

Knowledge Sharing, Institutional Learning and Change in the CGIAR

Report on a Workshop organized by the CGIAR
Knowledge Sharing Project and the Institutional Learning
and Change Initiative

CIAT, Cali, Colombia
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Contents

Summary and Key Messages	3
<i>Workshop overview</i>	3
<i>Key messages from the workshop</i>	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Welcome, Background and Expectations	7
<i>Presentation: Welcome to CIAT - Joachim Voss, CIAT Director</i>	7
<i>Presentation: System-wide perspective on KS - David Balson</i>	8
<i>Presentation: Importance of ILAC for the CGIAR - Robert Chambers</i>	8
<i>Expectations for the workshop</i>	9
3. Introduction to KS and ILAC	9
<i>Presentation: Overview of the KS and ILAC Projects - Doug Horton</i>	9
<i>Reactions and questions</i>	9
<i>Presentation: Examples of KS approaches and how they can help the CGIAR - Mark Faul and David Balson</i>	10
<i>Presentation: Examples of ILAC in the CGIAR - Jamie Watts</i>	11
<i>Clarifying key KS and ILAC concepts</i>	11
4. Experiences with KS and ILAC	13
<i>Presentation: Reflections on Organizational Change Program - Linda Spink</i>	13
<i>Questions and discussion</i>	13
<i>Sharing participants' experiences with KS and ILAC</i>	14
5. Work Planning	15
<i>Presentation: Current KS and ILAC work-plans and resources - Doug Horton</i>	15
<i>Reactions of David Balson</i>	16
<i>Group work and discussion</i>	16
<i>Proposals for KS pilot activities</i>	17
6. Next Steps	18
<i>Development of pilot activities</i>	18
<i>Possible common activities of the KS and ILAC projects</i>	18
After Action Review	20
List of Participants	22

Summary and Key Messages

Workshop overview

CGIAR centers and programs are finding it essential to learn faster, share knowledge better, and revise their strategies and operations more frequently. Two CGIAR efforts that address these concerns are the Knowledge Sharing (KS) Project, within the Information and Communication Technology – Knowledge Management (ICT-KM) Program, and the Institutional Learning and Change (ILAC) Initiative. From June 22 – 25, these two initiatives held a workshop at CIAT in Cali, Colombia, to review experiences with institutional learning and knowledge management and to plan for future activities.

Participants shared experiences with KS and ILAC, identified opportunities for improving KS and ILAC, built relationships and identified next steps that would continue the momentum begun during the workshop.

Twenty-two participants came from 7 CGIAR centers (CIAT, CIFOR, CIMMYT, IFPRI, ILRI, IPGRI/INIBAP and IWMI) and from the CGIAR Gender and Diversity Program, the Challenge Program on Water and Food, the Strategic Advisory Service for Human Resources and the ICT-KM Program. The workshop was facilitated by Training Resources Group, Inc (USA) and Bellanet (Canada).

The participants reviewed KS and ILAC activities with which they had been involved, included an assessment of organizational culture; development of learning alliances; impact pathway analysis; learning-oriented evaluations; development of software for sharing expertise; development of KM strategies; facilitation of policy changes in support of gender and diversity; development of web sites and intranets; and communities of practice.

The ILAC project is currently supporting “Pilot Projects” in 3 CGIAR centers. These aim to develop and test approaches for using innovation histories and evaluations to promote learning and change. Workshop participants were invited to propose ideas for KS activities in their centers or programs. These pilot activities should be of immediate use to the organizations involved and they should also generate lessons and guidelines of use to other CGIAR center and programs.

Participants developed project ideas for improving KS and ILAC in the following areas:

- Developing a KM / KS strategy
- Drawing lessons from learning alliances
- Leadership development training in KM / KS
- Strengthening pro-poor technology development through improved KS
- Introducing KS approaches in a center’s Annual Meeting
- Social network analysis
- Training in cross-cultural skills
- Strengthening KS and teamwork in the “Content for Development” thrust of the ICT-KM program

Participants agreed to revise and consolidate their project ideas after the workshop, and to submit them to the KS project team, for review and possible support. Participants involved in the ILAC Initiative identified priorities for scaling up the initiative in the future. It was agreed during the workshop that pilot activities should

be central to both the KS Project and the ILAC Initiative.

