacaní* - case study
- *Communication for Innovation and Rural Development in Chiquitanía* - case study
- *Communication for Innovation and Rural Development in Yacuiba* - case study
- *Agricultural, livestock and forestry technologies and practices for smallholder producers. TECA Bolivia* - introduction and guidelines for managing the information repository on agricultural technologies TECA Bolivia

In addition, CSDI Bolivia developed an institutional brochure and set-up a website to illustrate the project activities and services.

h. Support to Indigenous Peoples' ComDev Strategy

Collaboration with civil society and grassroots organizations has been a priority for the project. In 2010 the project supported the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia (CIDOB) to organize a three-day national meeting on 'Communication and Development within the Framework of Bolivian Indigenous Peoples' rights' (Santa Cruz, 11-13 November, 2010). During the meeting a five-year communication strategy was defined to be presented later that year at the 'XV National Assembly of Indigenous People of the East, Chaco and Bolivian Amazon'. It was also an occasion for indigenous groups to illustrate their initiatives to the government and establish a dialogue with the MDRyT and the INIAF.

Another activity conducted by CSDI with the CIDOB has been the facilitation and documentation of the Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)⁸ activities among Bolivian indigenous communities, in the framework of the REDD program. A series of materials about FPIC have been produced including a handbook, a video and audios, and this has contributed to make indigenous organizations participate in the negotiation with UNREDD and the government in relation to this issue.

⁸ FPIC recognizes Indigenous Peoples' rights to their lands and resources and respects their authority to require that third parties enter into an equal and respectful relationship with them, based on the principle of informed consent. Free prior and informed consent may in fact require a number of accompanying measures to be truly meaningful, such as: information about and consultation on any proposed initiative and its likely impacts, meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and representative institutions. FPIC is a very important mechanism of consultation for Indigenous Peoples as they are claiming for their active participation in this process.

i. ComDev components integrated in rural development projects in the country

CSDI has supported 2 important development initiatives in the country, developing ad-hoc information and communication components. These are the '*Fortalecimiento de los Bancos de Germoplasma Vegetal del Sistyema Nacional de Recursos Geneticos para la Agricultura y la Alimentacion*' project funded by the Italian Cooperation and the '*Programa Internacional de Seguridad Alimentaria*' (PISA) being launched by the INIAF with the support of the World Bank. Recently CSDI initiated a dialogue with the Ministry of Communication and other international agencies working in the country (e.g. Italian Cooperation, COSUDE), in order to look for possibilities of collaboration. As a result, a project proposal has been developed for the consolidation of a crosscutting ComDev programme within INIAF, as the lead institution in charge of managing and preserving the genetic resources and biodiversity in the country.

From this overview of the main activities going on at the country level under CSDI umbrella and the results achieved so far, there is enough evidence that the Bolivian component of the project has a great potential. Consistent with previous FAO ComDev experience in the country, the methods used are well known (e.g. the Audiovisual Pedagogy approach) and their subsequent implementation is promising. There is also evidence of buy-in at the local level as the end users, especially civil society organizations and training centres, have adopted the ComDev methodology proposed by CSDI and are looking into ways they can develop it using their own means, to further their objectives. Thus, the project impact can be significantly broadened thanks to the adoption and appropriation of ComDev methods by local stakeholders who can use them to embark on other projects. This process is key to lend sustainability to CSDI activities.

4. CASE STUDY: LOCAL INNOVATION AND COMMUNICATION PLAN IN YAPACANÍ

This case study was undertaken to assess more in depth the work done at local level, in particular in the Natural Zone of Integrated Management within the Amboró National Park (ANMI-PNA), in the Municipality of Yapacaní. This is the first pilot area where CSDI Bolivia has implemented field activities.

Out of the overall activities of the Yapacaní Innovation and Communication Plan developed with CSDI support, 80% had been implemented as to August 2011, when the case study was conducted. The international technical advisor of CSDI Bolivia stated:

When I saw that it was 80%, I was really happily surprised. The way Yapacaní is seen, being a complex area to work as compared to the Chaco and the Chiquitanía, I think that is a very acceptable rate.

Although linkages between decentralized INIAF offices and local institutions and stakeholders have been actively promoted, the factors that prevented the full completion of planned activities mainly relate to the weak commitment or involvement of the INIAF. Several informants stressed that a major issue has been the scarcity of resources (human, technical and financial) assigned by the INIAF to the project. Likewise, constant changes in authorities (ministers, directors, mayors) and job instability (INIAF operational personnel) undermined the implementation of the project. One local leader, responsible for the external relations of the Federation of the Unions of Intercultural Farming Communities in Yapacaní, commented:

I think that there is one important component here, which is the lack of commitment, more than the lack of resources. In the case of Yapacaní, there were resources in the Annual Operational Plan (POA). What wasn't done was the agreement, which is still not signed.

Additionally, according to the stocktaking results, there are power struggles at the local level between the various local entities in charge of implementing the project.

The CSDI team involved representatives of the local community in a series of workshops, meetings and trainings for the design and implementation of the PLIC, from local farmers organizations, indigenous people's networks, NGOs, community radios and TVs, research centres, the municipality and other institutions operating in the Yapacaní area.

The learning needs of the participants were identified through a communication diagnosis conducted in the communities in the zone of intervention. The diagnosis was also carried out in workshops coordinated by local technicians and was conducted in a highly participatory manner. The problem/situation was identified in the diagnosis workshops by identifying needs and later prioritizing them. They identified in the dairy cattle breeding the major innovation needs.

Based on this information, it was decided to work on pasture management for milk cows with the aim of training local facilitators/promoters who would in turn train producers in how to manage their pastures and feed their cattle, thus improving milk production. An employee of the municipal government acknowledged:

This was done based on a diagnosis conducted, since the workshop responded to the needs that they had, and many communities are asking for these courses. In fact, this diagnosis responds to what the producer really asked for. But it hasn't been enough because there are a lot of communities that want to benefit from these courses.

Three intensive training workshops for audiovisual trainers on the use of the Knowledge and Communication Module (MCC) about "Establishing and Managing Pastures for Milk Cows" were carried out, each with a duration of 32 hours (24 of theory and 8 of practical learning) spread over a period of four days. Through these workshops, 80 facilitators were trained to use communication methods and tools at the community level, and specifically to employ the MCC to train farmers on this theme. As an example, one workshop (November 30 - December 3, 2010) was attended by 26 persons from 11 organizations, including public institutions (municipal government, sub-municipalities, INIAF), academic institutions (universities and training institutes), sector organizations (farmers and cattle raising associations, milk producers groups), community unions and local media (community radio stations). All the participants had no previous experience or knowledge in ComDev capacity development. There was a large appreciation and appropriation by the facilitators trained, although some informants reported that various aspects of the methodology were quite difficult to understand, as they include many components with little room for changes and/or adjustments.

Lately, the facilitators trained, also called *operadores locales de la innovación*, carried out 11 workshops in the area of intervention (Norte Integrado region), specifically in the municipalities of Yapacaní, San Carlos, Santa Rosa del Sara and Portachuelo, reaching a total of 320 farmers trained on the topic of pastures for milk cows. This shows the multiplier effect of the project training strategy.

Findings of the case study highlighted the appropriateness of the ComDev methods used by CSDI to the characteristics of the target population. The teaching approach was primarily based on learning-by-doing, knowledge dialogue and the exchange of experiences, conducted in a highly participatory, dynamic and interactive manner. A set of multimedia tools were designed together with the participants as complementary materials for the learning process. The use of video has proved particularly effective as it has the advantage of showing the possibility of change (innovation) in local realities. In the opinion of field personnel, video was the most relevant, useful and effective tool similar experiences which demonstrate to the producers that they can easily follow the example of their neighbours who have positively adopted the techniques and experienced a production increase.

From the assessment of the training activities carried out at community level, it was evident that end-users were considerably satisfied with the capacity development offered. They appreciated theoretical learning activities but especially field practice which, they observed, should be conducted in the participants' plots to reflect the real conditions of their daily work. On the other hand, the facilitators were satisfied with the process of sharing their knowledge in a participatory environment in which both participants and facilitators learn from each other. They also valued their own experience and consolidated their capacity to use the ComDev methodology as a tool for their work.

For the printed materials participants recommended to maintain bilingual texts (Spanish/Quechua) and to add more illustrations, especially coloured photos that allow to recognize specifically what is planted. The audio-visual component in general could be strengthened and new educational techniques should begin to be implemented with training for the facilitators. In this sense, the internet and more specifically virtual educational platforms, were identified as a potential tool.

According to the national technical advisor of CSDI Bolivia, in the workshops *"it is assumed that all the participating technicians learned, because they did their practices correctly"*. The study conducted in August 2011 confirmed this assumption as it detected new knowledge, gained primarily through the practical activities that sparked the interest of the participants and motivated them to adoption the innovation. However, no formal follow-up to the adoption of the technologies introduced with the MCC has been done by the project.

As confirmed by one partner from CARENAS Foundation, the effectiveness is not only apparent at the individual level (managing new knowledge that creates positive attitudes towards adopting innovations, such as the intention to improve quality of life), but is also visible at the community level:

The first aspect is that they (the participants) know about the new topic [...] Then, the training is much related to the applications of that topic in the community. We know that the work is done by the community together. So, the introduction of new knowledge and work practices in the community has begun to have an effect on the organization of the community life and on family life. [...] We still can't see the final outcomes, but we can see attitudes. For example, if a small farmer says "I'm going to sell three of my cows to build fences and buy the wire", then there's a positive change of attitude in the small farmer [...] this means there's an effect in innovation, in difference, in attitude and in changes.

As to the institutions, the main positive aspect mentioned during the stocktaking exercise, was the method of participatory appraisal which made it possible to determine the needs of participants based on their everyday experience. This method is now being applied by participants for their own objectives. Additionally, some of the final users expressed their intention to reproduce some of the training materials, such as the printed ones “*with more images and less text*”. The facilitators have requested to receive further training in educational methods and tools in order to improve the training processes. They are even considering the possibility of using web-based learning platforms.

In the final stage of the project, in order to guarantee continuity to the process commenced at field level, CARENAS Foundation has been appointed as the entity in charge of accompanying, evaluating and strengthening the adoption of the innovations in the pilot areas. However, in a long-term perspective, this function of monitoring and following up to project activities should be assumed by the INIAF.

3.2 CSDI in DRC: Supporting Agroforestry Innovation ⁹

1. CONTEXT

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is among the fifty Least Developed Countries identified by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the most vulnerable to external economic shocks, natural disasters or catastrophes and epidemics. At the same time, 90% of the Congolese households rely on subsistence rain-fed farming and non-timber forest activities in a country that hosts on its territory the second largest rainforest in the world. Its vast forest areas are not only a unique biodiversity and carbon reserve, but also a vital source of food, income, medicine, fuel and housing for millions of poor living in rural areas. However, the country is plagued by environmental and ecosystem degradation due to recurrent deforestation and bushfires, and to the government failure to provide environmental education (RRN, 2009).

In DRC, the impact of climate change is experienced differently depending on climatic and agro-ecological zones of the country. From 1990 to 2009, rainfall patterns suffered sensible variations in many areas with increased likelihood of intra-seasonal drought, while extreme weather events became more frequent and intense. Increases in rainfall occurred in most regions, while less rainfall was recorded mainly in the southern part of the country, especially in the tropical savannah belt where more than 70% of the population lives in rural areas. Climate change affects the seasonal cycles and directly threatens the agricultural production of basic food in rural communities, with serious implications for the precarious food security of the country.

All these issues impact on a country that, with about 70% of the population living below the poverty line, faces serious difficulties in economic and social development, with limited access to education, health and other social services, poor management of natural resources, inadequate infrastructure and, finally, poor access to information technology and communication. Moreover, as a country emerging from conflict DRC faces institutional and governance constraints which have hampered agricultural development. Many agricultural policies and programs adopted earlier were abandoned or partially implemented due to lack of resources, low involvement of local populations, and weak institutional capacity (Mbaye, 2010).

In this context, the research and the extension system that should manage natural resources and the impacts of climate change have experienced several difficulties due to a precarious human and financial resources situation. Extension workers cannot properly perform their duties due to: (i) lack of means of transport and teaching aids; (ii) state of complete decay of office buildings; (iii) non-existence of material and moral motivation; and (iv) absence of training and retraining programmes.

On the other hand, agricultural research is conducted mainly within the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INERA), covering the following areas: (i) food production; (ii) industrial products; (iii) livestock production; and (iv) management and conservation of natural resources. In spite of the modest resources at its disposal, INERA has achieved worthwhile results in the improvement of yields and resistance to diseases of some foodstuffs, notably cassava and

⁹ This section draws on the stocktaking case study developed at the country level by Antoine Frangoie Ngoie, who carried out research in Kinshasa and the pilot area of Bas Congo (Mbanza-Ngungu) during the month of July, 2011. Additional insights were collected during the workshop organized to validate the stocktaking findings with local staff and partners.

banana. However, these achievements are not being disseminated in the rural areas due to lack of financing.

Research and extension activities, which can still be seen on the ground, are receiving some external support within the networks of sub-regional research organizations or backed by emergency programmes initiated by FAO and other donors. It is in this framework that CSDI was called to pilot out ComDev methods and tools in the DRC.

2. PROJECT STRATEGY

The CSDI experience in DRC started in May 2008, with the development of a Communication Action Plan (CAP) for an FAO project called *Programme de relance de la recherche agricole et forestière in DRC* (REAFOR), jointly with the NGOs CRAFOD and AGRISUD. The CAP aimed at disseminating research results among potential users in the agricultural and forestry sectors, therefore the main counterpart was the **National Institute for Agricultural Research (INERA)**. The strategy was to use ComDev methods and tools to share the latest techniques identified by researchers and encourage partners to use the best practices in agriculture to improve their productivity of cassava, a staple food for the farming populations concerned. The ComDev strategy would also enable farmers and rural communities to understand and apply agroforestry techniques, in an effort to counter harmful practices such as deforestation or bushfires.

The strategy identified rural radios as the best way to share knowledge and information. In fact, rural radios are popular tools addressing community development issues in local languages through broadcasting programs based on the needs of local population. They have a huge impact on changing attitudes of the population and they fill the void not covered by public radio. The rural stations are scattered in several provinces and operate at local scale. Although not yet covering the whole country, their areas of coverage may affect at least 30,000 to 40,000 people and sometimes a whole province. In the framework of the DRC pilot experience, the CSDI collaborated closely with the Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto radio stations based in Mbanza Ngungu.

The implementation strategy also included two complementary supports to be developed by the REAFOR project:

- a *database* to collect data both from locally-tested technologies and from available international research networks; and
- a *platform* intended as a forum to enable the different stakeholders (researchers, extension workers, community radio stations and farmers) to find solutions to issues encountered on the field and disseminate the latter via rural radio stations.

In addition to this first technical assistance activity, the CSDI has extended its partnerships in DRC with a focus on climate change and food security issues. A proposal for a communication component was developed under the project GTFS/RAF/391/ITA '*Improvement of food security in cross-border districts of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)*' funded by the Italian Cooperation. Contacts were established also with UNREDD, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Tourism. Thanks to these activities, the project signed a letter of agreement with the Institut Facultaire des Sciences de l'Information et de la

Communication (IFASIC) of the University of Kinshasa, and INERA requested an official collaboration to work on ComDev for Climate change adaptation.

3. MAIN ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The main activities and achievements of CSDI in DRC are summarized below:

a. Planning workshop and establishment of partnerships

CSDI activities in DRC started in May 2008 with a mission that confirmed the feasibility and advisability of establishing a communication component to support the dissemination of agricultural and forestry technologies, choosing an appropriate pilot area (Bas-Congo) and selecting two relevant subjects, respectively cassava production and agroforestry.

