



Some 200 researchers and development professionals from 40 countries attended the launch meeting of the Dryland Systems program in Amman. The meeting was opened by a keynote presentation of HRH Prince El Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan (seated 4th from left) - see article page 2.

Putting the Dryland Systems program into action

Inception phase complete... the research implementation begins now

The CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Agricultural Production Systems that is led by ICARDA, is moving forward with a series of implementation workshops, where the research teams will design workplans, set priorities and design action plans in the program's five target regions and action sites. The Target Region Implementation & Partnerships workshops (TRIPS) will be held between July and early September in Tunisia, Ghana, Uzbekistan, Nepal and Malawi (see box below).

The meetings will bring together the 'doers' - the research partners that selected and characterized the action sites in the inception phase, who are well versed in the needs and the potential solutions that the Program's research can bring to these locations.

In these workshops the teams will start the research, with the first target outputs for end-2013, explains program Director, Bill Payne. "Most of these partners and colleagues were involved in the inception phase and the characterization of the research action suites, so they know the challenges faced by farmers in these areas very well. The TRIPS meeting are the start of the Program's work on the ground," he says.

These meetings mark the start of the Dryland Systems Research Program research, which will begin in target areas immediately after each workshop, where the research teams will start testing and validate a range of integrated technology and policy packages, and engage with regional partners to assess potential interventions. Further efforts will also be made to tailor technologies to specific environments and conditions, and encourage their adoption by rural communities.

Target Region Implementation & Partnerships workshops

North Africa and West Asia – Hammamet, Tunisia - 26-28 July
West Africa – Kumasi, Ghana - 1-2 August
Central Asia – Ferghana Valley, Uzbekistan - 12-14 Aug
South Asia – Katmandu, Nepal - 26-28 Aug
East and Southern Africa – Malawi – September

Check the Dryland Systems website for detail of TRIPS meetings and research workplans www.drylandsystems.cgiar.org

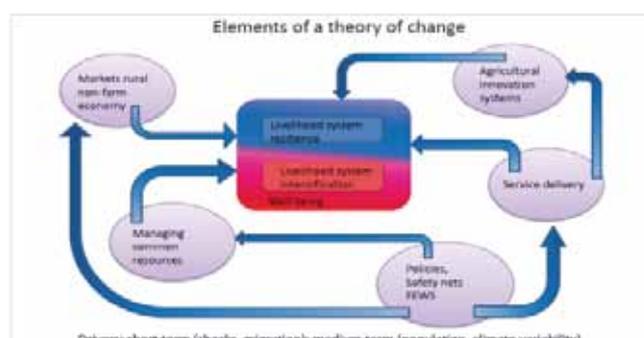
Intermediate Development Outcomes

A new set of Intermediate Development Outcomes will guide the progress of all CGIAR Research Programs. They are now being finalized by all programs and will be put in place in the Dryland Systems results framework. The Outcomes under discussion are:

1. **Resilient livelihoods** for vulnerable livelihoods in marginal areas.
2. **Stable and higher per capita incomes** for intensifiable households.
3. **Year round access to greater quantity and diversity of food sources** for women and children in vulnerable households
4. **More sustainable and equitable management of land and water** management in pastoral and agro pastoral zones.

Additional outcomes that are requirements for the first 4 Outcomes to be realized:

5. **Better functioning markets** underpinning intensification of rural livelihoods
6. **More integrated, effective and connected service delivery institutions** underpinning resilience and systems intensification
7. **Policy reform removing constraints and creating incentives** for rural households to engage in more sustainable practices that improve resilience and intensify production



Interactions and linkages – how the Intermediate Development Outcomes work. Source: Fergus Sinclair, World Agroforestry

Highlights from the launch of the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems

After two years of planning and an intense round of regional inception workshops, the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Agricultural Production Systems was launched in Amman, Jordan, in May. Some 200 delegates from 40 countries took part in three days of presentations, discussion and workplan development. This was a forum for exchange between key players from the five target regions where the research program is put into action - West African Sahel and Dry Savannas, East and Southern Africa, North Africa and West Asia, Central Asia and the Caucasus, and South Asia.