Some possible common activities were identified for the KS and ILAC projects:

- Preparation of a brief workshop report, news items or articles
- A joint final synthesis and review workshop in the second half of 2005
- Joint publication of “KS & ILAC Briefs”
- Website development
- Training workshops on such key topics as facilitation skills
- Work on human resource policies and practices
- Collaboration on specific joint pilots
- Activities to raise awareness of the importance of KS and ILAC among senior managers
- Communication and promotion of KS and ILAC across the CGIAR
- Facilitation of continuing discussion among the workshop participants
- Preparation of a joint statement on KS and ILAC, indicating their goals and strategies and possible links and synergies

Key messages from the workshop

Rationale for knowledge sharing, institutional learning and change

The CGIAR needs to operate more effectively as a system. Centers and programs need to be more flexible and adaptive, less territorial and more willing to share our knowledge and work together to achieve common goals. There needs to be a more “open-source” attitude towards knowledge. Access to data, information and knowledge needs to be improved across the CGIAR system. We need more “KS champions” and “change agents.” Continuous learning will be required to address poverty concerns effectively over time. The focus of our work needs to shift from things to people. Both *personal* and *institutional* change will be needed.

By expanding *collaboration and communication* – through such KS approaches and tools as peer assists, after action reviews, storytelling, knowledge fairs, mentoring, coaching, and communities of practice – we can improve science to help the poor.

By improving *learning from experience* and the *use of lessons learned*, we can improve our institutional approaches and overall effectiveness.

Origins of the KS Project and the ILAC Initiative

The KS project is part of the CGIAR Information and Communications Technology and Knowledge Management (ICT-KM) Program, which has its roots in the CGIAR Organizational Change Program that operated from the mid-1990s until 2002.

Improving KS requires behavioral and cultural changes in the CGIAR. To achieve such changes, a convincing “business case” for KS needs to be made to Center management and staff. Making this case will require concrete examples of success that will motivate people to make the efforts and take the risks needed for profound change. One objective of the KS project is to provide some of the needed examples.

The ILAC Initiative emerged over the last few years from the work of researchers in several CGIAR centers who were experimenting with learning-oriented evaluation approaches and were seeking ways to expand the use of evaluation results in decision making and in bringing about organizational change. Over time, ILAC has expanded its scope to embrace several management areas and skill domains that are essential for

promoting individual and organizational learning and institutional change. As with the KS project, the ultimate goal of ILAC is to foster sweeping changes in the way the CGIAR conducts its business.

Experiences with KS and ILAC in the CGIAR

Many CGIAR centers have more experience with KS and ILAC than they know! During the workshop a “knowledge fair” was organized in which participants outlined one or more of their personal experience experiences with KS or ILAC. A large range of experiences was presented including the following:

- *Strategy formulation.* Examples include the participatory process used by CIMMYT to develop its recent Strategic Plan, stakeholder involvement in IPGRI’s strategy process, and development of the ICT-KM Program strategy
- *Organizational change.* Examples include a recent Diversity Diagnosis at CIAT, the work of the CGIAR Gender and Diversity Program, and the development of an Innovation Fund at IPGRI. Examples were also provided for Action Aid and the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.
- *Evaluation.* Several examples of learning- and change-oriented evaluation, including ISNAR’s Evaluating Capacity Development project, IPGRI’s learning-oriented Center Comissioned External Reviews, preparation of Innovation Histories at CIAT, and an impact study for banana being carried out by INIBAP.
- *Knowledge management and sharing.* Examples include the development of CIAT’s Web site and ILRI Net, development of the “Expertise” database at CIAT, IPGRI’s Evaluation Web site, CIAT’s development of Inforcauca Community Telecenters, and the Water Dialogue at IWMI.
- *Networking and Communities of Practice (CoP).* Examples include CIAT’s Learning Allianzes, the CGIAR Information Managers’ CoP, experience with CoP for CGIAR researchers involved in Integrated Natural Resources Management, and development of a knowledge management strategy at CIFOR.

