

DS science implementation meeting – WAS&DS

Group work on integrating the learning into regional flagships

BLENDING issues and actions and critical gaps

a) Implementing the systems approach

- Including the range of variation within action sites via multiple interventions sites
- The way WAS&DS work presented should be changed to report per activity or per IDO
- The KKM and WBS sites are a very mature sampling strategy
- Request from centres that we need more leadership
- Expand the range of partners to improve capacity building and implementation
- Need to improve mode of presentation and how thoughts are organized
- Need to create science that addresses social needs
- Critically examine how our minds are trained to critically examine – learn to stand in each others' shoes and think in a 'new' systems way

b) Science and new science

- Systems science (in our context) is a new science and that is why we are struggling with it - stop expecting ourselves to automatically adapt
- Recognize the emotional, social, cultural and intellectual journeys – individually and collectively
- Quantitative and qualitative designs and tradeoffs
- Including more variables but in a smart way
- Not just about raising productivity by elevating from poverty (broader system) – i.e. from agricultural system to livelihood system
- Risk vs productivity – e.g. the same resource (e.g. quantity of water) has a different value in the two situations
- Payment for ecosystem services
- New science to confront the “tragedy of the commons”
- Reassess satellite and other sites for representative issues – e.g. water management options
- Train people

c) Synthesis research

- Define “synthesis”
- Synthesis existing knowledge to address the systems issues
- What product should this be at the program level – e.g.
 - i. synthesis of extension
 - ii. agricultural content management
 - iii. by technology – e.g. poultry, small scale irrigation
 - iv. synthesis of institutional approach
 - v. synthesis of systems approach
 - vi. historical contexts

- d) Knowledge management
 - E.g. promoting farmers' understanding of managing indigenous species
 - Data management
 - ...
- e) Communication/visibility
 - What we want to research and why
 - i. Drylands
 - ii. Systems
 - iii. What/why is it different
 - iv. Stand up and say "it is a new science" (recall 4 stages of acceptance of a new idea)
 - What are the consequences of excluding Drylands from a research agenda?
 - Demonstrate that it is new
 - Show we are "cutting edge" and we are moving towards a goal
 - Impression from outside that centres do not mention the program – only what is done per centre
 - Put DS on business cards
 - Aggressive approach to marketing DS
 - Elevator message
 - TV, brochures, flyers (billboards?)
- f) Partnership for impact
 - Capitalize on the strong culture of NGOs in West Africa
 - Involve NGOs at the beginning of projects
 - Work through CORAF on selected projects/overviews etc. – opportunity to follow-up with international doors – link with all DS to build synergies
- g) Scaling up/out
 - It is complicated
 - Centres should not commit to this (it has been a 40-year discussion)
 - Need to present all available information and interpretations and increase visibility for development institutions to take on
 - Ensure there are for a for these
 - Focus on youth projects
- h) Incentives
 - Scientists want to publish – encourage publishing in multi-disciplinary journals
 - Elevate the status of success stories – rewards for these???
 - Develop incentives for other partners and actors