A national ComDev consultant was recruited to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the activities in connection with the formulation of the Communication Action Plan. A participatory workshop was implemented on May 13-14, 2008 to assess communication needs and identify the requirements to formulate a Communication Action Plan, as well as to create partnerships needed at the local level with key stakeholders. More than 40 participants attended the two-day meeting, which constituted an important opportunity to establish a fruitful dialogue between grassroots organizations, NGOs, extension workers, research institutes (INERA M'vuazi) and local media.

b. Need assessment and Communication Action Plan for the dissemination of technologies

The national consultant led a survey on the ground in the District of Cataracts (Bas-Congo), which comprises Mbanza-Ngungu, Luozi and Songololo, to collect data related to the production of cassava, agroforestry, communication and extension systems. Three experts in cassava production, agroforestry and extension assisted the national consultant in the development of the survey and participated in a two-day validation workshop to analyse the findings. This was the basis for the formulation of a Communication Action Plan (CAP) to be integrated with a conceptual framework, a logical framework, a workplan and budget, taking into account the different contributions by the *Programme de relance de la recherche agricole et forestière en République démocratique du Congo (REAFOR)* and the concerned national institutions.

The CAP 2009 included a series of activities to be implemented in collaboration between CSDI and REAFOR which focused on: (i) the selection of results applicable immediately (REAFOR/CSDI); (ii) the creation of a database and a website (REAFOR); (iii) the setup of demonstration plots and the organization of open days (REAFOR); (iv) the organization of training workshops and a partnership for the production and broadcasting of radio programs on agricultural best practices (CSDI).

Three main activities have been performed in twelve specific areas around Mbanza Ngungu, in the Cataractes district in the province of Bas-Congo:

- Workshops were organized on inventories and the selection of research results;
- Rural radio presenters and extension workers underwent training on radio techniques and research results dissemination, climate change and the assessment of program production and broadcasting by radio stations;

- Demonstration lots were created and open days were held.

Some of the activities were only partially achieved (shrub multiplication by REAFOR), while others were not at all (website creation by REAFOR).

c. Capacity Development in ComDev for radio journalists

Three major ComDev training initiatives took place throughout 2009, namely:

1. Training for radio presenters and producers of Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto radio stations in radio techniques and agricultural extension;
2. Open day characterized by a guided tour, interviews, filming and distribution of technical sheets; and
3. Workshop to assess the production and broadcasting of radio programs and to introduce the climate change topic.

Several rural actors, including researchers, extension workers, farmers and journalists were also invited to these meetings, each attended by an average of 20 persons.

At the end of the training, collaboration contracts were signed between both radios and the CSDI for the production and broadcasting of radio programs concerning the three following topics: cassava production, agroforestry practices and climate change.

d. Rural Radio Broadcasting Programs

CSDI in DRC has paid special attention to promoting communication services for development, and rural radio in particular, looking at challenges in natural resource management and climate change, particularly with regard to adaptation, risk management of natural disasters, strengthening technical assistance to farmers, and rural communities' participation to development programs.

Rural radios broadcasting programs introduced by CSDI focused mainly on rural development and have proven to be interesting for farmers. General topics related to climate change were introduced by CSDI in the territory of Mbanza Ngungu. The project assisted the religious radio "Vuvu kieto" to specialize as a rural radio and enhanced the Ntemo community radio with relevant broadcasting programs in the local language (kicongo) related to agroforestry and climate change. Sample topics are: "cassava and its constraints including those linked to climate change", "importance of the tree fight against erosion", "sustainable agriculture", "the management of our forests", "our environment", "our season", "save the earth", "land tenure". The impact of these radio programs on rural populations has been significant according to the number of requests for more information received.

In fact, both partner radio stations, Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto, welcomed the capacity building initiative for presenters and producers, the financial support and the improvement of the quality of broadcasts. The training has led to considerable improvement in the services of both radio stations, as confirmed by the positive feedback received from the listeners, also with an impact on farmers practices. Moreover, one of the participants won an award for the best broadcast in the Bas-Congo province, in a competition organized by the Secretariat General of Agriculture together with the magazine *La Voix du Congo*.

e. Strengthening the R&E system

CSDI activities in DRC contributed to the functionality of research organizations, partner NGOs and rural radio stations, as the project facilitated the existence of qualified persons and resources for improved and immediately available technologies. CSDI activities also stimulated the receptiveness of development actors. In the framework of CSDI partnership with the REAFOR program, two NGOs AGRISUD and CRAFOD were chosen for the extension of research results. However, despite having been trained, the technicians representing the two NGOs were not able to implement ComDev methods and tools, because the contracts signed with REAFOR, through FAO, did not provide any financial support.

In sum, as it emerged from the stocktaking case study, the CSDI project in RDC was able to reach the following results:

- applying a valid strategy for the dissemination of technologies;
- boosting ComDev capacities;
- establishment of fruitful partnerships;
- facilitating improved collaboration among the different actors;
- strengthening the skills and profile of local radios such as the catholic radio Vuvu Kieto and the community radio Ntemo that have intensified broadcasts on rural development issues;
- stimulating the interest of farmers.

On the other hand, one major limitation was the weak support granted by the core partner REAFOR resulting in delays, partial funding disbursement and non-performance of the activities planned. National research and extension gaps concerning climate change and NRM related topics added up to project constraints, as well as the lack of sufficiently qualified personnel within rural radio stations. Local CSDI staff also pinpointed the cumbersome administrative procedures and the lack of consistent financial means to smoothly implement the project.

4. CASE STUDY: STRENGTHENING RURAL RADIOS IN MBANZA NGUNGU

This case study focuses on the end-users evaluation of the work done by CSDI at local level in the Bas-Congo Province, namely in Mbanza-Ngungu. Here the project implemented a capacity development initiative in ComDev involving journalists from two rural radio stations.

The collaboration between CSDI and the Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto radio stations followed the preliminary survey for the preparation of the joint CSDI/REAFOR Communication Action Plan. It began in 2009 with training addressed to selected partners, among whom the presenters and producers of the two radio stations based in Mbanza Ngungu. At the end of the training, collaboration contracts were signed between both radios and the CSDI pertaining to the production and broadcasting of radio programs on the following topics: cassava production, agroforestry practices and climate change. Six months later, an open day was organized including a guided tour, interviews, filming and distribution of technical sheets. Immediately following, a workshop was held to assess the production and broadcasting of radio programs and to introduce the climate change topic.

The CSDI initiatives were attended by radio station and program directors, as well as the presenters and producers of the Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto radios, together with extension workers, researchers and farmers. All participants had different backgrounds: commercial and financial sciences, French and linguistics, biology, social sciences, holders of state diplomas. None of the participants in the initiatives had followed traditional training in communication. Out of 14 attendees, 6 had been working at the Ntemo radio station since 2003, while one person began in 2005. Participants from the Vuvu Kieto radio station had been working there from 3 to 5 years.

Participants' needs in terms of ComDev training were identified in two stages: first in the course of the KAP survey that preceded the creation of the CAP, where weaknesses such as the lack of traditional training and learning by doing became apparent. Later, during the first initiative organized by the CSDI, the trainers asked participants to express their expectations in order to target their intervention more accurately.

The capacity building activities focused on techniques for producing radio broadcasts and preparing schedules, bearing in mind population requirements in three fields, namely cassava production, agroforestry practices and climate change. During the first initiative, 5 radio techniques modules were developed; the second initiative was an open day to demonstrate the new techniques derived from the research, while the objective of the third initiative was to assess the production and the programs of the two partner radio stations in the course of the first six months of the programs, and the launch of radio broadcasts concerning climate change. The trainers resorted to participative methods in the framework of debates and group work (workshops and plenary sessions) associated to the presentations. As for the methodology, the target was to conceive model broadcasts, thus enabling the enrichment of future broadcasts during the training workshops and the preparation of material covering almost a year.

The collaboration between the CSDI/REAFOR and local partners, among which the Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto radio stations, has been viewed positively by the project focal point in DRC, intimately convinced that it was meeting a social requirement in terms of radio broadcasts. The most urgent need was to supply training in radio techniques, but also in the specific topics of climate change, food security, cassava production and agroforestry practices. The trainers realized that they were meeting the true needs of the participants. During the assessment workshop, they noticed that the attendees were already starting to work as media professionals. Nevertheless, they believed it was important to build further on the capacities of the personnel of the two radio stations in terms of the new global concerns, since most are learning on the job.

Participants reported of having taken home with them after the training how to prepare and conduct a good radio broadcast and how to involve the population in the broadcasts. The following concrete elements for the appreciation of the learning level of participants have unanimously been expressed by the trainers and verified with the trainees:

- programming techniques: specifications, timing, objective and standpoints to exploit for each broadcast have been defined more clearly, thus preventing the overlaps with other programs that used to occur in the past
- program thread: a chronometer for the presenter and the producer is now used to allow for a good evaluation of the presenters.

As a result of the training, each radio station has now a new program schedule. Resorting to specifications and a program thread have become compulsory for all the broadcasts in the program schedule, while the assessment of presenters and producers now depends on their performances with regard to both the aspects. Broadcasts are prepared bearing in mind population requirements, timing respect (time assessment), practice of field techniques, participatory programs involving both researchers, extension workers and farmers.

Individual and focus group interviews with the attendees have confirmed that some of the proposed methods and tools have actually been used, while other disregarded. The elements used are namely: (i) audience issues and definition of prime time; (ii) broadcast scheduling techniques based on well devised program schedules; (iii) information processing techniques, namely reportages; (iv) preparation of a program thread to ensure broadcast timing and sequences are respected. Instead, information processing techniques have been disregarded, namely in the specific context of interviews and how to write for radio broadcasts. The absence of travel means and of a consequent budget explains the lack of interviews on the field, while the absence of basic journalistic training could explain shortcomings in writing for radio.

Both partner radio stations, Ntemo and Vuvu Kieto, welcomed the capacity building initiative promoted by CSDI and the field personnel agreed that the application of the know-how proposed in the training has led to considerable improvement in the services of both radio stations and clearly enhanced the quality of the broadcasts. One of the participants won an award for the best broadcast in the Bas-Congo province, in the framework of a competition organized by the Secretariat General of Agriculture together with the magazine *La Voix du Congo*.

The positive feedback expressed by listeners in hundreds of letters of appreciation and encouragement, phone calls, visits to the radio stations has proven the relevance and usefulness of the new broadcasts and their success with the community. Indeed, thanks to the broadcasts, some farmers were able to implement the latest techniques devised by researchers to increase their productivity of cassava and protect the environment. Nevertheless, both radio stations believed that more consistent means should have been allocated to actively involve the community in the long term.

3.3 CSDI in the Caribbean Region: Enhancing Climate Resilience ¹⁰

1. CONTEXT

Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are becoming increasingly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters in recent years. This vulnerability is particularly acute because Caribbean economies depend largely on agricultural production and tourism, both sectors which have been experiencing adverse climate change effects for many years already. Known for beautiful beaches, coral reefs, biodiversity flora and fauna, these natural resources that draw visitors to the Caribbean islands are also the same resources that are absolutely critical to the livelihoods of many Caribbean people, especially small farmers and fishing folk (CSDI, 2012).

In recent years, natural disasters such as floods, landslides, droughts and hurricanes have threatened the Caribbean's agricultural livelihood base: Ivan (2004), Dean (2007) and Gustav (2008) all brought incredible devastation in the last few years alone. In 2010, Tropical Storm devastated the island of St Lucia with the loss of several lives, and severe damage to the agricultural sector.

Added to this is the recognition that agriculture in the Caribbean today is in a state of crisis as the sector experiences stiff competition due to globalization and trade liberalization. In every country, the sector is being forced to radically, and rapidly, diversify. Now, more than ever, if the sector is to survive, it has to become much more proactive and must anticipate and satisfy niche markets which demand high quality products for the discerning food, cosmetic, health, chemical and industrial markets. At the same time, diversification must happen in a sustainable manner without jeopardizing the region's fragile eco-systems.

The decline in the agricultural sector has threatened food security and contributed to growing levels of poverty and rural unemployment, particularly among rural women and youth. Farmers are also aging and young farmers are not replacing them as they do not see agriculture as a high-tech, cutting edge, profitable business.

In the face of these challenges, farm families need to quickly adapt to new markets and to adopt the most up-to-date technologies available for integrated pest management, soil fertility, irrigation, harvesting, agro-processing and all other aspects of agricultural production and marketing while also calculating their potential risks in the event of hurricane, drought or other CC related disasters. They require accurate information on a range of factors including weather, inputs, crops, animal husbandry, pest control, trade opportunities and market requirements. More effective and closer ties with research are also needed for farmers to be more directly involved in participatory agricultural technology development to find sustainable solutions.

While some larger farmers have more resources and can access the information they need to adapt and compete effectively, several small farm households and more vulnerable groups are still highly dependent on traditional face-to-face extension services. However, cutbacks in public sector funding and acute resource shortages have resulted in weakly functioning extension services in many countries within the region. This in turn has reduced the number of extension staff available to serve rural areas and/or limited their mobility. As a result, the opportunity for

¹⁰ This section draws on CSDI project documentation and the stocktaking case study developed at the country level by Indi McLymont-Lafayette, who carried out research in Jamaica during the month of August, 2011.

the traditional type of face-to-face interaction to which most farmers are accustomed has been greatly reduced.

In addition, it is generally recognized that existing capacity of extension services in the region to provide communication services for climate change adaptation is limited and needs to be strengthened and supported. National agricultural research and extension systems, many of which have deteriorated in their effectiveness, also need to increase their capacity to respond to the technology needs of small-scale farmers.

In several Caribbean countries, in order to deal with global competition, agricultural policies have adopted a highly entrepreneurial and professional business approach and has shifted to focus on the needs of successful champion farmers. Regionally, the general trend in extension delivery is towards decentralization and privatisation. Where they exist, services are now provided by multiple service providers, including private enterprises, commodity boards, agricultural educators, researchers, extension workers and communicators. As a result, extension service providers are less and less geared to serving resource poor farmers and those groups who are more vulnerable, yet highly dependent on agricultural and NRM for their own survival.

2. PROJECT STRATEGY

Within the English speaking Caribbean, the **Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication (CARIMAC)** of the **University of the West Indies** is the premier communication training facility. As the main home for ComDev in the region, there was a natural fit for CARIMAC to serve as partner institution of the CSDI global programme to provide technical communication assistance within the region and in Jamaica.

The CSDI project in the Caribbean elaborated a strategy based on several guiding principles that were critical to achieving its goals and objectives. One of the key strategic pillars has been the mandate to provide direct support to existing FAO technical assistance projects in the region, and ideally, to support those that are specifically focused on disaster risk management, food security and/or natural resource management. While implementation of activities might involve partnerships with other agencies and donors, and also benefit entities outside of direct FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) activities, the selection of activities has given priority to FAO's own activities.

A second pillar fundamental to the prioritization of CSDI activities has been to ensure sustainability, so that ComDev activities introduced and encouraged through the CSDI are also mainstreamed and institutionalized, both within the organizations directly benefitting from the service (such as extension services and MOAs) and within the CARIMAC Caribbean Centre for Communication for Development.

A third criterion for consideration has been the need to show impact, climate change adaptation, and behaviour change on-farm or at the community level. In short, while extension and other rural services can be strengthened and their capacity and skills in ComDev enhanced, the results of their ComDev training have to translate into on-farm impact. This in turn demands that links are made with CBOs and farmer groups that have capacity in ComDev at the local level (through community radio, multi-media centres, etc.) and that CBOs also be trained in ComDev practices in conjunction with extension and other rural services.