Lessons from experience

Workshop participants drew the following lessons from their experiences with KS and ILAC:

- *Design issues.* First and foremost, initiatives to improve KS or ILAC need to take intended users seriously and design interventions that respond to real demands. It is important to keep intervention realistic and simple. Complex plans and activities tend to be difficult to communicate and implement. It is common to underestimate the time and resources needed to design and implement successful change efforts.
- KS and ILAC should save time! It is crucial to look for ways to save researchers’ and managers’ time, as they are often overwhelmed by competing demands on their time.
- *There is no template or blueprint for success.* We need to be flexible, learn to improvise, learn lessons from successes and failures, and incorporate these into implementation strategies.
- *Process issues.* Successful KS and ILAC initiatives require changes in behavior and culture. Hence, process issues are crucial. Good facilitation is needed for both face-to-face and online collaboration. Conflicts need to be

resolved as they emerge and not left to “fester.” Face-to-face interactions are indispensable for “transformational learning.”

- *Hidden value of frustration.* Frustrating situations should not be ignored but capitalized on as opportunities for learning and change and as sources of energy.
- *People issues.* It is important to get the right people involved and get them motivated. Also be sure to get buy-in from senior managers, who will be ultimately responsible for making changes in management practices that influence KS, organizational learning, and change efforts.

1. Introduction

Centers and programs affiliated with the CGIAR and their national and regional partners are under increasing pressure to learn, share and utilize their knowledge and change in ways that improve their contributions to sustainable poverty reduction. They also need to frequently re-assess and update their goals, assumptions, strategies and modes of operation to keep pace with changing needs and opportunities.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, the Ford Foundation sponsored an “Organizational Change Program” (OCP) for the CGIAR that fostered improvements in two key areas prioritized by Center Directors: knowledge management and building viable and effective partnerships and alliances. The Training Resources Group (TRG) coordinated the OCP, organized a series of seminars and workshops and supported pilot activities in centers.

The OCP was an important precursor of the current program on Information and Communications Technology and Knowledge Management (ICT-KM) which was established in 2002 within the new Systems Office of the CGIAR. The ICT-KM Program, which is sponsored by the Centers and is supported by a grant from the World Bank, presently includes 15 projects. One of these projects focuses on knowledge management and sharing (KS). The goal of this project is to foster a learning-oriented, knowledge-sharing culture in the CGIAR that contributes to the CGIAR’s goals of food security, poverty reduction and preservation of natural resources. The KS project is based at CIAT.

In 2003, motivated by a concern that CGIAR centers and programs urgently needed to become more open, learning-oriented and responsive to change, an initiative emerged within the CGIAR on “Institutional Learning and Change” (ILAC). The goal of the ILAC Initiative is to improve the effectiveness of agricultural research programs in contributing to sustainable poverty reduction, by fostering learning among individuals, groups and organizations and use of the results of this learning to improve the effectiveness of their work. The ILAC Initiative is coordinated by IPGRI, and receives financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, BMZ and IFAD.

While the ILAC and KS initiatives have different origins, they have many similar concerns and approaches, and consequently may benefit from interaction and collaboration. Both projects were designed to include review and planning workshops in their early stages. For this reason, it was decided to hold a joint workshop to review experiences with KS and ILAC in the CGIAR and to plan future activities for the 2 projects.

The objectives of the workshop were to allow participants to:

- Share past experiences and current practices with KS and ILAC in the CGIAR and elsewhere
- Reach shared understandings of key KS and ILAC concepts
- Identify priorities and challenges for improving KS and ILAC in the CGIAR (i.e. in challenge programs and system wide programs, CGIAR centers, and projects within the ICT-KM program)
- Identify high potential areas for the KS and ILAC projects to collaborate with CG centers, challenge programs system-wide programs, and projects within the ICT-KM program, in order to achieve quick successes
- Build relationships and identify next steps that will continue the momentum begun during the workshop.

The workshop was facilitated by Kathy Alison of TRG and Mark Faul of Bellanet. It was organized in a series of sessions over four days. During the first day, participants exchanged background information on themselves and on the KS and ILAC projects. KS and ILAC concepts were clarified and commonalities and differences were identified between the 2 projects. On the second day, participants discussed their experiences with KS and ILAC, including those associated with the CGIAR Organizational Change Program (OCP). Linda Spink, who coordinated the OCP, participated via teleconference, providing an overview of the OCP's activities and results and discussing with participants some of the implications for the current KS and ILAC initiatives. During the bulk of the day, participants prepared posters on one or more of their activities in KS or ILAC and presented these to the group. Subsequently, participants identified *common themes* in the activities reported on, *challenges* to KS and ILAC, *success factors* and *implications* for the KS and ILAC projects. During the third day, participants reviewed the work plans for the 2 projects and drafted proposals for KS and ILAC in their own centers or programs. In the afternoon, David Balson and Doug Horton gave a presentation on the KS project to CIAT staff. On the fourth day, the draft proposals were presented and discussed and decisions were reached on some next steps for the KS and ILAC projects.