The keynote address, presented by His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan, who endorsed the program in a wide-ranging speech on science and the political context for action in the dry areas. He called for a 'new architecture' for food and agricultural production and stressed the importance of a regional approach to food and nutrition problems.



HRH Prince El Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan delivering the opening keynote presentation.

The three-day launch included detailed work planning with an emphasis on synergy between regional priorities in the series of research action sites in five regions, and a series of global research themes and cross-cutting issues. Highlights of the event are summarized below:

Dr Camilla Toulmin: With strong partnerships, 1+1 can equal 11.



Dr. Peter Craufurd, Research Program Director for Resilient Dryland Systems at ICRISAT, represented the Directors General of the eight CGIAR centers, that are partners in the Program. In her opening remarks, Dr. Camilla Toulmin, Board Chair of ICARDA and Director of the International Institute for Environment and Development, spoke of the power of partnerships and the unique contribution that the Dryland Systems can bring, building on ICARDA's long experience in integrated approaches to agricultural research. The program's unique and expanded partnership approach of international, national and local actors mean that it will have far greater reach than a typical research activity – "so that one plus one can equal eleven..." She commented that communities are managing their situations - cycles of flood and drought and ensuring livelihoods. But policy makers have misconceptions about drylands, and there are few government policies, investments or planning to support dryland communities' own strategies.



CGIAR CEO Dr. Frank Rijsberman: Dryland Systems is one of the three 'systems' programs, that are designed to deliver research results of the CGIAR Research Programs on the ground in many countries.

Dr. Frank Rijsberman, CEO of the CGIAR Consortium, outlined the potential of the reformed CGIAR to deliver bigger impacts, focused through 16 CGIAR Research programs, compared to the former CGIAR system of some 3000 research projects. "With these changes, the CGIAR has refined to meet key challenges and the donors have responded. Over the past five years the CGIAR budget has almost doubled, increasing by some 20% in 2012. We now need to show that we can deliver development outcomes, that we have a good grasp of the impact pathway and deliver results. If we can do this, I believe there will be more interest in longer-term investment in these programs."

Dr. Mahmoud Solh, Director General of ICARDA, the lead center of the Dryland Systems program spoke of how past expertise, of ICARDA, CGIAR centers and national partners can be leveraged through the program to reach a large number of rural communities across the dry areas. "At ICARDA we have many examples and successes developed over 36 years of integrated agro-ecosystems approaches. What's new is that these lessons can now be spread very widely and applied in new locations such as East Africa, West Africa and the Sahel," he said. He also encouraged partners to re-think extension, harnessing new information and media to reach farmers. "Farmers are smart, they know their business well and will adopt new technologies if it brings them more income – this is their main criteria for choosing," he explained.

ICARDA Director General, Mahmoud Solh: New ways to see extension, using new media and information approaches to reach farmers.



Cross-cutting themes: gender focus

Gender was high on the meeting's agenda, both as a cross-cutting issue and strategic priority – for both the Dryland Systems and the CGIAR. In a presentation delivered on the opening day, Dr. Malika Martini, rural development and gender specialist at ICARDA, argued that without a focus on women there can be no progress in dryland agricultural production systems.



Marina Cherbouner of YPARD makes the case for youth empowerment in dryland areas

Outlining the Program's plans to prioritize the inclusion of rural women, Dr. Martini stressed the need for an effective monitoring system that disaggregated impacts on women and a 'gender audit' that continually identified the strengths and weaknesses of the Program's approach to female empowerment.

Recognizing this potential and the unique challenges that women face, the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems is developing a gender strategy and an effective monitoring system that can focus the impacts of rural development interventions on women. A 'gender audit' will investigate the program and identify the strengths and weaknesses of its approach to female empowerment.