The following types of results were expected in the Caribbean from CSDI perspective:

- Improved ComDev assistance to FAO projects working in the region to promote climate change adaptation, disaster risk mitigation and natural resource management leading to greater CC resiliency among farmers/fishers and improved rural livelihoods;
- Assistance in mainstreaming ComDev plans and activities among Ministries of Agriculture within key pilot areas;
- Creation of a network of ComDev practitioners and professionals within the region;
- Greater visibility of the value-added that ComDev can bring to the region.

3. MAIN ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The Caribbean Institute of Media and Communications (CARIMAC) of the University of West Indies was identified as key partner for CSDI due to its strong commitment to ComDev and its experience in the region. After revising the opportunities for collaboration, FAO and CARIMAC signed a Letter of Agreement in May 2009 to develop and implement a regional workplan. This would help giving greater prominence to CARIMAC's ComDev work and raising its profile as a regional ComDev technical service provider for FAO projects.

The main activities and achievements of the CSDI Caribbean component have been:

a. Regional Need Assessment and Communication Action Plan for the Caribbean

While the LOA identified broad categories of services to be delivered, a more specific project workplan had to be developed. A preliminary assessment was conducted to identify key priority areas for assistance based on the demand from the countries and from potential partners in the region. This resulted in a comprehensive needs assessment paper to guide the regional Communication Action Plan (CAP) for the Caribbean, which included a review of current opportunities and trends in the region and identified relevant approaches, stakeholders, programmes, services and priorities for community-based climate change adaptation, natural resource management and disaster risk reduction. The document also assessed existing good practices and ICT applications in the above-mentioned areas.

b. Assistance to disaster risk reduction programmes in the region

Technical assistance was expected to be demand-driven and responsive to the needs and requests of potential partners and Ministries of Agriculture, as well as TCPs within the region. In 2012 and 2011 requests for assistance arrived for 3 projects:

1. *'Enhanced capacities for disaster risk mitigation in agriculture, fisheries and forestry'* TCP/STL/3202 in St Lucia
2. *'Assistance to improve disaster risk management capacities in agricultural sectors'* TCP/DMI/3203 in the Commonwealth of Dominica
3. *'Strengthening the national extension system'* TCP/BZE/3204 in Belize

During CSDI missions to St Lucia, Dominica and Belize, assistance was given to the national communication consultants to prepare initial ComDev strategies and to get the countries moving in this direction.

c. Assistance to climate change adaptation and food security projects in Jamaica

The project held meetings with the local FAO-Jamaica office, the Jamaican Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MOAF), the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), as well as with PANOS-Caribbean, the Jamaica Organic Agricultural Movement (JOAM), the Jeffrey Town Farmers Association (JTFA) and others. Based on these consultations, it was decided that the scope of CSDI assistance in the country would be broadened to improve the resilience of farming communities to climate-related hazards.

The following activities were carried out by the CSDI component in Jamaica:

1. Contribution to the Jamaican Climate Change working group and assistance to PANOS-Caribbean *Voices for Climate Change* to develop a national ComDev strategy
(CSDI coordinated a retreat with key communication specialists associated with the project, from PANOS-Caribbean and the National Environmental Education Committee, during which a draft communication strategy was produced)
2. Assistance to the Jeffrey Town Farmers Association (JTFA) with audience research for radio production and with the formulation of a funding proposal on ComDev for Community-Based Adaptation to be submitted to the UNDP Global Environmental Facility
3. Creation of a comprehensive training programme in ComDev for extension officers of the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), that would ultimately lead to a professional diploma course from CARIMAC
4. ComDev training and assistance with video and instructional media component of:
 - *Master Gardener* project under the GCP/JAM/018/EC EU Food Facility Initiative
 - *Agricultural Disaster Risk Mitigation (ADRM)* component of the TCP/JAM/3202 (D) National Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Plan for the Agriculture Sector
 - Jamaica Organic Agricultural Movement (JOAM) sub-project under the EU Food Facility programme

A video script was prepared for the Master Gardener project through RADA training and one-on-one assistance. Due to limited fund available from CSDI, it was decided that additional resources for video production would be generated through RADA's own funds. JOAM started the scripting process and received assistance to conduct an inventory of existing ADRM video footage for their video.

d. Preparation of training modules and manuals on ComDev for DRM and CCA

Four training modules were prepared to provide extension workers with the ComDev skills needed to ensure that they deliver farmer-driven services. The modules cover the following topics: (i) introduction to ComDev and audience research techniques (with emphasis on ComDev for CCA and NRM components); (ii) instructional video scripting skills; (iii) single camera production; and (iv) single camera editing skills. Based on the introductory course on ComDev and audience research skills, a "training of trainers" manual was created for officers to use it in the field. In addition, nine short instructional videos were produced.

e. Delivery of training courses in ComDev for extensions workers in Jamaica

The Jamaican MOAF requested a professional development programme in ComDev for extensionists of the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), including a series of ComDev training modules and an implementation plan. It was decided that RADA would pilot the training in Jamaica which could then be scaled up as a regional training activity. In Dominica it was explored the possibility to organize a “remote” ComDev training exercise, to be offered by CARIMAC or with CSDI support.

Three training workshops have been delivered in: (1) PRCA/audience research techniques for ComDev; (2) scripting for instructional video and power point presentations; and (3) video camera and video editing skills. Overall 29 persons have been trained, mainly extension officers of RADA involved with key Government of Jamaica-FAO initiatives plus members of the Jamaica Organic Agricultural Movement and the Jeffrey Town Farmers Association.

f. Caribbean ComDev Platform and web-based repository

CSDI Caribbean launched in 2010 a web-based portal for online learning and discussion to connect and facilitate sharing of knowledge and experiences among a wide range of ComDev practitioners, students, farmer groups and multimedia centres who use communication to enhance sustainable development, climate change adaptation and food security.

The site serves as a ‘one-stop-shop’ to showcase a range of ComDev experience and relevant initiatives from the Caribbean and can be found at: <http://csdi.carimac.com>

g. Participation to international conferences

CSDI-Caribbean has been present at several regional and global conferences and sectoral events, such as:

- International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Bangladesh (March 2009);
- CTA Agriculture and Media forum (October 2009);
- CEF-5 forum (June 2010); OECS and World Bank (July 2010);
- CTA media and agriculture forum - Caribbean Week of Agriculture (October 2010);
- Commonwealth of Learning meetings, Kerala India (November 2010);
- UNFCCC/CTA meetings in Cancun (November/December 2010).

As a result of these participations, considerable headway has been made in furthering recognition of the value added that ComDev can bring to the agricultural and NRM sector, and considerable traction has been generated for further technical services from CARIMAC and CSDI in the Caribbean and beyond.

4. CASE STUDY: RAISING COMDEV SKILLS OF EXTENSION WORKERS IN JAMAICA

Jamaica is particularly vulnerable to climate related hazards. The agricultural sector has already begun to experience the increased and more frequent impacts of natural events including drought and changing rainfall patterns. Over 200,000 crop and livestock farmers have suffered the most from these climate change impacts: floods have destroyed their crops, washed away top soils, eroded river banks, while increased periods of drought have caused widespread water shortages in many areas of the country, in particular the Southern parishes. Based on this, the Jamaican government in collaboration with civil society has been promoting initiatives to ensure that the island becomes more climate-resilient.

CSDI in Jamaica aimed to develop, test and implement communication tools and strategies that would solidly support good environmental practices in rural communities, to better cope with the impacts of climate change. The activities started with initial assessments to identify the gaps and needs in the country. According to the CSDI focal point in the Caribbean, the greatest need was in training, which has made this component significantly more prominent than originally planned.

Work was done to strengthen the capacities of national institutions and to assist selected projects in the island in the field of communication for sustainable development. The Ministry of Agriculture, the Rural Agriculture Development Agency (RADA) and the Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement were the key organisations in the agricultural sector that participated in the project. PANOS Caribbean and the National Environmental Education Committee (NEEC) also received technical assistance for their Voices for Climate Change Education Project.

The training was intended to raise the capacity of key staff to communicate and capture critical information to be disseminated on climate change, NRM and disaster issues. There was much focus on practical skills building such as introduction to basic videography so that participants could produce a video on backyard gardening for example. One major result from the training was the creation of a Training of Trainers manual that officers could continue to use in the field. Nine short instructional videos were also produced.

Three training workshops were held on: (i) Audience Research; (ii) Video script writing; and (iii) Video camera and editing skills. Participants included:

1. Extension officers at the Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA) involved with key Government of Jamaica-FAO initiatives
2. Members of the Jamaica Organic Agricultural Movement (JOAM) and two persons from the Jeffrey Town Farmers (JTF) Association

Based on the final training workshop reports supplied and the follow-up interviews conducted, the training workshops were considered well designed and executed. About 23 of the 29 participants in all three training programmes were satisfied with the topics covered and the relevance of those topics for their work. In the words of one participant: *the training increased my knowledge 100 per cent.*

According to CARIMAC staff involved in CSDI activities, the training given to RADA complemented their livelihood baseline process and at least 2 of 20 participants actually submitted focus group plans following the training. The training with JOAM and JTF also helped to push forward the

planning and preparation for increased use of participatory communication methods in the activities of the organizations. This was confirmed by one respondent:

We will be able to plan instructional leaning tools (video and power point) in a more focused and targeted way to respond to farmers' real learning needs.

Participants saw video as a useful tool to improve communication with farmers and to raise awareness around key issues. It was felt that there was scope to produce a range of locally relevant video materials, which would help in delivering training on different aspects of agriculture including livestock management, beekeeping, land husbandry and growing particular crops. Videos could also be used in marketing for farmers as well as highlighting best practices.

The participant also indicated some challenges in terms of the design of the training: in two of the three workshops they felt that perhaps too much information was put into the timeframe and that the training could be expanded to allow more time for absorption and application. Several respondents would have liked the training to be more practical and field-based, while others expressed a desire for in-depth training in video editing. Lack of proper equipment was another reason why persons could not practice both during the training and later in their work places.

National CSDI staff also expressed concerns about the realities of the end-users of the training program: *the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*. In their view, although RADA was very keen to have a ComDev training programme designed, getting commitments from RADA head office to allow agricultural extension officers being released from regular duties to attend the training, proved to be extremely challenging. According to the proposed training plan, sessions should have commenced in the early part of 2010, but did not begin until June 2010. In fact, out of the 18 training modules originally foreseen, only four have been delivered. As a result, the pilot training program in ComDev provided extension officers with critical introductory modules that should be complemented by a full-fledged training in a longer time period.

4. Interaction between Global and Field Components

As an interregional project, the CSDI devoted much attention and resources to facilitating the interaction and information exchange among its different components as well as relevant institutions. In addition to the daily email communications, the scheduled Skype meetings and the progress reports regularly submitted to the coordination unit, the following activities were undertaken to contribute to this purpose:

1. CSDI EXPERT MEETING (Dhaka, 2009)

The decision to assemble the consultants and partners of the project was taken during a project Steering Committee meeting, in July 2008. It was deemed necessary so that the project approach and methodologies could be consolidated and the project services made accessible at the international level. The CSDI Expert Meeting was thus held in Bangladesh (Dhaka, February 26-27, 2009). It was attended by the project technical officers and the ComDev partners from Africa, Caribbean and Asia. During the meeting CSDI staff and collaborators had the opportunity to exchange views in order to:

- a. review and firm up project objectives and priorities;
- b. revise CSDI project strategy, general workplan and specific action plans;
- c. identify mechanisms for coordination and synergies;
- d. establish networking, global consultation and strategic partnerships; and
- e. revise the project conceptual framework.

The meeting allowed to revise the project overall conceptual framework and operational strategy based on regional and national priorities. It also hosted a joint discussion on inter-regional activities and allowed the different components to start networking and sharing ideas.

Among the issues, concerns and clarifications that surfaced were, for instance, the proposal to establish Steering Committees at country level to guarantee the effective implementation of national plans as well as the active participation of stakeholders and institutions in the project. It was also agreed that the project should seek for multi-donors including institutions, agencies, research centres, universities and other organizations.

From the Expert Meeting discussion also emerged core recommendations and priorities for action, such as advancing regional networks and strategic partnerships, and providing follow-up to CBA to pursue the strategic direction of the project. Specific recommendations were made to improve mechanisms for coordination, reporting and information sharing.

2. CSDI D-GROUP DISCUSSION LIST

A D-Group mailing list called “CSDI Core Group” was set up as a board of discussion for CSDI personnel, to keep in touch and share their work in the different regions or contribute documents of common interest, inputs or suggestions just sending a mail message to the address CSDI-CoreGroup@dgroups.org. The overall goal of the group was to facilitate knowledge sharing among project members for the successful application of CSDI initiatives, methodologies and tools at local and global level. The list has been used more for general communications from the

coordination unit than for actual discussion among the different components, being the language issue an apparent discouragement especially for non-English speaking members. CSDI experiences and news were collected and shared through the global CSDI portal launched in 2010.

3. CSDI STOCKTAKING WORKSHOP AND STEERING COMMITTEE (Rome, 2011)

As part of the end-of-project stocktaking exercise, an inter-regional workshop was held at FAO Headquarters (Rome, September 12-13, 2011) with the participation of CSDI staff from the coordination unit, country focal points and other institutional stakeholders.

During the two-day workshop CSDI participants were able to jointly reflect and interpret the information collected during the stocktaking process, adding their views and contributions to come up with a comprehensive self-assessment. Lessons learned from experience and the overall results of the CSDI project were identified and discussed jointly with recommendations for a second phase. CSDI staff also had the opportunity to interact with the project donor in occasion of a Steering Committee meeting (Rome, September 15, 2011) where findings of the stocktaking process were presented.

PART 2. PERSPECTIVES ON CSDI EXPERIENCE

1. Perceptions by FAO Colleagues and Partners

During the past years the CSDI project has collaborated with several FAO units, such as the Climate, Energy and Tenure division (NRC) of the Natural Resources Management Department, the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment division (ESW) and the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation division (TCE). CSDI has been also actively participating in two FAO Inter-Departmental Working Groups (IDWG), namely on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, supporting FAO framework programmes on these two topics. This has contributed to raise awareness within the house about the role that ComDev plays for climate change adaptation and sustainable natural resource management.

Moreover, CSDI has contributed to the work of the Research and Extension Branch (OEKR), the unit to which the project technically and administratively belongs. In particular the project played an active role for the preparation of the OEKR paper '*Facing the challenges of climate change and food security: the role of research, extension and communications institutions*' (Leeuwis & Hall, 2010) coordinating the realization and validation of country case studies in Bolivia, Bangladesh and Democratic Republic of Congo.

Based on these considerations, focus groups and open-ended interviews were held with key-informants from different FAO units to elicit their appreciation of the CSDI experience. Although insufficient to draw a comprehensive picture of in-house perception of the project, this material illustrates some strengths and weaknesses of CSDI project as narrated by FAO colleagues.

According to members of both IDWGs on climate change and disaster risk reduction, a major merit of the project has been promoting in the international climate change arena the long experience gained by FAO in ComDev as applied to sustainable development and natural resource management. This process has taken place in different manners and through different means but, according to the informants, participation of CSDI staff in several international events has been highly effective in this respect.

One example was the 3rd Annual Conference on Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change, held in 2009 in Bangladesh. It was reported that CSDI and its partners played a very proactive and catalytic role in the forum, thanks to which ComDev was recognized as a key approach for community-based adaptation (CBA). The informants stressed that the commitment and expertise of CSDI staff and country focal points have been one main driver of success.