The present report, based on notes taken by Mark Faul, is structured around the main sessions in the workshop.

2. Welcome, Background and Expectations

Presentation: Welcome to CIAT - Joachim Voss, CIAT Director

Note: Presentation handout is available on the KS website (http://www.ciat.cgiar.org/cgiar/knowledge_sharing/home.htm).

Commonality and relevance of KS & ILAC projects. The KM/S project was conceived at the system level, while the ILAC project is more of a grassroots initiative.

Why are we doing KS and ILAC? Global changes are increasingly rapid. We live in a smaller, more interconnected world. We need to be more aware of the context and environment within which we're working. The CGIAR needs to learn to work better together as a system. Management needs to be more flexible, adaptive, less territorial, more willing to share and work together. There needs to be a more "open-source" attitude towards knowledge. New features of the CGIAR include Challenge Programs, Communities of Practice, System-Wide Initiatives, and Learning Alliances. The Audit Unit of the Systems Office is promoting risk management. On one hand, we are encouraged to minimize risks (safety, efficiency, financial, legal). But on the other hand, we need to take risks (to increase

effectiveness through innovating and learning).

Presentation: System-wide perspective on KS - David Balson

KM is a menu of approaches and tools for dealing with a rapidly changing world and to achieve objectives. “KM is largely common sense.” The CGIAR has a long history of adopting technologies to support collaboration, and is an early pioneer in the area.

One of the central concerns of the ICT-KM program is to break down “silos” within the CGIAR – different centers and units, all competing for resources and power, with little trust or knowledge sharing. Both the KS and ILAC projects aim to break down the silos. The ICT-KM program has 3 thrusts: (1) ICT for tomorrow's science (infrastructure issues, supporting scientific communities and innovation); (2) content for development (easier access to information, knowledge, resources, within the CG); and (3) a CGIAR without borders (KM/S project).

Originally, the ICT-KM program was conceived as an ICT program. But then KM/S was recognized as too important to be left out. Additional money is to be raised for subsequent years. There are 3 or 4 very strong champions of KM within the CG system among the DGs.

What are we trying to achieve is ongoing KS, learning, institutionalized behaviour, supportive HR policies, increased profile for the CG in the development community. Dispersed teams and communities are needed to achieve the CGIAR's objectives. Access to data and knowledge needs to be integrated across the CGIAR. We also need more “change agents” in the CGIAR.

Presentation: Importance of ILAC for the CGIAR - Robert Chambers

There is a new emphasis on poverty in the CGAIR. But a huge amount of change and learning is required to address poverty concerns effectively. ILAC shifts the focus from things to focus on people. This has major implications for methods, values, approaches and priorities. The ILAC initiative originated in a conference in Costa Rica on why impact assessment has not had more of an impact. In ILAC, there is a strong emphasis on *personal* learning, reflection, and change, in addition to *institutional* change. ILAC is about:

- Continuously finding new ways of doing things
- Investing in relationships
- Face-to-face learning
- Retreats
- Participatory learning groups
- Downwards accountability (to poor people)
- “Immersion” – to get close to clients

We should be careful when we use terms like “knowledge” and “information.” Learning is both a social and a personal process. Knowledge cannot be “transferred,” it must be developed by individuals and their organizations.

If we have a poverty-alleviation objective, it is important to connect to the client and spend time in the field, to learn more about real needs. We need to balance the time we spend looking at computers and the time we spend getting and keeping in touch with real people in the field. We need much more serious analysis of how we as professionals spend our time.

Robert presented 2 recent publications to the group: a book titled “*Inclusive Aid*” and a paper titled “*Relationships Matter*.”

