

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



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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)



- 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



CACAAARI GOVERNANCE

Central Asia and the Caucasus Association
of Agricultural Research Institutions

- 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 CACAAARI – 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



ACTIVITIES

- 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 – Regional Research Needs Assessment (RNA-2007): Exercise in Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- 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

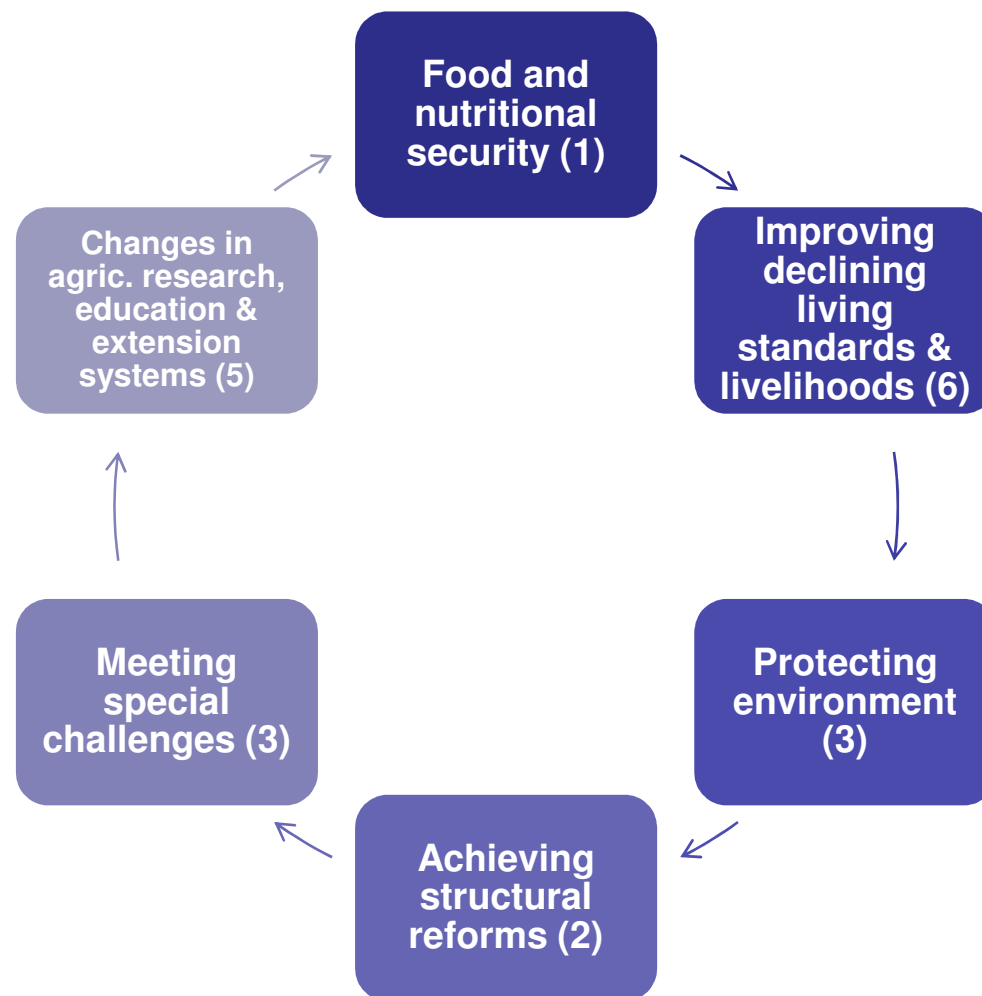
- E-consultation from 3 – 23 Sept '09
- 120 participants and about 200 messages, mobilized through e-mail invitations of database members
- Feedback very encouraging and useful
- Matrix table prepared by Lead Consultant summarizing all issues
- Fast translation English-Russian of all messages regardless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



- Priority research themes were also identified for each of the seven stakeholder groups
- Researchable issues identified under each strategic theme

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

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