OEKR officers as well believed that mainstreaming ComDev in the climate change adaptation debate and practice should be considered the most important project achievement, and the outstanding value added by CSDI to the Branch work. In the words of an OEKR Communication for Development officer:

In the area of adaptation to climate change, what is important is the shift from communication projects where the farmers, the small-holders, the communities and the rural people at large are recipient of technologies, policies and innovation in a wide sense, to communication strategies

where the rural communities are protagonists of adaptation to climate change. This is the concept behind the effort that CSDI has made in several countries and in the international arena.

This concept was expanded by another OEKR officer, who considered that CSDI's main contribution to the climate change debate has been adding the human dimension and providing tools and methodologies to engage local stakeholders in the adaptation process, building on existing local knowledge:

Most programmes for climate change adaptation are based on risk assessments that identify the adaptation matters and options from a hard science prospective. Farmers' knowledge is seldom taken into consideration. But farmers are often aware of the impact of climate change. CSDI has been focusing on engaging people in analyzing their observations and experience and finding out ways to cope with climate change creating ownership at the grassroots level. [...] CSDI real strength has been focusing on the grassroots stakeholders.

While some informants were already skilled in ComDev, others discovered it through collaborations with CSDI in the field. This is the case of an environmental scientist from FAO IDWG on climate change. On a field mission to Saint Lucia for an emergency-preparedness project, she was impressed by the impact of a training workshop on ComDev promoted by CSDI and the enthusiasm of local extensionists eventually led her to implement the ComDev methodology. According to this informant:

Back from Saint Lucia I took a training on communication skills and started working to make the CSDI approach more known among everybody working on climate change in FAO. Now I am developing a distance learning course on climate change adaptation and CSDI's Collaborative Change Framework (one of the project's main outputs) is being included in the curriculum.

On the other hand, the same informant experienced slight frustration as the documents produced by CSDI were not fully reflected in the project work at the grassroots level.

CSDI collaboration with other FAO field projects was particularly intense in Bangladesh, in practice a "fourth" country component. According to the officer in charge of the FAO *Livelihoods Adaptation to Climate Change (LACC)* - a major community-based climate change adaptation project in Bangladesh - the value added by CSDI was the assessment of the communication practice of local institutions. He specified that CSDI report was relevant in capturing the communication needs, methods used and institutional settings in the country and was very useful to link the LACC project to the Bengalese communication institutions (complementing the work done by the same project with agriculture and rural development institutions).

The respondent also felt that CSDI could have contributed more to the project in terms of concrete tools to implement the proposed communication strategy and to apply the ComDev approach to community-based livelihood adaptation. He suggested that:

CSDI should move from the formulation of communication strategies to get them implemented, by preparing and diffusing ComDev products from which the communities could benefit, for instance: videos on good practices to be circulated on YouTube or other channels, a database of community-based adaptation experience available for training, etc.

As a matter of fact, the normative activities carried out by CSDI in the framework of LACC paved the way for another two-year FAO Technical Cooperation Programme in Bangladesh on

“Enhancing Rural Communication Services for Agricultural Development through Rural Radio”. Here the CSDI supported for instance the installation of the first community rural radio station of the country, currently managed by representatives of local communities in the Barguna district, to enhance participation and improve links between researchers, extensionists, and small farmers.

Looking at CSDI implementation strategy from a more comprehensive perspective, OEKR officers concurred that the global CSDI would have benefitted from a more focused implementation roadmap and selection of country components. As stated by one informant:

Activities were identified and developed as pilots along the way. So, the project started in a certain country, later in another country and so on. I feel that, right from the beginning, a clearer strategy perhaps would have given more opportunities to focus on the capacity development and the real technical assistance needs.

Another OEKR informant felt that one weakness of CSDI has been to operate in contexts where there was no critical mass of people skilled in ComDev:

In some cases CSDI did not take into account that local extensionists, journalists, communicators would need more training, more capacity development in order to fully implement ComDev activities. Also in the academia those who are in the social science tend to serve all areas of development, and communication specialists are not available.

Adding to this, the project experienced institutional constraints in the field. CSDI negotiations in some countries took much more time and effort than expected, which entailed a substantial delay in the priority setting and actual beginning of project activities.

As we are taking stock of the experience, in future projects we have to consider that it is not so easy to start, go and have immediately all the arrangements made with the local institutions. It takes time.

2. Perceptions by Partner Institutions in the Field

Interesting inputs were also provided by the national counterparts that have been working in close collaboration with CSDI staff to implement the field pilots. As part of the stocktaking case studies and validation workshops carried out at country level, key informants from these partner institutions were interviewed about their appreciation of CSDI experience. The opinions reported are not intended to give an exhaustive picture, but can provide additional insights about some of the perceived major strengths and weaknesses of CSDI project.

BOLIVIA

In the Bolivian context, the counterpart institutions - namely the Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT) and the National Institute for Innovation in Agriculture, Livestock and Forestry (INIAF) - acknowledged CSDI contribution to introducing an innovative and highly participatory way of thinking about and practicing communication for agricultural innovation. According to the chief of the INIAF Technical Assistance Unit, *up until CSDI for us the issue of communication was basically radio and television while thanks to CSDI the institution has become more familiar with the ComDev methodology and is now aware of the primary providers of ComDev services in the country, especially NGOs and civil society organizations with an extensive network of communicators. In this sense, a key contribution expected from CSDI was the facilitation of a national platform to connect the different ComDev stakeholders and develop joint action pursuing common goals.*

Another informant from the national Technical Assistance Unit stressed that CSDI contributed to the institutional strengthening of INIAF by supporting increased recognition of ComDev and its inclusion in the Institutional Strategic Plan 2011-2015. In his opinion, shared by other colleagues, one of the main strengths of CSDI has been the full synergy with the vision and priorities of the Bolivian government regarding the recovery and exchange of knowledge (both ancestral and scientific):

Definitely, ComDev is a project that supports the guidelines defined (by the INIAF) so, at that level, the issue of a lack of political will, I think, in part, has been overcome [...] and of course we have worked on that together.

As the project approach is based on the principles of participation and dialogue, which are complementary with INIAF's political vision, it has been well accepted by the institution and considered useful to meet farmers' needs in several thematic areas. At the same time though, the respondents perceived that the project methodology maintains elements of complexity. According to several staff of the INIAF who were directly linked to the project, this constituted a weakness for CSDI which faced a deep-rooted understanding of communication mainly as diffusion of information. For this reason, it was pointed out that CSDI would have benefitted from a simplified approach for technicians and a strategic presentation of the advantages of ComDev, particularly to decision-makers at national and departmental level, emphasizing how the methodology is in line with the current state policies and public discourse on "dialogue of knowledge" and communication for living well (*Comunicación para el buen vivir*).

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

In the framework of the pilot experience in DRC, the CSDI main counterpart were the Directorate General and the Mvuazi research centre of the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INERA), as well as the Institute of Information and Communication Sciences (IFASIC) of the University of Kinshasa.

According to INERA staff and other project stakeholders from local radios and NGOs, the CSDI project in RDC had fewer weaknesses than strengths. The informants perceived that CSDI was successful in applying a valid principle and strategy for the dissemination of technologies, boosting ComDev capacities, establishing partnerships and facilitating improved collaboration among the different actors. In particular they appreciated how the project stimulated the interest of farmers by improving the community radio Ntemo and changing the profile of the catholic radio Vuvu Kieto, which now have intensified broadcasts concerning rural development.

On the other hand, perceived weaknesses of CSDI were mainly linked to the choice of the core project to be supported, an FAO project called *Programme de relance de la recherche agricole et forestière* in DRC (REAFOR). The informants considered that this produced endless discussions for the approval of the Communication Action Plan proposed by CSDI, partial funding disbursement and cumbersome administrative procedures, a weak support granted to the formal establishment of the communication platform and in general to the project implementation, which eventually resulted in the delay or non-performance of some of the activities. With regards to the above, partners concurred that a much firmer commitment was needed and the representative of INERA Directorate General suggested a more direct collaboration between CSDI and national research and ComDev institutions.

In particular, the member of IFASIC directly engaged in CSDI activities felt that the experience in DRC suffered from being short-term, supported by minimal financial resources, and in a very limited area of the Cataractes district. The duration of CSDI project was considered too short to enable an adequate use of all the topics selected, considering the national research and extension system's gaps on climate change and NRM issues and taking into account also the lack of sufficiently qualified personnel within the rural radio stations.

JAMAICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION

CSDI partner institution for the implementation of field activities in Jamaica and the Caribbean region was the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communications (CARIMAC) of the University of West Indies.

From a focus group discussion held with three members of CARIMAC involved in the project, it emerged that one of the major strengths of CSDI was the work done in Jamaica to strengthen the capacities of national institutions - including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) and the Jamaica Organic Agriculture Movement - and to assist selected projects in the field of communication for sustainable development.

With hindsight, the informants observed that the initial CSDI workplan designed for providing assistance at the regional level had been a little too ambitious and underestimated the long time required to receive and process country requests for assistance.

3. CSDI Collective Review: Results of the Stocktaking Workshop

As part of the stocktaking process, project staff from both the coordination unit and the country components, together with representatives from institutional counterparts, gathered at FAO Headquarters for a two-day workshop (September 12-13, 2011). During the meeting, the team had the opportunity to share views and jointly reflect on the work done and the results achieved by the project. The CSDI team's collective review focused on the two project outcomes and generated a number of recommendations also in view of a follow-up phase.

ENABLING FACTORS

Among the major enabling factors for CSDI work, participants indicated the linkages built through networking and collaborations with other projects and FAO actors. A key element also identified was the mutual reinforcement between the participatory communication approach promoted by CSDI and the local mechanisms for decision-making, which allowed to effectively support ongoing development initiatives at the field level. Operating in a conducive policy environment, in synergy with national and local priorities, was indicated as a condition that CSDI has been able to facilitate, focusing on people's real needs and responding to the high demand for more inclusive processes.

Workshop participants stressed as an asset the wealth of information materials and knowledge produced, systematized and shared by CSDI, as well as the creation and strengthening of capacities. This was considered particularly effective when done building on previous experiences and existing ComDev capacities. For instance in Bolivia, a country with a long history of ComDev initiatives promoted by FAO, continuity has been a strength for the project. It has increased the sense of ownership among individuals and organizations involved and has helped to facilitate the sustainability of ComDev services.

LIMITING FACTORS

According to CSDI staff, the most significant constraints to the full achievement of project objectives included: weak or evolving institutional frameworks; bureaucratic administrative procedures; limited time, financial and human resources; limited scale and visibility of project activities; insufficient buy-in by FAO and the technical unit hosting the project.

It was noticed that many efforts were concentrated at the national level, while a ComDev project by its own nature should have undertaken more activities at the local level. Moreover, as CSDI field work was often tied up to requests by technical projects, there was a time lapse between the expression of demand for ComDev assistance and the actual uptake of services by local institutions who took time to appreciate ComDev value. However, from an internal perspective, the team recognized that the project design should have been less ambitious compared with the time and resources available.

The need for a more selective prioritization during project implementation emerged as CSDI major weakness. Apparently the "opportunistic" approach driven by several requests for assistance led to a multiplication of initiatives both at the global and field levels. As a result, the project became more complex and challenging to handle. Another perceived limitation was the

insufficient information exchange and coordination among the various countries involved in the project.

| ENABLING FACTORS | | LIMITING FACTORS | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|---|
| Linkages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking w/ other FAO actors • Connections with field projects • ComDev plan strengthens link w/ FAO strategy • Mutual reinforcement b/w the CSDI strategy and local mechanisms for decision making • Integration with local services of technical assistance | Institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolving institutional frameworks requiring project adjustments • Institutional weaknesses |
| Policy environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synergy with national policies / priorities • National policies for inclusion of local communities • Favorable attitude toward participation process | Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited financial and human resources • Limited time to showcase results and have some impact at policy level |
| Capacities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development on community and social media • Previous experience and capacity existing (national/regional level) • Good practices based on indigenous knowledge exist (e.g. for CCA and ADRM) | Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems with FAO country office • FAO and national government bureaucracy • Administrative obstacles to project implementation |
| Continuity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability of ComDev services • Long lasting ComDev experience in Bolivia • Sense of ownership by institutions and people | Participants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences among participant's backgrounds • Competing demands for field agents' time impeding to take full advantage of training |
| Responsiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High demand for methodology and training • Focus on real people's needs | Scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scale of project activities (only 4 pilots) not enough to test and institutionalize |
| Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematization and documentation of knowledge produced • Wealth of information and materials produced • Opportunities for sharing knowledge | Visibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited visibility of project activities and results for decision-makers at country level • Poor understanding of ComDev |

In light of the above, workshop participants agreed that the project would have benefitted from regular collective consultations. This could serve to the purpose of fine tuning terminology and basic concepts across countries, but also to applying a common framework or Theory of Change aiming at its appropriation by the national counterpart institutions.

It was suggested that participatory, in-depth planning and prioritization processes should be envisaged in the context of a possible follow-up phase. This would help to clearly identify the different topics and areas of intervention (climate change, agricultural innovation, disaster risk reduction, food security) and jointly decide on which dimensions and functions to focus on, yet allowing flexibility to capture the uniqueness of every context and respond to real needs.

Workshop participants also expressed the need to do more focused activities, for more in-depth interventions. At the local level, attention should be paid to formulating SMART objectives and documenting more systematically outcomes and impacts, when evident. Finally, there was a general appreciation of the relevance of the normative work done by the project at the global level, well exemplified by the *Collaborative Change* framework publication. It was noted though that this potential should be operationalized at the field level through adequate ComDev services.

The table below summarizes the recommendations emerged from the stocktaking workshop in relation to project future directions.

| FUTURE DIRECTIONS | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide to which extent, dimension, and function to integrate yet allow flexibility to proceed in different ways to capture uniqueness Link process (e.g., capacity development) and services at the field, national and global levels |
| Focus | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide on where to focus. Do less with more Be selective in identifying activities, levels, and projects Capture collaboration process and issues |
| Terminologies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify and fine tune terminologies Agree on definition of terms Terms include strategy, service, output, outcome, learning, product, deliverable, tool, methodology, media |
| Sustainability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make the project sustainable inside and outside of FAO |
| Global Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global level of CSDI should support technical assistance delivered at the local/field level State what is needed to make a global component; what is the contribution of each country to the global level |
| Grassroots Dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make project more responsive to the ground Bring the materials down to the people Design capacity building on ComDev targeting local people and institutions |
| Monitoring and Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find concrete indicators for ComDev processes/services Improve M&E framework to make it participatory and flexible since it cannot capture everything Consider an alternative to the log frame since it does not capture processes Plan for innovative evaluation |

In conclusion of the two-day stocktaking workshop, participants also enumerated a series of ideas for follow-up:

| IDEAS FOR FOLLOW-UP | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. | Conduct advocacy and training on ComDev in agriculture and the Collaborative Change framework at all levels |
| 2. | Foster partnership between CSDI and other communication programs |
| 3. | Make project collaborative activities and outreach strategy more visible and showcase success for local, national, and global audiences |
| 4. | Include gender sensitization and vulnerable groups |
| 5. | Make activities interactive horizontally and vertically |
| 6. | Explore complementarities between public awareness and ComDev |
| 7. | Design activities to engage technicians and policy makers in the collaborative change innovation process |
| 8. | Prepare a proposal for donors for scaling up ComDev activities and enhancing capacities in the field |

CONCLUSIONS

Lessons learned and critical issues

The CSDI stocktaking exercise allowed to assess results and experiences accumulated by the project during its 4-year life across different countries and components. This constituted a tremendous opportunity to extract lessons for the future, looking at the project approach and implementation strategy, the activities completed, the results successfully achieved and the drawbacks encountered.