Expectations for the workshop

In an exercise designed to introduce participants and surface their expectations for the workshop, the following expectations were identified:

- Understand current status of KS and ILAC in the CGIAR
- Clarify what terms like KS & ILAC mean to this group
- Learn what experiences people have had in the past (success / failures)
- Practice KS & ILAC ourselves during the workshop
- Understand how to encourage appropriate behaviors for KS and ILAC
- Identify specific, concrete joint activities for the 2 projects
- Identify effective links to build common actions
- Identify what centers can do in the future to promote KS
- Understand how networks can support learning
- Build connections between researchers and technical groups (for example between IT and IM groups)
- Build the trust needed to discuss failures openly and to learn from them
- Clarify the role of the on-going ILAC pilot activities in future work on KS and ILAC
- Understand how to maximize pro-poor impacts (new thinking is needed)
- Create supportive policy frameworks and incentives for KS and ILAC
- Strengthen links between the Gender and Diversity program and the KM & ILAC projects
- Get to know people better in new context
- Identify change agents and champions for KS and ILAC
- Have a list of clear tips on how to improve KS & ILAC in centers
- Increase awareness of challenges and ways forward
- Clarify plans for the KS and ILAC projects and identify overlaps and potential synergies
- Communicate outcomes to others around the CG
- Be able to demonstrate results of KS this time (in contrast to the results of earlier efforts)
- Avoid collaboration for the sake of it!

3. Introduction to KS and ILAC

Presentation: Overview of the KS and ILAC Projects - Doug Horton

Note: Presentation handout is available on the KS website.

Reactions and questions

Why do these 2 projects have to be separate? Doesn't it make sense from the client perspective to have 1 project with a clear set of objectives, approaches, etc. Are KS & ILAC the same or different? We need a better understanding of the underlying concepts. It is difficult to understand the differences between these 2 projects. We need to develop a coherent message for the outside world as well for ourselves. We must avoid the impression that we are doing different things simply because we're following the money. We need to be truly "demand driven."

There's strong competition for resources among centers. How can we develop more trust and a willingness to share, in this environment?

How do the projects need to be integrated: at the "project level" or at the "conceptual level"?

The issue of power shouldn't be ignored. ILAC is a type of renegade project that has emerging from tensions in the evaluation sector, concerning values and research paradigms. The KS project, in contrast, is based in the ICT-KM program, which is located in the CGIAR System Office. The ICT-KM program has its origins in the Organizational Change Program, which was sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the CGIAR Secretariat.

We need to be aware of differences between KS and ILAC so that nothing gets lost in a possible integration of the 2. At a broad level they seem to be the same. But perhaps they aren't at the activity level.

The model for integrating KS and ILAC presented (based on the book by Mark McElroy, *The New Knowledge Management*) defined 2 broad phases of KM, corresponding to "knowledge production" and "knowledge integration." Doug argued that ILAC was mainly concerned with knowledge production and KS with knowledge integration. Many workshop participants were not comfortable with this distinction, and offered alternative ways of thinking about KS and ILAC. Some felt that KS is more "grassroots," while ILAC is more systemic in nature. Others felt that KS is concerned mainly with single-loop learning, while ILAC is concerned mainly with double- and triple-loop learning (for example, ILAC is concerned with learning about learning).

Someone noted that "to understand what we're talking about, we need to clarify what it is that we need to learn about, what knowledge we need to share and why. Before planning what to do we need to understand what's been done before and where we are. Where are we on the scale of knowledge sharing, and where are we trying to get? The ILAC project contemplates a diagnosis of the status of ILAC in the CGIAR. But we've been cautioned that raising awareness of inadequacies in an organization can lead to frustration if there is no plan to move ahead quickly and address these inadequacies. In other words, a diagnosis needs to be linked to appropriate subsequent action.

When we talk about ILAC and KM being demand-driven, whose demands are we referring to? At one level, ILAC is driven by the demands of donors. Managers of organizations seldom demand changes that would threaten their grip on things. This takes us back to the issue of power.

How can we help scientists be more pro-poor in their day-to-day work? What do we need to do to accomplish this? A start is to look beyond the CGIAR and involve partner organizations.

Presentation: Examples of KS approaches and how they can help the CGIAR - Mark Faul and David Balson

The presenters offered a list of KS approaches and tools:

- Peer Assists
- After Action Reviews
- Storytelling
- Knowledge Fairs
- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Communities of Practice
- Collaborative Platforms
- Forums & Meetings

During discussion, "Open Space" was added to the list.

It was noted that the ICT-KM program is largely about COPs. The ICT-KM strategy was developed by COPs. Many of the projects are supported by COPs. The KS project is looking to support COPs.

The following priorities for the KS project were identified: (a) to influence HR policies, (b) to provide “generic support” to CGIAR centers and programs, and (c) to provide targeted support to individual centers, units, or programs so they can serve as models for replication across the system. In all its activities, the key goal of the KS project should be to institutionalize KS in the CGIAR.