Cross-cutting themes: prioritizing youth

Young people face a daunting future in dryland regions, characterized by unemployment and limited access to decision-making, natural resources, and finance. The consequence? High levels of civil unrest, instability, and rural out-migration.

Meeting these challenges requires efforts to raise the capacity of young people and facilitate their access to decision-making and policy forums, according to Marina Cherbouner of the Young Professionals Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD).

Geo-informatics: maps tell a thousand words

Given its global focus, the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems assigns a prominent role to advanced technologies, helping development planners to more effectively identify the most appropriate interventions for a given location and set of conditions.



Dr. Chandra Biradar discusses the potential of geo-informatics to frame complex and impact decision making.

Geo-informatics – technologies that support the acquisition, analysis and visualization of spatial data such as remote sensing and geographical information systems – have enormous potential for scaling-up interventions given their ability to highlight areas facing similar challenges; and for presenting complex data to decision makers in a concise and easily understandable form.

Dr. Chandrashekar Biradar, Head of ICARDA's GISU Department, outlined this potential in a wide-ranging presentation that described the various applications of geo-informatics: the accurate mapping of land uses and indigenous practices, identifying promising water harvesting techniques, and assessing the impact of outcomes in different action sites.

Scaling-up and out

Fergus Sinclair of the World Agro-Forestry Center, spoke about the innovative nature of the Program's efforts to scale-up appropriate interventions and place them in the hands of farmers. Rather than working in isolated pilot sites, researchers in this program will apply local findings and share knowledge across regions – what Dr. Sinclair calls 'scaling domains,' or in the language of the Program, 'Action Sites.'

A real opportunity to apply local findings globally - Dr. Fergus Sinclair, World Agroforestry Centre.



Dryland Systems' research will also attempt to understand how proven and appropriate interventions aimed at increasing productivity or reducing vulnerability can be customized and adapted to different conditions and contexts. The key consideration, according to Dr. Sinclair, is to work effectively with partners who can apply their expertise and knowledge of specific conditions and regions to tailor interventions accordingly.

Data Management Framework

Dr Carlos Barahona, expert in research support and research data management, a partner from the University of Reading, offered concepts and approaches useful for the effective management of data that will be generated by the Dryland Systems Program. Referring to the large number of research activities about to begin in the Program, he commented that the time is right to put in place clear policies and guidelines for managing data across the action sites.



Policies and good practices for research data management – Dr. Carlos Barahona, Reading University.

He highlighted efforts to improve the collection and organization of data – several of these in the CGIAR – and said that the CGIAR Research Programs provide a

golden opportunity to join forces, save resources and work more efficiently in data management. The big question and our goal, is: how do we set up policies that ensure that our data is systematically archived, stored and described – so others can use it in the future to improve world food security. "Data is our raw material. It is extremely important if we are to find lasting solutions to the problems faced by people in dry lands," he said.

Endorsing the Dryland Systems approach

Dr. Harry Palmier of the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR) expressed his confidence in the Dryland Systems Program, spoke about the crucial needs facing dryland regions, and the increasing attention that donors were paying to dryland areas, given their environmental vulnerability and high rates of poverty and degradation. Acknowledging the energy and dynamism surrounding the Program, and recognizing that the initiative had all the assets to successfully raise productivity and incomes, Dr. Palmier stated that GFAR were excited to be involved.



Dr Harry Palmier, GFAR – increased interest in the problems of drylands agriculture.

A 'systems approach' in action

Meeting participants also heard from Dr. Florence Mabugu, Chief Executive of the Africa Harvest Biotechnology Foundation International, who offered perspectives on her organization's efforts to implement a 'systems' approach to agricultural development in the arid and semi-arid environments of Makueni District and Central Kitui in Kenya.



Dr. Florence Mabugu advises delegates on the importance of a 'systems' approach – and investing in finding out what communities want.