It is worth considering here a number of opportunities and constraints, failure and success factors, that have been critical to the achievement of the project. These have been identified complementing the data and opinions collected for the case studies with inputs provided by the CSDI team during the workshop.

As emerged from the stocktaking process, the value added of CSDI work at the **international level** is testified by major **project achievements** that include:

- Promotion of participatory approaches and methodologies to apply communication for sustainable rural development processes;
- Effective positioning and mainstreaming of ComDev in the international debate on community-based climate change adaptation;
- Significant contribution to shaping FAO Research and Extension Branch's vision in connection to the role agricultural innovation and communication for development in facing the challenges of climate change;
- Production, systematization and sharing of quality information materials and knowledge resources;
- Comprehensive assessments of needs, stakeholders and service providers as a basis for effective communication planning in the different areas of intervention at the global, regional and local level;
- Creation and strengthening of institutional and professional capacities in ComDev;
- Establishment of linkages and partnerships with other FAO projects and actors through networking and collaboration proposals; and
- Facilitation of a conducive policy environment for ComDev activities, targeting people needs and responding to the demand for improved services in the field of agricultural innovation, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

More specifically, the project has shown potential at the **field level** and a great attention to guarantee the sustainability of its services, especially in Bolivia where most investment were made. CSDI **major strengths** in this sense have been:

- Responsiveness to the needs and characteristics of target groups among farmers, indigenous peoples and rural communities which led to successful awareness and interest raising initiatives;

- Adoption and appropriation of ComDev methods and tools by local stakeholders, civil society and grassroots organizations who have used them to further their own objectives;
- Increased sense of ownership among the individuals and organizations involved;
- Synergies between CSDI and FAO field programmes at country level through the support provided to the formulation of ComDev projects and components;
- Effective partnerships established between FAO and community media and communication networks (e.g. AMARC, BNNRC); and
- Increased recognition of the need to institutionalize ComDev services within national agricultural policies.

The review and systematization of CSDI experience was undertaken assuming that the whole process constituted a learning opportunity for FAO and partner institutions, as well as for communication practitioners. While the CSDI project has piloted out innovative rural communication strategies and services, this exercise also made clear a number of constraints and weaknesses.

Below are presented the main **lessons learned** that emerged from the stocktaking and could help improve future endeavors:

- CSDI ‘opportunistic’ approach (country requests prioritized on a first-come-first-served basis, planning based on local assessments or opportunities arose during the project life) had some advantages in terms of local responsiveness and operational flexibility. However, the team faced the challenge of over planning, with some activities not fully relevant to the project focus, and others not receiving the adequate follow-up. A more focused implementation strategy, as well as closer ties with the FAO program of work, would have helped the project to be more effective in implementing its own Theory of Change and gain sustainability in the long run.
- CSDI would have significantly benefitted from a stronger institutional support within FAO as part of the regular program and taking advantage of technical initiatives (e.g. IDWG on climate change and disaster risk reduction). The project experienced the consequences of weak or instable institutional frameworks and bureaucratic administrative procedures, both in FAO and in the pilot countries. Stronger advocacy and, at the field level, further involvement of government institutions, ministries or FAO country representations would have been required.
- CSDI efforts to conceptualize normative products, communication strategies and plans could have been better balanced with the development of practical methods and working tools to implement those strategies with more substantial impact at the grassroots level. For example the *Collaborative Change* communication framework had a large potential but lacked grounding at the operational level, also due to the delay in producing the planned training modules and guidelines for field use.
- The interaction between the different CSDI components was not sufficient to ensure a real exchange of experiences. Differences emerged on terminology, concepts and focus areas across national teams. A more effective exchange mechanism was needed to increase collective consultations and interregional cross-fertilization.

It is interesting to see some complementary points emerging from the country-level assessments:

- In the Democratic Republic of Congo time and scale limitations, together with the financial and qualified human resources available, were considered major constraints.
- For the Caribbean regional component, the plan of action originally developed by the local team was regarded as too ambitious compared with the time and resources assigned.
- In Bolivia it was perceived that, to face a deep-rooted understanding of communication mainly as diffusion of information, the project would have benefitted from a stronger advocacy and strategic presentation of the proposed National ComDev Plan to decision-makers at the highest institutional level to get the necessary policy support.

Final recommendations for follow-up

In light of the conclusions of the CSDI stocktaking exercise, the following recommendations emerge to be taken into consideration for a possible project continuation:

1. Additional collective consultation are needed to fine tune terminology and to **define a shared approach** across countries and a common framework or “theory of change” that differentiates among the various topics (climate change, agricultural innovation, risk reduction, food security).
2. Selective continuation of a few country experiences would be more strategic, as the time, effort and resources required to reach a consensus on project components, level of work and interrelationships may be better spent on **targeted country by country continuity**.
3. Any project extension or follow-up should focus on **doing less and more in-depth activities**, setting strategic priorities and more realistic outcomes considering the time and resources available, in order to ensure an acceptable quality level and the adequate follow-up.
4. The development of assessment, plans, and strategy documents should be better balanced with the **provision of operational tools** for field implementation by local staff trained on their use.
5. The option of **providing services to existing FAO programmes and projects** rather than launching new stand-alone ComDev initiatives in CSDI selected countries should be reconsidered strategically.
6. If self-contained and relatively autonomous country components are to be kept, presence of a **critical mass of communication practitioners** and institutions should be considered.
7. **Existing institutional capacity** must also be considered in selected countries and field sites. Although CSDI mandate it so strengthen national capacity to develop Com Dev competence and institutionalize it, there is probably a threshold, under which this cannot be efficiently and effectively done.
8. The project should produce elements to **demonstrate effectiveness**, in particular a coherent set of indicators for outputs, outcomes and impacts/results which should be more systematically documented.

9. The project should focus on **effective ways to advocate for ComDev and share experiences** that the countries and regions are implementing on the ground through the technical assistance they are doing. In this sense, the advocacy and knowledge sharing dimensions seem to be assets for a follow-up phase of CSDI.
10. The global CSDI component could be more closely **tied up with FAO strategic framework and field programme**. Priority would be developing utilization strategies for existing documents/materials, seeking targeted events for consultation with FAO policy makers, identifying where those materials could be put to work, etc.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. CSDI Stocktaking Study Design¹¹

1. Stocktaking of CSDI coordination unit experience and results [global level]

The global component of the stocktaking study focused on the interregional coordination unit (CU), in its threefold role of (a) project designer and coordinator; (b) implementer of normative activities and global/regional/sub-regional initiatives; and (c) provider of technical assistance to FAO and other international organizations. CU's facilitation role in support of activities in pilot countries was dealt with in the framework of the country case studies.

The table below lists the topics covered by the global stocktaking study and the evaluation questions addressing each block of information:

| STUDY TOPIC | EVALUATION QUESTIONS |
|--|--|
| 1. Analysis of the end-of-project scenario and implementation strategy | <p>a) <i>What was initially expected to be the end-of-project scenario? Is this scenario relevant, internally sound and realistic (in the light of time and resources available to the project)?</i></p> <p>b) <i>To what extent has this scenario been achieved according to project staff? What changes have taken place during implementation (if any)?</i></p> <p>c) <i>How was the expected scenario meant to be achieved? What changes took place during implementation in project strategy?</i></p> |
| 2. Analytical stocktaking of monitoring data | <p>a) <i>How were the services and products delivered reflected in the logframe elements and categories of activity?</i></p> <p>b) <i>What was the "actual" implementation strategy as elicited from monitoring data?</i></p> <p>c) <i>What differences exist (if any) between the "stated" and "actual" project strategy?</i></p> |
| 3. Appreciation of the project by partner institutions (including FAO units) | <p>a) <i>What has been the subject/content of collaboration with CSDI project?</i></p> <p>b) <i>What are the strengths of the support obtained from the project?</i></p> <p>c) <i>What are the weaknesses of the support obtained from the project?</i></p> <p>d) <i>What can be suggested to the project/OEKR/FAO to improve their capacity to support the work by the partner institution?</i></p> |
| 4. Appreciation of project experience by CU staff and CPFs | <p>a) <i>What are the strengths of project experience?</i></p> <p>b) <i>What are the weaknesses of project experience?</i></p> <p>c) <i>Based on the above, what can be suggested to the project/OEKR/FAO to improve their capacity to deliver relevant and effective ComDev services?</i></p> |

Table 1. Global component study topics and evaluation questions

Relevant **research activities** were the following:

Topic 1. Critical analysis of the expected end-of-project scenario as outlined by the ProDoc, carried out by a recognized international ComDev expert. Assessment of project implementation

¹¹ The study design was developed by Patrizio Warren, Monitoring and Evaluation specialist, with the support of Marzia Pafumi, CSDI research and M&E assistant.

strategy and of the internal consistency between theory and practice of change, based on project documentation and focus group interviews with CU staff.

Topic 2. Analytical stocktaking of the services and products delivered by the CU, exploiting the project monitoring database and using evidence of the distribution of “deliverables” by different categories (e.g. networking, training, capacity building) and logframe elements as a proxy for assessing the relative distribution of CU work in different operational areas.

Topic 3. Assessment of CU’s role as ComDev advisor to selected FAO units conducted by interviewing colleagues that benefitted from CSDI’s services.

Topic 4. Self assessment of project performance by CU staff and country focal points.

2. Stocktaking of CSDI country experience and results [Bolivia, DRC, Jamaica]

In addition to the global study, three case studies were carried out focusing on the countries where CSDI experience and results are more consolidated: Bolivia, Democratic Republic of Congo and Jamaica.

Each country case study included two major components:

- a. **Review of CSDI project experience at the national level** primarily consisting of an analysis of CSDI strategy, activities and results (based on the Communication Action Plan developed by the particular field component), and an assessment of the collaboration between CSDI and the national ComDev institutions working on NRM and sustainable agriculture; and
- b. **End-users’ assessment** focusing on a self-contained experience in ComDev capacity development involving field agents such as agricultural extensionists (Jamaica), rural radio journalists (DRC), *operadores de la innovación local* (Bolivia), who are the end-users of the services delivered by CSDI through local partners.

The implementation of the country case studies was the responsibility of three **national evaluation consultants**, who were supported by the country focal points, CSDI team in Rome and the international evaluation consultant. Furthermore, in each country the national consultants organized and facilitated in collaboration with the CFP a **country validation workshop** to consolidate and validate the findings of their studies, using the data collected as an information base for soliciting the feedback of representatives of CSDI partners and other relevant stakeholders in the country.

A. National Review

The main subjects of the national review and the related research questions were as follows:

| STUDY TOPIC | EVALUATION QUESTIONS |
|--|---|
| 1. Overview of NRM issues in the country | a) <i>What are the main NRM problems and issues in the country?</i> |

| | |
|--|---|
| 2. Overall review of CSDI activities in the country | <p>a) Which were the strategy and plan of action foreseen by the project in the country?</p> <p>b) To what extent were the activities foreseen in the country Communication Action Plan carried out and services delivered?</p> |
| 3. Institutional relationships and networks established by the project in each country | <p>a) What are the main ComDev service providers in the country?</p> <p>b) Which ones deal with NRM issues? What activities are they conducting?</p> <p>c) Which of the above institutions are/have been collaborating with CSDI?</p> <p>d) What national institutions are/have been collaborating with CSDI?</p> <p>e) What services and products have been jointly developed and delivered?</p> |
| 4. Assessment of mutual collaboration between CSDI and national partner institutions | <p>a) How the above counterpart and other partner institutions assess their collaboration with the CSDI (strengths and weaknesses)?</p> <p>b) What are counterpart and other partner institutions suggestions for improving collaboration with the CSDI in the future?</p> <p>c) How CSDI assess the collaboration with counterpart and other local institutions (strengths and weaknesses)?</p> <p>d) What are CSDI suggestions for improving collaboration with the counterpart and other partner institutions in the future?</p> |
| 5. Appreciation of project experience by CU staff and CPFs | <p>a) What are the strengths of project experience in that particular country?</p> <p>b) What are the weaknesses of project experience in the country?</p> <p>c) Based on the above, what can be suggested to CSDI and related FAO units to improve their capacity to deliver relevant and effective ComDev services in that particular country?</p> |

Table 2. National review study topics and evaluation questions

The following **research activities** were carried out to answer the above:

Topic 1. Brief overview of the literature on NRM issues in the country to identify which area could have the greatest advantage from ComDev.

Topic 2. Comparison between the objectives and activities planned and the products and services actually delivered, based on monitoring data and complemented with information elicited from the CFP to highlight the implementation capacity of the project, as well as the constraints met.

Topic 3. Rapid census of ComDev institutions in the country with an emphasis on those working on NRM issues and comparison with those collaborating with CSDI, to assess the extent of national networks facilitated by the project.

Topic 4. Review of project documentation and focus group and individual interviews with project counterparts, CFPs and a sample of representatives of partner institutions to assess how the collaboration with CSDI is perceived by national stakeholders and identify facilitating factors and constraints affecting CSDI work in the country.

Topic 5. Focus groups and country validation workshop with representatives of national partners and the CFP to assess strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

B. End-users' assessment

The second element of the country case studies consisted in a specific **end-users' assessment** focusing on ComDev services delivered in a particular site by a local partner institution with CSDI assistance. The focus was on capacity development initiatives in ComDev targeting field agents acting as (direct or indirect) providers of information and advice to farmers, such as rural radio journalists, agricultural extensionists or community facilitators. The table below provides more details about the subject of these assessments:

| Country | Local partner institution | End-users | Site |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Bolivia | Instituto Nacional de Innovación Agropecuaria y Forestal (INIAF) | Operadores de la innovación local | Yapacaní (Santa Cruz Dept.) |
| Congo DR | Ntemo Community Radios | Rural radio journalists | Mbanza Ngungu (Katert District) |
| Jamaica | Caribbean Centre of Communication for Development of CARIMAC | Agricultural extension workers | Jeffrey Town (Kingston area) |

Table 3. Details of the end-users' assessment studies

Evaluation questions relevant to this study component are presented below:

| STUDY TOPIC | EVALUATION QUESTIONS |
|---|--|
| 1. Assessment of the collaboration among CSDI, the counterpart and local partner institution(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How did the collaboration among CSDI, the counterpart and the local partner institution(s) started and how has it developed? b) How does the CSDI project (CFP) assess this collaboration? c) How do the counterpart and the partner institutions assess this collaboration? |
| 2. Background and working experience of participants in CSDI capacity development initiative(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Who were the participants in CSDI promoted /assisted capacity development initiative(s)? b) What was their background? How many years they have been on duty? c) Who among the participants was exposed before to some form of ComDev capacity development? |
| 3. Curricula of CSDI capacity development initiative(s) in ComDev | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How were ComDev learning needs of participants identified? b) What were the contents (learning objectives) of the capacity development initiative(s)? c) What were the teaching-learning methods used? d) What is the opinion of participants about the capacity development initiative(s)? e) What is the opinion of the trainers about the capacity development initiative(s)? f) Based on the above, what can be suggested to the implementing partner institution to improve its delivery of relevant and effective capacity development services in ComDev for NRM? |

| | |
|---|---|
| 4. Learning effectiveness ¹² of the capacity development initiative(s) | <p>a) <i>What evidence (pre/post test, acceptable level of performance, other benchmarks) is available that sheds light on what the participants learned and how this is consistent with what was expected?</i></p> <p>b) <i>What do participants remember about what they learned?</i></p> |
| 5. Learning impact ¹³ of the capacity development initiative(s) | <p>a) <i>What ComDev methods and tools (among those learned in the capacity development initiative(s) promoted/assisted by the CSDI) are actually used in the field? Which ones have been disregarded? Why?</i></p> <p>b) <i>To what extent are the above ComDev methods and tools used in a sound and appropriate manner?</i></p> <p>c) <i>When applicable, to what extent have ComDev methods and tools become part of conventional extension work?</i></p> <p>d) <i>What is the opinion of field staff about relevance, usefulness and effectiveness of these methods and tools?</i></p> |

Table 3. End-users' assessment study topics and evaluation questions

Research activities undertaken to answer the above questions were as follows:

Topic 1. Review of project documentation and individual or focus group interviews with CFP and managers of collaborating institutions, to appraise the partnerships established by CSDI to deliver capacity development services at the local level.