Presentation: Examples of ILAC in the CGIAR - Jamie Watts

Note: Presentation handout is available on the KS website.

Jamie presented the following ILAC approaches:

- Learning-oriented impact assessment and reviews
- Innovation funds
- Preparation of innovation histories
- Strategic planning
- Engaging donors and CGIAR management in reflection and learning
- Building capacity in such key areas as facilitation
- Reconnecting people to the field level (for example through “immersions”)

Clarifying key KS and ILAC concepts

After the presentations, participants met in small groups to discuss the following topics:

- What are the kinds of problems that could be addressed through KS & ILAC?
- Who would benefit from addressing these problems?
- What are the possible synergies between the KS and ILAC projects? The following list of points was produced.
- What questions do you still have about KS & ILAC concepts and projects?

The following lists of responses were developed by the groups:

What kinds of problems could be addressed through KS & ILAC?

- HR policies and practices (for example hiring, induction, rewards) that do not support KS, learning, and participatory ways of working
- Integration of KS & ILAC tools and approaches into project development, implementation and evaluation
- Lack of awareness of tools/approaches and how to effectively apply them
- Informing / convincing senior managers of the value of KS and ILAC so they will provide support
- Lack of cooperation in general
- Inadequate learning from the poor
- Inequality in relationships among different groups involved in research and development
- Inadequate diagnosis of problems of the poor (supposed beneficiaries of CGIAR work)
- Failure to learn lessons from the past
- Organizational culture that does not support closer relations between researchers and farmers

- Competition among researchers and centers for funds and “intellectual turf”
- Lack of capacity in the CGIAR and in NARS to manage participatory projects
- Inadequate pro-poor orientation. ILAC and KS should foster:
 - Continuous learning
 - Experiencing poverty
 - Understanding impact pathways
 - Sharing lessons learned more effectively through system
- Helping guide management reforms. We must become a truly learning organization to change and improve on a continuing and sustained basis.
- Learning why and how others have failed
- Learning how to reward constructive change and innovation
- Document lessons concerning:
 - Changing people's behavioral routines to promote learning and KS
 - Obtaining DG and board support for needed changes
 - Incorporating KS and ILAC into TOR for staff (including DGs!)
 - Incorporating KS and ILAC into policies and standard operating procedures

Who would benefit from addressing these problems?

- The immediate focus is on CG staff,(including management) and possibly external partners (NARS)
- The short-term focus is on making the CGIAR more effective
- Poor farmers should ultimately benefit, but we can't expect this immediately.
- Donors can benefit as well
- CG Centers can learn from each other and from NARS as well
- NGOs and field organizations may benefit
- We need to strengthen learning within and among programs within individual centers, and more importantly strengthen collaboration across centers and programs

What are the possible synergies between KS & ILAC?

- Complimentary to each other and using both can be more rich
- Non threatening terminology
- How the concepts are presented
- Facilitation training, awareness building, working with HR
- Single-loop learning (KS stronger, learning from what we do, and doing it better), double-loop learning (questioning what we do and how we do it), and triple-loop learning (learning about learning and learning approaches)

What questions remain about KS & ILAC concepts?

- The terminology is still confusing.
- How are these projects going to deal with the loss of organizational memory? (perhaps through COPs, storytelling, learning reviews, and mentoring)
- Why were certain KS approaches presented and not others? Was this a comprehensive list or a sample only?
- “Institutional learning” may be a more appealing term than “KS.”
- The boundaries between KS & ILAC activities are still not clear. The conceptual frameworks for KS and ILAC need to be more clearly articulated. Is ILAC a subset of KS or vice versa? ILAC seems to be concerned mainly with the “meta-level” while KS is concerned more with the “micro-level.” ILAC also seems to be concerned more generally with innovation and change.

- How can we really get ILAC and KS going, particularly in the present context of aggressive competition for funding?
- How to link KS and ILAC to practical problems and needs of the CGIAR system? How can we make KS and ILAC and their benefits tangible to CGIAR and its partners? We need concrete examples.
- How to deal with the massive communication tasks required by these 2 projects?

Final comments

- All three groups identified *competition for resources* as a core issue. What can we do about this?
- *HR policies* can provide incentives and rewards for change. But they may also be inhibiting rather than liberating. In fact, they usually inhibit more than inspire. How to deal with this paradox”?
- What is the relevance of KS and ILAC for *poverty alleviation*, and what is their relevance to the poor? The paramount CGIAR goal of sustainable poverty reduction needs to be kept in mind.

