Agricultural Research for Development in Central Asia and the Caucasus: State, Issues, Problems and Perspectives

Acad. Hukmatullo Ahmadov,
Chair, CACAARI
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CENTRAL ASIA AND CAUCASUS

- Vast land area:
  - 419 million ha (mha); 11.4 mha irrigated, 256 mha rangelands, mountains
- Blessed with tremendous agro-biodiversity
- Poverty
  - reduced compared with 2005, but ranges from 15.4% (Kazakhstan) to 75% (Tajikistan) (2007)
- GDP per capita
  - increased in 2007: range from US$1,656 (Tajikistan) to 10,223 (Kazakhstan) (UNESCAP, 2008)
MAP OF THE REGION

The Caucasus and Central Asia

- Russia
- Ukraine
- Belarus
- Kazakhstan
- Uzbekistan
- Turkmenistan
- Tajikistan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Afghanistan
- Pakistan
- India
- China
- Turkey
- Syria
- Iran
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Saudi Arabia

Legend:
- Black Sea
- Caspian Sea
- Aral Sea
- Lake Balkhash
- Other geographical features

Scale 1:11,900,000
Lambert Conformal Conic Projection, standard parallels 41°N and 62°N
0 0
300 Kilometers
300 Nautical Miles

Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.
- Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions founded in 2000
- Regional platform of agricultural scientists, agricultural officials, farmers, NGO activists, university lecturers etc.
- Consortium of Farmer organizations and Consortium of NGO organizations
- Member of CIARD
- CACAARI membership: almost 40 NARS institutions, 2 CG centers (ICARDA and AVRDC); farmer and NGO members – about 20 and expanding fast
• The Association is governed by the Steering Committee of 14 members, representing all stakeholder groups
• The Chairperson heads the Steering Committee
• Two Consortia have been formed under CACAARI – Farmer and NGO Consortia, each with own steering committee of eight members, one from each country
• Consortium of Agrarian Universities to be formed in May
• Advocacy in the region for increased and improved investment, both financial and human capital, in agricultural research and innovation for development
• Improvement collaboration among various stakeholders in ARD
• Enabling and facilitation of information exchange, especially through innovative ICM tools
• Reorientation of ARD by including and empowering commercial and farmer organizations and women organizations in agriculture
• 2001 - Brainstorming Meeting on Regional Agricultural Research Priorities
• 2002 – Co-founded INCANA
• 2002 – CWANA Research Priorities Meeting
• 2004 – CACAARI Regional Agricultural Information System Workshop
• 2004 – Second Meeting of INCANA held
• 2006 – CACAARI-IFPRI Workshop on Reorienting Research and Innovation Systems in CAC
• 2007 – Launch of the Regional Agricultural Information System (CACAARI RAIS); formation of the Steering Committee of CACAARI RAIS
• 2009 – Workshop on Information Technologies in Agricultural Research
• 2009 – Formation of Consortium of Farmer Organizations (CFO-CAC) and Consortium of Agricultural Non-Governmental Organizations (CNGO-CAC)
• 2009 – GCARD Review Process: CAC Regional Review, E-consultations and Face-to-face Consultations held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan
OVERVIEW OF AGRICULTURE

- both irrigated (11.4 mha) and rainfed (22.3 mha)
- 256 mha of rangelands used as pastures
- important agricultural commodities: wheat, barley, potato, cotton, vegetables and fruits, livestock
- rich genetic heritage of fruits, vegetables and nut trees (almond, walnut)
- sustenance mountain agriculture
IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Ensuring food security: Irrigated agriculture & dehkons
- Poverty reduction: Employment (10% in Armenia and 30% in Tajikistan) and livelihoods
- Significantly contributes to the GDP:
  - 6.3% in Kaz - 19% in Uzb)
  - important for hard currency earnings
- Vast rangelands: Feed, biodiversity and environment
- Protecting environment
OUTLINE OF FARMING POPULATION: GROUPS

• Dehkons
• Small farmers (<5 ha)
• Small to Medium farmers (5-50 ha)
• Large farmers (>50 ha)
• Pastoralists
• Sustenance smallholders in mountains
• Fisher folks
• Forest dwellers
FOOD SECURITY

- Food insecurity in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and to some extent in Uzbekistan
- Intensive population growth expected in Central Asia by 2050
- Arable land per capita under global average everywhere except Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan

Issues and solutions:
- Greater investment in agriculture - crop diversification and value chains
- Enhance crop production in irrigated and rainfed areas
- Explore potential of livestock production
- Special attention to horticulture
- Research on fisheries
- Attention to transboundary diseases
- Machinery for small-scale farmers
REGIONAL E-CONSULTATIONS

- E-consultation from 3 – 23 Sept ’09
- 120 participants and about 200 messages, mobilized through e-mail invitations of database members
- Feedback very encouraging and useful
- Matrix table prepared by Lead Consultant summarizing all issues
- Fast translation English-Russian of all messages regardless of length
REGIONAL F2F CONSULTATIONS

• About 90 participants convened on October 16-17, 2009
• Group discussions: Two sessions
  • Session I: Issues relating to 7 producer groups
  • Session II: Issues relating to 7 cross-cutting issues
• Plenary Session
  • Voting on the key researchable issues
  • 16 flip charts and a sticker-based voting system
  • 8 votes to choose farmer categories and themes
  • 14 votes to choose from more than 100 researchable issues
• Very positive feedback: biggest achievement – widest stakeholder participation
Priority research themes were also identified for each of the seven stakeholder groups.

- Food and nutritional security (1)
- Improving declining living standards & livelihoods (6)
- Changes in agric. research, education & extension systems (5)
- Achieving structural reforms (2)
- Meeting special challenges (3)
- Protecting environment (3)
- Achieving structural reforms (2)
INSTITUTIONAL AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- Improving agricultural extension & advisory system
- Improving agricultural research and education system
- Extension, knowledge sharing and ICT use
- Marketing of agricultural commodities; Climate change
- Gender/women issues
- Biodiversity
- Desertification
- Land-related policies
- Rangelands
KEY MESSAGES ON TRANSFORMING ARD

• The need to strengthen collaboration within region and at inter-regional level
• The urgent need for capacity building and bridging age gap in agricultural research, attraction of talented youth:
  – Higher salaries and social provision
  – New equipment and labs
  – Making agricultural research a competitive sphere
  – CGIAR is making a large progress in the region, but government support is essential
THANK YOU

sag’ol
ташаккур

ката раҳмат
чон раҳмат
маъруф үзун