Topic 2. Profiling of the participants in ComDev capacity strengthening activities, through a review of their CVs and individual/focus group interviews.

Topic 3. Overall analysis of content, methods and learning materials, based on document review and focus group interviews with designers/implementers and participants, to assess the ComDev curriculum and its relevance to CSDI core subject.

Topics 4-5. Appraisal of the effectiveness and impact of the teaching-learning service based on data from learning evaluation tests, a soft ex-post test (e.g. group discussion on the subject of the ComDev capacity development initiative) and focus group interview with participants in CSDI promoted/assisted capacity development event.

¹² Learning effectiveness is the understanding and/or capability to perform the content of the teaching-learning process (achievement of learning objectives).

¹³ Learning impact is the actual application of the contents of the teaching-learning process in working activities.

ANNEX 2. CSDI Monitoring and Result Assessment Guidelines¹⁴

Introduction

The *Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative* (CSDI) is an inter-regional project being implemented by FAO since 2008, to promote communication as a key element to achieving food security, climate change adaptation and sustainable natural resource management.

In addition to the normative and networking activities supported at the global level to enhance Communication for Development (ComDev) capacities and partnerships, the CSDI provides technical assistance to selected projects and countries and in particular has developed field components in different agro-ecological and institutional contexts: Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Bolivia and various countries in the Caribbean region.

The common approach of the different CSDI field components is the design and implementation of ComDev strategies and services with a focus on strengthening rural institutions and grassroots organizations while enhancing local capacities in ComDev. In each context the project works with national and regional actors as focal points for the provision of rural communication services. In the case of Bolivia, the CSDI is working to scale-up and institutionalize rural communication services as part of the national research and extension system of the country.

During the first CSDI expert meeting held in Dhaka, in February 2009, CSDI regional focal points from Africa, Caribbean, Latin America and Asia sit together with FAO specialists to share their experiences and progress, consolidate the project approach and methodology, collect suggestions and priorities for action (CSDI, 2010b). Among the issues pointed out was the need to simplify and harmonize planning and monitoring procedures. To this end, an ad-hoc team including CSDI staff and a M&E expert revised existing procedures and developed a common set of tools for consistent planning and monitoring of project activities at the national, regional and global level. The proposed system is meant to improve efficiency and coordination among the different CSDI project components, as well as to facilitate the collection of compatible and reliable monitoring data in view of the project stocktaking exercise of September 2011.

This document describes the structure and operation of the project's monitoring and result assessment (MRA) system, developed in April-June 2010 by the Coordination Unit (CU) staff with the assistance of a M&E consultant, Mr. Patrizio Warren. The document is meant to be an aide-mémoire of the decisions made during the design process, as well as a trouble-shooting reference to be used during the implementation of the system; it covers both the conceptual aspects and operational rules of the monitoring and result assessment routine, including some hints on Excel informatics support.

I - Improving Planning and Monitoring Procedures

1.1 Project's plans: the need for simplifying

¹⁴ These guidelines were prepared by Patrizio Warren, M&E consultant and Marzia Pafumi, CSDI research and M&E assistant.

Project GCP/INT048/ITA “Communication for Sustainable Development Initiative” (CSDI) is a rather complex endeavor. Its logical framework (see Appendices) breaks down the two expected project outcomes into five major outputs and nineteen activities (which, in fact, are best described as broader and open-ended activity lines).

Furthermore, a set of project activities are implemented under the direct responsibility of the CU and three field components¹⁵ (Bolivia, Caribbean and the Democratic Republic of Congo), which are facilitated by local institutions, with the support of the CU. Although the project’s logframe places these three field components under the umbrella of one single output (Output 1.2: Environmental communications strategies, plans and tools implemented in at least three countries), several planning elements of the field activities also relate to other outputs of the Project Document (ProDoc). This implies synergies between the interregional (normative) and national (field) levels but requires effective coordination and an improved planning and monitoring mechanism.

During the life of the project, the CU and the field components in Bolivia and the Caribbean¹⁶ have been developing detailed workplans. Operational planning consisted in breaking down logframe activities (or activity-lines) in smaller units called “deliverables” (i.e. micro-outputs such as the drafting of a document, the issuing of a leaflet, the organization of a workshop, etc.). These deliverables were subsequently broken down in “tasks” (i.e. the different micro-actions to be carried out to deliver the deliverable), and sometimes in “sub-tasks”. This led to the proliferation of planning elements in short-term planning, which in some cases made annual workplans quite complex and to some extent rigid tools.

To simplify the planning and monitoring practice and make it more flexible, during the internal review of the project M&E it was agreed that deliverables will be kept as the smaller planning and monitoring unit. It has also been agreed that managing day-by-day work leading to any given deliverable would be the responsibility of the staff in-charge, who will monitor the accomplishment of relevant tasks in the context of his/her individual workplan.

In addition, annual workplans have proved to be to some extent quite ambitious. This becomes apparent considering the partial accomplishment of the planned deliverables of the field components. A careful prioritization was done, fine-tuning the deliverables within the relevant ProDoc activity-line, and making strategic decisions about the relative urgency of delivery (e.g. preparing progress report to be submitted to the donor).

1.2 A single CSDI monitoring and result assessment

Until March 2010, CSDI used a monitoring tool at both central and field level, that assigned specific responsibilities and tasks for the implementation of deliverables to one or more CU staff, fixing deadlines for delivery and check progresses on a bi-monthly basis (in so called “action points” team meetings). Verification of accomplishment of tasks and status of deliverables and tasks was meant to be carried out every six months. Two tools were designed to manage this process: an individual monitoring matrix and an Excel spreadsheet in which accomplishment of

¹⁵ A fourth component was also launched in Bangladesh.

¹⁶ The field component in the DRC has still to develop an operational workplan.

tasks and production of deliverables were entered in connection with logframe activities and other specifications.

The above mentioned system resulted to be complex and not effective in the regular project planning and monitoring. In addition, this system focused exclusively on delivery, not encouraging efficient result-based management.

In response to CSDI need of ensuring a continued follow-up to the delivery of particular products on a short term basis (quarterly), and to assess whether the project is generating the expected changes (results) in the medium term (biannually), a new monitoring system was designed considering two components:

- *Process Monitoring*, i.e. the continued follow-up of the delivery of deliverables contributing to the implementation of project log-frame activities; and
- *Result Assessment*¹⁷, focusing on biannual progress towards log-frame output and outcomes.

The following sections of this document present the procedures and tools for implementing both components of the system.

II – CSDI Process Monitoring

2.1 The process monitoring spreadsheet

The new project monitoring system was based on existing CU planning and monitoring practice, taking as a reference the project workplan at the global level. However, as already mentioned, several amendments were introduced to simplify monitoring procedures, decrease the monitoring workload for staff, increase the relevance and accuracy of monitoring information, ensure its comprehensiveness and take full advantage of informatics support.

Excel was selected as the system informatics support because of its user-friendliness and because its functions are known by most computer literate persons. However, in monitoring operations Excel is to be used as a qualitative and quantitative database application, with a limited use of displaying tables and graphs. For the smooth functioning of the database, the planning and monitoring spreadsheets should not contain any merged cell, or other types of fancy formats (e.g. colours, highlights, lines, special fonts). In addition (and most important) each column should be dedicated to only one category of information (e.g. the output column, the activity column, the person in-charge column, the deadline column, etc.), and each cell should contain single information belonging to that particular category (deliverable, name of the person in charge, deadline date, etc.).

Based on the decision to simplify existing monitoring tools, the Excel spreadsheet was re-organized as follows (see Figure 1):

- The core column of the process monitoring spreadsheet is now the *deliverable column* (column C) in which the deliverables already produced or to be produced are listed¹⁸.

¹⁷ “Result assessment” is in fact the evaluation component of the system. However, the word “evaluation” is not used in this guide, because of its particular meaning and connotation in FAO jargon.

Each cell of the column contains one single deliverable and, hence, generates a row in which some attributes of that particular deliverable are entered in the corresponding columns.

- On the left side of the deliverable columns there are two *project logframe columns* (A and B), through which each deliverable is associated to the corresponding project logframe output and activity¹⁹. Information included in these columns allows analyzing the distribution of project work according to logframe elements²⁰.

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K |
|----|---|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|------------|-------------|---|---|---------------|---|
| | Outputs | Activities | Deliverables | Responsible (one person) | Alternate person | Deadline | Status | Notes | Quality control | Geo-component | Labels |
| 1 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Collaborative Change Conceptual Framework | Aconzo | Da Silva | 31/05/2010 | done | improve CSDI photo medabase, develop a multi-lingual glossary | printing process and photo selection to be reviewed | global | normative, publication |
| 2 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Collaborative Change Conceptual Framework - Spanish version | Vertiz | Da Silva | 31/07/2010 | done | | delay due to poor translation | global | normative, publication |
| 3 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Collaborative Change Conceptual Framework - French version | Matteoli | Da Silva | 31/05/2010 | done | multi-lingual glossary | need for a technical glossary | global | normative, publication |
| 4 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Overview paper on application of ComDev in CCA and NRM (also I12 overall project need assessment) | Sala | Matteoli | | planned | draft revision | | global | normative, assessment |
| 5 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Manual Diagnóstico Participativo de Comunicación Plural (publication) | Sala | | 01/03/2008 | done | | | global | normative, capacity building, publication |
| 6 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Diálogo participativo para una estrategia de comunicación (publication) | Sala | | 01/03/2008 | done | | | global | normative, capacity building, publication |
| 7 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | E-forum on ComDev & CC for Indigenous Peoples (proceedings) | Servo | | 01/04/2008 | done | | | global | networking, knowledge sharing, IP |
| 8 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Virtual consultation on Communication for NRM, CCA and FS in Latin America (Nota conceptual, proceedings) | Servo | | 01/07/2008 | done | | | latin america | networking, knowledge sharing |
| 9 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Proceedings from the virtual consultation on ComDev for NRM, CCA and FS in Latin America (paper "Memorias de una consulta virtual") | Vertiz | | 01/02/2010 | done | | | global | knowledge sharing, publication |
| 10 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Expert virtual consultation on ComDev and CCA (CI report) | Servo | | 01/07/2009 | done | | | global | knowledge sharing, networking |
| 11 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | III Stocktaking exercises of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices | Study on Indigenous Peoples' ComDev for NRM and CCA (CIDOB study) | Aconzo | | 01/04/2008 | done | | | global | normative, IP, publication? |
| 12 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | I12 Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programmes and | Communication assessment for LACC project, Bangladesh (report) | Sala | | 01/11/2009 | done | | | bangladesh | normative, assessment |
| 13 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | I12 Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programmes and selection of pilot sites | Workshop to identify priority ComDev activities for the dissemination of technologies for agriculture and forestry in CongoDR (ETOR Matteoli + report) | Matteoli | | 01/05/2008 | done | assessment planned for pilot sites | agreement achieved on ComDev activities | congo | field, assessment |
| 14 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | I12 Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programmes and selection of pilot sites | Needs assessment for 2nd phase of CSDI-CongoDR | Matteoli | Aconzo | 31/12/2010 | in progress | full-fledge assessment to be implemented | | congo | field, assessment |
| 15 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | I12 Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programmes and selection of pilot sites | Need assessment and regional ComDev strategy for the Caribbean (also I13 and I21) | Aconzo | Matteoli | 01/03/2009 | done | follow-up at the country level | feedback from SLAC and countries needed | caribbean | field, assessment |
| 16 | II Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable NRM identified and assessed | I13 Preparation of National/Communication | CSDI overall project strategy and | Aconzo | | 01/03/2008 | done | | | global | policy, management, strategic |

Figure 1. Sample Monitoring spreadsheet

On the right side of the deliverable columns there are the proper monitoring columns, including:

- the *delivery responsible* column (D), where the name of the staff in-charge for that particular deliverable is entered;
- the *alternate responsible* column (E) where is indicated the staff who will take over the deliverable in case something unexpected happens preventing the primary responsible to fulfill the job;
- the *deadline* column (F), fixing the expected date of delivery;
- the *status of deliverable at deadline* column (G), which is defined according to four categories: done, in progress, not done, cancelled;

¹⁸ For the sake of completeness and in view of the forthcoming CSDI project internal review, deliverables produced by the project since its inception have already been entered in the monitoring worksheet.

¹⁹ Reiteration of output and activities data entry for each deliverable will be facilitated by Excel's edit/fill/fill down command.

²⁰ This can be done by Excel data/filter command.

- a *notes* column (H) in which relevant comments are to be entered, such as reasons for delay, constraints met, measures to solve the problems, etc.;
- the *quality control* column (I), in which, whenever applicable, a brief self-evaluation comment on the quality of the deliverable will be entered based on peer assessment or expert review;
- the *geo-component* column (J), classified in CU, Bolivia, Caribbean and DRC.
- the *labels* column (K). Here, a list of attributes of the deliverable will be entered, such as its nature (e.g. formal meetings, workshops, training events, “grey” papers, publications, etc.), primary beneficiaries (e.g. policy makers, professional communicators, extensionists, farmers), and others. Data in this column will provide an additional possibility of classifying deliverables, crosscutting the logframe elements; or to know how many and what publications were issued²¹.

2.2 Process monitoring indicators

The monitoring data would be consolidated annually (see below) by the CU, based on the process indicators presented in the table below.

| Indicator | Process issue | Formula / Data display |
|--|---|---|
| Productivity | Accomplishment ratio | Number of planned deliverable completed/ number of planned deliverable not completed or cancelled |
| Consistency with logframe | Distribution of completed deliverables by logframe activities and outputs | Count (by filtering logframe linking columns) |
| Problems/constraints met in implementation | Ranking of most common problems met in implementation of the quarterly plan | Count and ranking of problems and constraint as reported in the “note” column |
| Hqs/field balance in implementation | Distribution by Hqs and field components of completed deliverables | Count (by filtering label column) |
| Prevalence of different types of deliverables as per crosscutting attributes (on an as needed basis) | Number of deliverables associated to a particular attribute (or combination of attributes) listed in the label column | Count (by filtering label column) |
| Quality of deliverables | Recurrent strengths and weaknesses reported by quality control | Narrative based on content of the quality control column |

Table 1. Process Monitoring Indicators

²¹ Unlike the output and activity columns that can be operated by the plain filter command, the label column requires the use of the “contains” option of the filter menu.

Beyond these basic indicators, further “playing” with data can allow additional insights. For instance, by double filtering the status of deliverables with any particular labels it would be possible to check whether some particular type of deliverables have proved more or less difficult to deliver (in time) than others and elicit from the note columns cell the reasons for that (e.g. most “publication” deliverables may be found incomplete because of time constraint, or most “capacity building” deliverable may be found completed because outsourcing to specialized capacity building institutions).

The overall goal of this analytical exercise would be to learn lessons from implementation experience, identify bottlenecks, and highlight factors of success or failure, in order to draft better and more realistic workplans for the future. In other words, wrapping up monitoring information makes sense only if analytical findings are used for re-planning project implementation.

2.3 Process monitoring operations

Time-wise the system would be based on bimonthly and quarterly meetings and annual reviews. The agenda and role of these meetings is described below.