Her advice? Identify a wide range of partners in target areas, invest time finding out what communities want, and adopt a flexible approach. Expanding on this final point Dr. Mabugu stressed that it was unhelpful to have rigid ideas. She added: "There has to be a mindset change if we want to see real impacts on the ground in dryland areas. It can no longer be a case of business as usual."

Dryland Systems Governance Structure

At the launch meeting, Drylands Systems Program management and the steering committee finalized and presented a governance structure for the Program. Informed by consultations with a wide range of stakeholders and partner organizations, the Program takes a multi-level approach to governance:

The **Steering Committee** considers research proposals from the research management group. The high potential ideas are submitted to the Program's lead Center, ICARDA, and the CGIAR Consortium Board for final approval.

The regional groups report to the **Research Management Committee** which manages the research agenda and draws up budgets and plans.

Regional Coordinating Groups oversee and coordinate activities in the Program's five target regions. They ensure that interventions are effectively delivered and monitored.

Planning outcomes and the future of the program

Dryland Systems at the CGIAR Research Program Engagement with Donors and External Stakeholders

In parallel with the start of Dryland Systems research activities, the Program's management is involved in the planning phase for the next round of funding for CGIAR Research Programs that was discussed in a special meeting - the CGIAR Research Program Engagement with Donors and External Stakeholders hosted by the CGIAR Consortium in Montpellier in June.

ICARDA Director, General Dr. Mahmoud Solh and Deputy Director General-Research Director, Dr. Maarten van Ginkel, attended for ICARDA, the Program's lead center. Dryland Systems Director, Dr. Bill Payne presented the program's medium-term direction and targets for the Program planned activities with potential financial backers alongside other CGIAR Research Programs.

The 'systems' approach adopted by CRPs and the tight focus on development outcomes – reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving nutrition and health, and the sustainable management of natural resources – was well received. Also welcomed was the priority given to marginal populations such as women and youth. However, donors stressed the importance of adopting a clear set of indicators and measurable targets that could accurately measure progress against stated aims.

A key focus of this meeting was to develop a common vision on results and high-level outcomes – that all Programs contribute to. A set of Intermediate Development Outcomes (IDOs), was prepared by participants, and will be finalized in September, pending final review and discussion by individual CGIAR Research Programs. The outcomes include practical benefits for people and communities, such as increased household income; more resilient livelihoods for vulnerable households; more sustainable and equitable management of land and water resources in pastoral/agro-pastoral areas; and more integrated, effective, and connected service delivery institutions.

Dryland systems Steering committee

	Member	Organization	Position
ICARDA	Dr. Mahmoud Solh	ICARDA	Director General
CGIAR Partner Centers (non-rotating)	Dr. William Dar	ICRISAT	Director General
	Dr. Jimmy Smith	ILRI	Director General
	Dr. Tony Simons	ICRAF	Director General
Advanced Research Institutions (rotating)	Dr. Bernard Hubert	CIRAD/ Agropolis	President
	Dr. Peter Carberry	CSIRO Land & Water Sustainable Agriculture Flagship	Deputy Director
National System Representatives (rotating)	Dr. Monty Jones	The Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR) & The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)	Chairman, Executive Director
	Dr. Adugna Waqjira	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)	Director General
	Dr. S Ayyappan	Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)	Director General
Development Bodies (rotating)	Dr. Mohammed Badroui	Institute National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA)	Director General
	Dr. Markos Tibbo	FAO	Regional Office for the Near East- Livestock Officer
	Dr. Mohamed Abdelgadir	IFAD	Near East, North Africa and Europe Division-Jordan Portfolio-Country Programme Manager
Dryland Systems	Dr. Francois Boa-Amponsem	HG Buffet Foundation	Conservation Agriculture Consultant
	Dr. William Payne	Dryland Systems	Director
ICARDA Board of Trustees Member	TBD		