During the *bimonthly meetings* CU progress towards the deliverable planned for the quarter will be reported and discussed among CU team members. If a CU deliverable is delivered during the previous two weeks, relevant changes will be entered in the monitoring worksheet. This exercise is expected to take two hours to be completed.

In *quarterly meetings*, monitoring data will be analyzed. A stocktaking of the deliverables delivered during the last three months by the CU and the field components will be carried out²². Distribution of delivered deliverables by logframe activities and outputs, geo-components and, when appropriate, other criteria, will be analyzed and discussed. Deliverables planned for the quarter that have not been delivered will also be considered, with the aim of understanding the cause of delay, identifying actions to be undertaken in order to overcome these constraints, and establishing new deadlines for delivery (or canceling deliverables which are found to be unfeasible).

In brief, quarterly meetings will allow adjusting the annual work plan to the real situation emerging from the analysis of monitoring data. This exercise might be rather committing and take half or one full day to be completed. Hence, quarterly meetings would be best carried out in a “protected” environment, ensuring none or little external interference. It is also recommended to draft a short report (for the records) at the end of the meeting. Together with the wealth of data, which would be progressively entered in the process monitoring spreadsheet, these reports will be of outstanding importance for making sense of result achievement.

During the *annual review* a retrospective, analytical stocktaking of the progress of the project as a whole will be carried out, based on a thorough analysis of process indicators (see above). This would allow extracting lessons learned from implementation, which will be considered in planning for the following year. Basing on this review, the interregional project annual workplan will be drafted and adjusted, including a review and comments from field-based teams.

²² As a preparation for the quarterly meetings, the monitoring responsible should get from the staff in-charge up-to-date information on the status of deliverables included in field components workplans.

III – Implementing the monitoring system

The project monitoring system became operational in June 2010 at the CU level and, subsequently, was transferred to the field components, with the aim of ensuring the homogeneity of planning and monitoring practice among all project components.

Given the differences existing in planning formats among project components, this process has gone through gradual adjustments, as follows:

- The CU revised and homogenized the monitoring data previously recorded, covering CUs deliverables as well as deliverables included in the field components workplans
- The Bolivia component, that produced a two year workplan (2009-2011) based on the local logframe, migrated to the new M&E system in August 2010. With CU support, the workplan was simplified and the deliverables foreseen for the Bolivian component were matched to the global project logframe
- The Caribbean component had organized its workplan from the beginning according to the ProDoc logframe. This facilitated the migration of data to the new integrated system
- Planning of the DRC component is still incipient.

Adaptation of this guide and of the monitoring tools for the field components and particularly its translation to Spanish and French have been instrumental to ensure that the overall concept and operation of the monitoring sub-systems are adequately understood by field collaborators.

CSDI Field Guidelines for Planning, Monitoring and Result Assessment can be found in the Appendices.

IV – Result assessment

The purpose of this component of the MRA system is to assess periodically to what extent the changes (concerning ComDev) described by the outcomes and outputs (i.e. the results) of the project are taking place²³ (i.e. *effectiveness*). As there is always a time lag between the delivery of deliverables and the occurrence of the expected changes, result assessment during the life-time of the project can only capture small and incipient changes, which would help assessing to what extent the project is on the right track. Major, fully mature changes are best appreciated by end-of-project evaluations²⁴ or, even better, by ex-post evaluations²⁴.

As process monitoring, result monitoring has a formative goal: it aims to learn from experience, by eliciting progress towards the changes that the project is expected to bring in its institutional and social environment. Yet, from a technical point of view, result monitoring is a less “mechanical” and straightforward exercise, than process monitoring, which - at the end of the day - basically deals with the done/not done question (i.e. productivity). Result assessment entails

²³ According to TC's, *Project Document Format Guideline for Project Formulators* (2007) “Results are changes in a state or condition which derive from a cause-and-effect relationship. There are three types of such changes (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) which can be set in motion by a development intervention – its output, outcome and impact”.

²⁴ Ex-post evaluations are carried out from one to five years after the end of the project, generally to assess impact. Actually ex-post evaluations are seldom implemented.

complex value judgments, which although based on the best evidence available, imply some degree of subjectivity.

Validity and reliability²⁵ of this judgment might be kept under control by:

- Blending quantitative and qualitative indicators²⁶, which would allow for *internal triangulation*²⁷;
- Making sure that judgments are negotiated among different persons, with different backgrounds and roles and representing diverse project stakeholders, i.e. that they are inter-subjective judgment²⁸, which would allow *external triangulation*.

4.1 Identifying result assessment indicators

As not all project effects can be captured, result assessment should focus on a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators. A straightforward method for identifying result monitoring indicators is as follows:

- Convert outcome and output statements in operational and accurately worded *assessment questions* (for instance outcome 2, “Improved capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development” might be converted in the assessment question “To what extent capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development have improved among project stakeholders (by type of institutions, country, etc. during the period at stake)?”).
- Identify the variables or opinions that can contribute to answer the evaluation questions e.g. “perception by a “purposive sample²⁹ of project stakeholders”. These are the result *assessment indicators*.
- Identify the *means of verification*, i.e. the methods and sources from which information needed to fulfill with content the indicators (and, hence, answer the relevant evaluation question) would be elicited. For instance the indicator “Perception of project

²⁵ A statement is valid when it captures (or nears to) reality. A statement is reliable when different person using the same inquiry methods, reach the same (or similar) conclusions.

²⁶ An indicator is quantitative when it is expressed by a figure (e.g. “number of extensionists trained in Com Dev”). Qualitative indicators are statements describing opinions (e.g. “views of project components managers about the outcome of ComDev capacity building”). As a rule of thumb quantitative indicators reflects facts, while qualitative indicator focus on perceptions (but this is not always the case). Qualitative indicators might not be as straightforward and reassuring as quantitative, statistics-based, “objectively verifiable indicators” (OVIs), but are more rich in information and more capable to capture the “non-expected”.

²⁷ Internal triangulation refers to founding the assessment on multiple sources (e.g. survey, interviews, documentation and monitoring data). External triangulation refers to taking into consideration the views and opinions of different project stakeholders.

²⁸ An inter-subjective statement is the end-product of a negotiation among the views of multiple stakeholders. Inter-subjective statements may reflect full consensus among sampled stakeholders, which would lead to straightforward judgments. However, inter-subjective statements often elicit different opinions. Analysis of these controversial issues can generate important and useful insights.

²⁹ Unless the probabilistic samples (whose units are selected at random), purposive sample select a small number of persons according to particular criteria (generally, competence on the issue at stake). It must be made clear that findings of probabilistic samples (such as those used in population survey) are expected to be (statistically) representative of the investigated population and can be generalized (with major or minor precision). On the other hand, purposive sample do not represent anything else than the views of the inquired persons. Notwithstanding, they are particularly appropriate for investigating in depth the views of small populations (such as representatives CSDI’s key-stakeholders) for which - on the other hand - statistics will be non-sense.

stakeholders” could be verified by a number of interviews, an on-line survey, a rating exercise, etc.

- Appraise the *feasibility* of getting the information required in terms of cost and time. For instance, interviewing a big sample of people might be time consuming. As a rule of thumb, should a means of verification be suspected beforehand to be out of reach of project, it must be disregarded and an alternate solution found. This may entail reconsidering the selected indicators, and, sometimes, rewording the assessment questions.

4.2 Designing and operating result assessment

Based on the above, a tentative design of an assessment of the CSDI project is outlined in the following table. The design outline includes a list of assessment questions based on project outcomes and outputs, and the relevant indicators and means of verification. Relevant requisite and constraints are also identified.

A few outstanding features of this table should be highlighted beforehand:

- Collecting the information needed to fulfill all the selected outcome and output indicators’ set requires an amount of work that may go beyond the operational capacity of the project. This inconvenient can be obviated by selecting for assessment a meaningful combination of outcomes and outputs, which is deemed of particular for the subsequent development of the project. For instance the result assessment can focus on cross cutting issues such as capacity building, or the development of ComDev initiatives at the global and local levels. Such a “strategic” approach will allow for a more in-depth assessment of issues that are deemed “critical” in a given point in time.
- Most of the result assessment information is to be collected through qualitative methods³⁰. However “qualitative” does not mean superficial. On the contrary qualitative evaluation research requires rigorous data collection and analysis procedures and the help of an expert in this kind of studies. To this end a skilled consultant should be recruited for conducting the hereby described result assessment exercise, for a period that, depending on the required width and depth, would range from one to two months.
- Conducting a result assessment exercise makes sense only when a critical mass of deliverables has been delivered, a substantial experience has been gained and enough time had flown to make major results visible and meaningfully “valuable”. For these reasons (and considering also the cost of the exercise), it is suggested that result assessment covers at least a two-year period. Conducting a result assessment exercise in the second half of the current year (i.e. almost two-years after project inception, would be certainly. Moreover, the exercise would be instrumental to the preparation of the forthcoming Project Stocktaking exercise).
- Based on the assumption that an evaluation specialist will be hired to conduct the result assessment, the outline presented in the following table should be considered as an

³⁰ In this connection it must be noted that (whatever the rigid OVI listed in projects framework state) the end-product of most evaluation research carried out in FAO is largely based on qualitative information.

illustrative and tentative tool. Furthermore, the specialist in-charge to conduct the exercise should be responsible for preparing the final result assessment design.

Here follows an outline for a comprehensive result assessment of the CSDI project.

| OUTCOMES/ OUTPUTS | EVALUATION QUESTIONS | INDICATOR | MEANS OF VERIFICATION | REQUIREMENTS/ CONSTRAINTS |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Outcome 1: Effective applications and management of ComDev, strategies, tools and services to support sustainable natural resource management and rural development</p> | <p>How effective has been the project in strengthening ComDev practice by the collaborating institutions?</p> <p>To what extent this practice is relevant to improve management of sustainable natural resource and rural development?</p> | <p>Opinions of project components' managers and staff, ComDev experts and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Extent to which ComDev is acknowledged as part of national strategies and plans for NRM and RD</p> | <p>Interviews³¹ to project field component managers and ComDev experts</p> <p>Institutions' annual plans having incorporated ComDev activities</p> <p>Consolidated monitoring data</p> <p>Backstopping missions reports</p> | <p>Expert in qualitative analysis needed</p> <p>Respondents' compliance</p> |
| <p>Output 1.1: Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable natural resources management identified and assessed</p> | <p>Which communication strategies and services for sustainable natural resources management were identified by the project?</p> <p>To what extent are they innovative?</p> <p>Which were tested and validated in each field component, and with what results?</p> <p>What do stakeholders think about these communication strategies and services?</p> | <p>List and description of communication strategies and services for sustainable natural resources management identified, tested and validated</p> <p>Number of stakeholders expected to be knowledgeable of the above</p> <p>Stakeholders opinion</p> | <p>Consolidated monitoring data</p> <p>Field reports</p> <p>Backstopping missions reports</p> <p>Expert opinion</p> <p>Interviews to project field component managers, counterpart staff, and ComDev experts</p> | <p>Expert in qualitative analysis needed</p> <p>Expert in survey design and implementation needed.</p> <p>Respondents compliance</p> |

³¹ These interviews might be conducted face-to face or at a distance (i.e. by phone)

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Output 1.2: Environmental communication strategies, plans and tools implemented in at least three countries</p> | <p>To what extent are the three (four) project field sites implementing environmental communication strategies, plans and tools, as a result of project deliverables?</p> | <p>Number, composition and other relevant features of new consolidate partnerships</p> <p>Opinions of project field component managers and ComDev experts</p> | <p>Stocktaking of monitoring data</p> <p>Interviews to project field component managers, counterpart staff, and ComDev experts</p> <p>Backstopping missions and field reports</p> | <p>Expert in qualitative analysis needed</p> |
| <p>Outcome 2: Improved capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development</p> | <p>To what extent capacities and collaboration in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development among concerned institutions is increasing (since the beginning of the project)?</p> | <p>Number and description of mechanisms promoting partnerships and knowledge sharing implemented by the project</p> <p>Number of institutions/stakeholders sharing knowledge in ComDev through CSDI initiative by type</p> <p>Opinions of project field component managers and ComDev experts.</p> | <p>Consolidated monitoring data</p> <p>Findings of backstopping missions</p> <p>Field reports</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Interviews to project field component managers and ComDev experts</p> | <p>Expert in qualitative analysis needed</p> |
| <p>Output 2.1: Improved knowledge and skills on environmental communication</p> | <p>How many ComDev capacity building events and publications were implemented by the project in the period at stake?</p> <p>How many colleagues have received and read these CSDI publications?</p> <p>How many participants have attended these capacity building events?</p> | <p>Number and proportion of participants in project- promoted capacity building events</p> <p>Number of publication copies distributed</p> <p>Number of recipients having read the publications</p> <p>Number and proportion of participants in training events having achieved the acceptable performance level (APL) in learning tests</p> | <p>Consolidated monitoring data</p> <p>Findings of backstopping missions</p> <p>Field reports</p> <p>Readership survey</p> <p>Count of access to the relevant web-page and discharge</p> <p>Capacity building events pre-post tests</p> | <p>Expert in capacity building assessment needed</p> <p>Time for design and follow up</p> <p>Identification of denominators</p> <p>Respondents compliance</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| | To what extent participants in ComDev events (courses, workshops, seminars, etc.), implemented by the Project have learned what they were supposed to? | (by gender, country, etc.) on knowledge and skills in environmental communication? | Distance survey (to persons exposed to project-promoted capacity building events) | |
| Output 2.2: Environmental communication projects and initiatives designed and promoted | How many environmental communication projects and initiatives were implemented? What are the initial results of those projects and initiatives? | Number and features of environmental communication projects and initiatives implemented Opinion of project field component managers and Com Dev experts and other stakeholders. | Consolidated monitoring data Findings of backstopping missions Field reports Interviews to project field component managers and ComDev experts | Expert in qualitative analysis needed Respondents compliance |
| Output 2.3: Strategic partnerships and environmental communication platforms implemented | How many environmental communication platforms were implemented? Who is using them? What are the initial results of those platforms? | Profile and opinions of ComDev platform users. | Distance survey of platform users Consolidated monitoring data Findings of backstopping missions Field reports | Survey designer and analyst needed Respondents compliance |

Table 2. Outline of a comprehensive result assessment of the CSDI project

Appendices

A. Logical Framework of the CSDI Project

| Design Summary | Indicators / Targets (by End of Project unless otherwise stated) | Data Sources | Assumptions |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Impact: Sound environmental practices for sustainable rural development adopted through effective Communication for Development strategies and services</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improved NRM practices in selected areas Agricultural and environmental services improved in at least 3 countries Communication for Development mainstreamed into environmental and agricultural policies (2) | <p>Field surveys and KAP reports</p> <p>Reports assessing institutional changes</p> <p>Proposals for communication policies (national & international levels)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> No mayor detrimental external factors affecting project life Political will to support environmental and rural development through communication Support by the international community |
| <p>Outcome 1: Effective applications and management of Communication for Development strategies, tools and services to support sustainable natural resource management and rural development.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> At least 3 national programmes have incorporated communication components in NRM, environmental and climate change programmes Set of communication methods and services validated | <p>Reports of 3 communication strategies</p> <p>Feasibility studies for communication service delivery</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Government commitment for mainstreaming and scaling up communication services Support by donors and development agencies |
| <p>Outputs 1.1: Innovative communication strategies and services for sustainable natural resources management identified and assessed.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Series of case studies and lessons learned on the application of ComDev to environmental issues National plans formulated (3) including ComDev strategies | <p>Manuals and reports on the applications of communication strategies</p> <p>National Communication Plans documents</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic assessment of demands and feasible proposals for effective strategies and services identified |
| <p>Activities:</p> <p>1.1.1: Stocktaking exercise of relevant approaches, policies, trends and best practices related to environmental communication services in developing countries.</p> <p>1.1.2: Assessment of needs and opportunities for implementing ComDev activities in support of priority environmental programmes and selection of pilot sites.</p> <p>1.1.3: Preparation of National plans and updating of the project strategy and</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Overview studies on approaches, policies, trends and best practices At least 3 country needs assessment National plans and an updated | <p>Documents of the overview studies</p> <p>Needs assessment documents</p> <p>Document of the national plans & revised</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information on project initiatives and willingness by potential partners to collaborate on priority issues/plans Donor and interinstitutional support at the national and global level Effective bottom-up & feedback mechanisms, reporting system and |

| Design Summary | Indicators / Targets (by End of Project unless otherwise stated) | Data Sources | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>detailed workplan for implementing pilot activities in selected countries.</p> <p>1.1.4: Design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities to document and validate environmental communication strategies and services</p> | <p>overall project strategy</p> <p>4. A M&E system in place</p> | <p>project strategy</p> <p>Guidelines for project M&E</p> | <p>documentation procedure</p> |
| <p>Output 1.2: Environmental communication strategies, plans and tools implemented in at least 3 countries.</p> | <p>1. Communication strategies implemented in at least 3 countries</p> | <p>Reports on the implementation of National Communication Plans.</p> | <p>10. Policy support for the implementation the recommendations for strategies and services</p> |
| <p>Activities</p> <p>1.2.1: Participatory communication appraisals and strategy design in support of natural resources and rural development programmes in at least three pilot areas.</p> <p>1.2.2: Implementation of the communication strategies and plans for sustainable NRM and rural development in selected areas (see 1.2.1).</p> <p>1.2.3: Feasibility studies and workshops for the scaling up of pilot experiences.</p> <p>1.2.4: Documentation, monitoring and evaluation of the communication plans, tools and lessons learned at the field level.</p> | <p>1. A Communication plan designed in each project site (3)</p> <p>2. Series of communication activities and services implemented at the field level</p> <p>3. Proposal for programme &/o policy development</p> <p>4. Effective delivery of 3 communication systems</p> | <p>Documents</p> <p>Multimedia materials</p> <p>Information services</p> <p>Policy documents</p> <p>Project documents</p> <p>Monitoring reports</p> | <p>11. National Teams established and trained.</p> <p>12. Leadership of institutions and NGOs at the national/local level</p> <p>13. Identification of pilot sites, and formulation of National Workplans (including target groups and indicators)</p> <p>14. Successful implementation of National plans and effective delivery mechanism.</p> <p>15. Effective monitoring and documentation system in place and trained staff.</p> |
| | | | |
| <p>Outcome 2: Improved capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development.</p> | <p>1. A model for environmental communication services</p> <p>2. A global initiative and regional strategic partnerships in place</p> | <p>Documents and operational model</p> <p>Partnership documents</p> | <p>16. Willingness to mainstream environmental issues and communication into national rural development policies</p> |
| <p>Output 2.1: Improved knowledge and skills on environmental communication.</p> | <p>1. Communication services implemented in support of NRM and development initiative</p> <p>2. Series of training courses</p> <p>3. National staff trained</p> | <p>Training modules</p> <p>Reports from the training courses</p> | <p>17. Interinstitutional collaborative learning and effective experience sharing</p> |
| <p>Activities</p> | | | <p>18. Awareness raised and</p> |

| Design Summary | Indicators / Targets (by End of Project unless otherwise stated) | Data Sources | Assumptions |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>2.1.1: Production of documents, case studies, guidelines, training modules, multimedia materials on communication approaches, methodologies and tools applied to environmental services in different agroecological and development contexts</p> <p>2.1.2: Studies on best practices, institutional frameworks, policies and laws related to environmental and communication services.</p> <p>2.1.3: At least three intensive training courses in environmental communication to be held in the project areas</p> <p>2.1.4: Series of workshops and training events on communication, rural livelihood and environmental services for policy makers, field workers, institutions, NGOs, community based organizations.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Series of multimedia and training materials produced and validated 2. At least 3 series of case studies 3. intensive training workshops (3) for at least 45 participants 4. Awareness raised on the importance of mainstreaming communication | <p>Training materials and documents</p> <p>Case studies</p> <p>Reports from training workshops</p> <p>Project documents; letters of agreement for service delivery</p> | <p>agreement reached on priority themes and issues.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Collaboration established with communication research centres, networks and development agencies and Governments 20. Knowledge on approaches and best practices systematized and National plans formulated 21. Identification of the best communication approaches, methodologies and tools applied to environmental services in different contexts |
| <p>Output 2.2: Environmental communication projects and initiatives designed and promoted.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guidelines for mainstreaming ComDev 2. Series of projects and project components developed | <p>Guidelines document</p> <p>Project documents</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Commitment by recipient Governments & institutions to implement proposed strategies/services |
| <p>Activities</p> <p>2.2.1: Technical assistance to selected countries, and environmental and development programmes in the design of communication projects and initiatives.</p> <p>2.2.2: Two consultations on lessons learned on environmental communication policies and services.</p> <p>2.2.3: Preparation of guidelines (e.g. a framework and an operational model), for designing environmental communication services.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication components mainstreamed into NRM and development programmes 2. Lessons learned on policies and services systematized 3. Improved operational model for mainstreaming ComDev | <p>Project documents and reports</p> <p>Reports</p> <p>Guidelines</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 23. Strategic initiatives to be supported identified by the Donor, FAO and other partners. 24. Evidences and operational models for applying ComDev to environmental programmes ready 25. Identification of the best communication strategies for each contexts |
| <p>Output 2.3: Strategic partnerships and environmental communication platforms implemented.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An overall CSDI partnership programme 2. Regional project documents 3. Communities of practices through | <p>Membership and funding</p> <p>Project documents</p> <p>Portals and e-fora</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Willingness of national institutions, NGOs and international agencies to cooperate in ComDev |

| Design Summary | Indicators / Targets (by End of Project unless otherwise stated) | Data Sources | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|
| | portals and other means | | |
| <p>Activities</p> <p>2.3.1 Support to at least three multistakeholder regional thematic platforms to share knowledge and provide support on communication strategies, best practices and environmental services.</p> <p>2.3.2: Advocacy and policy dialogue through fora and information activities involving local stakeholders, governments, development agencies, donors, etc.</p> <p>2.3.3: Identification of potential partners and mechanisms for cooperation.</p> <p>2.3.4: Design and launching of a partnership programme for the expansion and sustainability of project activities.</p> | <p>1. Improved flow of information and collaborative learning</p> <p>2. Improved awareness on communication & environmental services</p> <p>3. Feasibility study and project proposal</p> <p>4. A multidonor programme approved</p> | <p>3 thematic platforms working</p> <p>e-fora reports</p> <p>Pro-doc and report</p> <p>Project document and partnerships agreement signed</p> | <p>27. Awareness raised on the role and importance of communication in development.</p> <p>28. Consolidation and creation, where possible, of multistakeholders platforms as mechanism for knowledge sharing and policy dialogue</p> <p>29. Evidence based approach to guide the advocacy and partnership initiatives.</p> <p>30. Appropriateness and efficiency of mechanisms to link up multistakeholders at different levels.</p> <p>31. Donor willingness to join a multidonor partnership.</p> |

B. Field Guidelines for Planning, Monitoring and Result Assessment

CSDI is undertaking a full revision of its Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system, to involve all project components (both field and central coordination unit) in an effort to fine-tune and harmonize tools and operations. This activity is expected to contribute to the following deliverables included in the global CSDI project workplan:

- a. an overall M&E system in place, including local monitoring systems for Bolivia, DRC, Caribbean
- b. guidelines for M&E (also translated into Spanish and French)
- c. internal mid-term project review
- d. (provide data for) field case studies and evaluations

A team has been formed including a specialist consultant and staff in the Coordination Unit (CO) to improve the planning, monitoring and evaluation practice and to provide continuous support to the start up and implementation of this new system, which includes three steps:

1. *Planning*: drafting of activities and deliverables corresponding to project objectives, to be implemented in the long term (overall CSDI workplan) and short term (annual workplan)
2. *Process Monitoring*: continued follow-up to the deliverables contributing to the implementation of activities of the overall CSDI project workplan on a short term basis;
3. *Result Assessment*: evaluation of progress towards the expected results in the medium term.

At the current stage, national field components will mainly focus on the improvement of Planning and Monitoring operations (points 1 and 2). The following sections of this document briefly present the proposed procedures and tools.

1. Planning

The project global workplan provides the framework for all project activities, to be undertaken both at the global and field level. Furthermore, each field component of CSDI project develops a detailed overall workplan, specifying activities for the duration of the component (1-3 years). Planning is based on the breaking down of the local logical framework (outputs and activities) into smaller units called „deliverables. (such as a paper, a workshop, a need assessment, etc.). These follow a logic of coherence vis a vis the specific objectives of each CSDI component. Deliverables have to be kept as the smaller planning and monitoring unit, without further specification of tasks and subtasks. Deliverables also serve as a link to the global CSDI workplan in the phase of process monitoring.

2. Process Monitoring

Process Monitoring Tool

The support for the monitoring system will be an Excel spreadsheet organised as follows:

- *Deliverables (column D)* – is the core column of the process monitoring spreadsheet, where all the deliverables identified for each activity in the workplan are listed
- *Outputs and Activities (columns B and C)* – through these two columns each deliverable is associated to the corresponding output and activity according to the overall workplan
- *Link with global CSDI workplan (column A)* – this column is just a reference, to link the activities carried out by the field component with the global project workplan. The CU will be in charge of distributing each deliverable matching field activities with those of the global CSDI workplan
- *Delivery responsible (column E)* – where the name of the staff in-charge for that particular deliverable is entered
- *Deadline (column F)* – fixing the expected date of delivery
- *Status of deliverable (column G)* – defined according to four categories: “done”, “in progress”, “planned” or “cancelled”. Planned applies to those deliverables that have been identified but are yet to be started, and for this reason the deadline for planned activities is often not defined
- *Notes (column H)* – short comments related to the delivery process, such as external collaborators, constraints met, next step to do, reasons for delay, etc. When a delivery is

already “done”, this column can be used to take note of suggestions or recommendations for future actions

- *Quality control (column I)* – applicable only to ‘done’ items, is a brief self-evaluation comment on the quality of the deliverable. It will be based on peer assessment, highlighting the major strength and/or weakness experienced in the delivery process.

The Excel data/filter command is applied to select a subset of data and information within the monitoring sheet. Deliverables can be filtered by output, activity, responsible, status or even deadline³². Filtering data by ‘Status’ is very useful during the monthly meetings, allowing to temporarily hide the rows of the deliverables already ‘done’ and facilitates the reporting on activities pending and in process.

Process Monitoring Timing

The monitoring system is based on monthly and quarterly meetings, and annual reviews.

During the monthly meetings, progress towards the deliverables planned for the quarter will be reported and discussed among team members. If a deliverable is delivered during the month, the change of status will be entered in the monitoring worksheet (ex. ‘in progress’-> ‘done’). When a deliverable just planned is started, its status changes from ‘planned’ to ‘in progress’ and a deadline is associated to it.

A short monthly progress report will be filled out to document the main activities carried out and the progress achieved, using the reporting template provided by the CU and presented in the next page. This should be submitted by day 1st of the following month according to the project reporting calendar.

In quarterly meetings, a revision of the status of deliverables planned or processed during the last three months carried out, in order for the team to:

- document what has been done
- identify what is still pending although should be already done
- reflect upon possible causes of delay
- identify actions to overcome the constraints and improve the process
- establish new deadlines for delivery
- cancel deliverables that are considered unfeasible
- add new deliverables

Quarterly meetings allow adjusting the annual workplan to the real situation and the monitoring data collected constitute the basis to assess the project achievements not only in terms of productivity (see the quality control). At the end of the quarterly meeting it is recommended to save the file with the current date (ex. Caribbean_Monitoring_30/09/2010). A quarterly progress report has to be drafted (for the records and to be shared with CU staff) at the end of the

³² The columns of outputs, activities, responsible and status can be filtered using the **Autofilter** command, where arrows  appear to the right of the column labels in the filtered range. When filtering by deadline it is necessary to use custom **Autofilter** and the ‘contains’ option to display rows that contain values within a specific range.

meeting, filling the template provided by the CU. This report should be submitted by the day 1st of the required month (see the reporting calendar).

Finally, during the annual review, an analytical stocktaking of the progress of the project as a whole will be carried out. This will help extract lessons learned from implementation, which will be considered in planning for the following year.

3. Result Assessment through a Stocktaking Exercise

The wealth of data progressively entered in the process monitoring spreadsheet, together with the quarterly reports and the annual review will be useful to make sense of the results achieved by the project.

Moreover, an inter-regional end-of-project stocktaking workshop will be held in Rome by the end of 2011. This will be an opportunity to take stock of the work done by all project components and focus on progress towards the achievement of expected local and global project results.

ANNEX 3. CSDI Stocktaking Workshop Agenda

| DAY 1 Mon 12 Sep | | OUTPUT-TO-OUTCOME REVIEW OF PHASE I Objective: To analyze the extent to which the project has reached the expected outcomes |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 08:30-09:00 | Registration & Logistics (CSDI) | |
| 09:00-09:15 | Welcoming (IMET & FAO) | |
| 09:15-09:30 | Who is who; Agenda (Ramírez) | |
| 09:30-10:00 | Summary of the Stocktaking Exercise (Warren) | |
| 10:00-10:20 | <i>Coffee break</i> | |
| 10:30-11:00 | Feedback from participants | |
| 11:00-12:30 | Session 1 – Outcome 1 ³³ Instructions in plenary; break into groups Group work | |
| 12:30-13:30 | <i>Lunch</i> | |
| 13:45-14:00 | Session 1 group products are posted and organized | |
| 14:00-15:00 | Session 2 – Outcome 2 ³⁴ Instructions in plenary; break into groups Group work | |
| 15:00-15:20 | <i>Coffee break</i> | |
| 15:30-15:45 | Session 2 group products are posted and organized | |
| 15:45-16:30 | Plenary review of products | |

| DAY 2 Tue 13 Sep | | OUTLINING A FOLLOW-UP PHASE Objective: To identify priorities and outcomes for the follow-up of CSDI activities |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| 09:00-09:15 | Summary of day 1 findings (Ramirez) | |
| 09:15-09:45 | Discussion in plenary | |
| 09:45-10:15 | <i>Coffee break</i> | |
| 10:20-12:30 | Session 3a and 3b (concurrent) – Frameworks to focus a project follow-up Instructions in plenary; break into groups Group work | |
| 12:30-13:30 | <i>Lunch</i> | |
| 13:45-16:00 | Session 4 (with short break) – Integration of lessons learned and future directions | |
| 16:00-16:30 | Summary of day 2 findings and final recommendations | |
| 16:30-17:00 | Conclusion and final remarks | |

³³ Outcome 1: Effective applications and management of ComDev strategies, tools and services to support sustainable natural resource management and rural development.

³⁴ Outcome 2: Improved capacities and partnerships in communication for sustainable natural resource management and rural development.

ANNEX 4. List of Participants to CSDI Stocktaking Workshop

| NAME | ORGANIZATION | ROLE | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Mario Acunzo | Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) | CSDI Lead Technical Officer | mario.acunzo@fao.org |
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| Erik Murillo | MDRyT / Instituto Nacional de Innovación Agropecuaria y Forestal (INIAF) | Director | emurillo@gmail.com |
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“People live the impacts of climate change, hence, they need knowledge and communication to better cope with it”