4. Experiences with KS and ILAC

Presentation: Reflections on Organizational Change Program - Linda Spink

Note: Presentation handout is available on the KS website.

Questions and discussion

- We started 4 years ago to introduce KS into the CGIAR and have it seen as important for the CGIAR’s work. But we have seen very limited success so far. Why is this so, and what, in your mind have been the main achievements to date? *Linda*: Creation of CIO post is perhaps the most tangible result of the OCP. Real success with KS requires a cultural change that applies to all levels of the CG.
- We need to make a more convincing “business case” for KS to Center management and HR people. To do this, we need to also look for successful cases outside of the OCP.
- Individual behavior change is necessary:
 - People sharing their information and knowledge, not hoarding it
 - People being more open to dialogue and collaborative work
 - Greater willingness to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from the experience
 - More transparent reflective processes
- KM and KS are “elastic terms” with multiple meanings. We need to develop definitions that are accepted within the CGAIR.
- People learn mainly from their failures. What were some failures of the OCP that we can learn from? *Linda*: In 1 center a particular “champion” organized a “knowledge audit” to document what knowledge existed and what gaps existed in a particular program. However, there was a lack of critical mass in support of KS among staff members and a lack of understanding and commitment to KS at the top-management level. Funding and staff time were also missing for implementing results of the audit. The effort was only driven only by the champion, who became frustrated and abandoned the exercise. The OCP wasn’t always successful in

communicating with the centers, through formal lines of communication with DGs, DDGs, etc. The line of communication was too narrow. When communication broke down, support wasn't there. The communication strategy and linkages weren't well conceived.

- Why didn't the Ford Foundation continue supporting the OCP? *Linda*: The foundation's interest shifting away from the CGIAR. There was also a desire to move the OCP inside the CGIAR. However, insufficient time was dedicated to engaging donors.
- How should we manage donor relations to secure more continuous support and funding? *Linda*: Show potential and value for the money invested.

Sharing participants' experiences with KS and ILAC

In this session, participants presented one or more personal experience with KS or ILAC. They summarized their experiences on posters, using the following outline:

- Objectives
- Approach employed
- Main stakeholders
- Successes and failures
- Lessons learned

The posters were arranged on poster boards to create a "knowledge fair." Each person presented her / his poster to the group as a whole. Afterward, participants met in small groups to identify: (a) approaches employed, (b) success factors, (c) reasons for failure, and (d) lessons learned. The results of the group discussions are summarized below.

Approaches that were employed in the cases:

- Participatory collaborative processes were common
- Facilitation was a key feature of many
- Strategy development often featured
- All had high-level buy-in
- Collaborative platforms, such as COP, were common
- Learning approaches were often used
- Several cases involved utilization-focused evaluation approaches
- It was often difficult to state if the case involved KS or ILAC. There was is no clear KS – ILAC split. More often elements of both KS and ILAC could be identified.
- A concern for organizational change was common
- Several cases focused on communities of practice

Success factors identified:

- A committed champion
- Well facilitated groups process
- Adequate financial and human resources
- Engagement of users (participation)
- Building ownership and trust
- Leadership support
- Investment of effort (time, sweat and tears)
- Passion
- Open, transparent, accessible, inclusive approach

- Listening to clients to meet real needs
- Working with trusted people
- Building on momentum
- Having sufficient time to achieve results and institutionalize practices
- Visibility

Reasons for failure include the following:

- Absence of above-listed success factors
- Lack of institutional commitment
- Unwillingness to share or contribute
- Loss of motivation over time
- Lack of vision and strategy - not seeing the big picture
- Competition, especially for funding
- The intervention required too much time or was too costly
- Changes in leadership or champions
- Pilots were isolated and eventually sidelined
- Lack of focus or lack of obvious benefits to members of COP
- Inadequate ways to communicate failures

Lessons drawn from the exercise:

- Take user views seriously (respond to demand)
- Resolve conflicts; don't let them fester
- Ensure good facilitation (for both face-to-face and online collaboration)
- Keep the intervention simple and be sure it's useful for the main stakeholders
- Improve planning: More time and resources are usually needed than anticipated.
- Look for ways to save time, which is a very scarce resource for most people.
- Draw lessons from your successes and failures
- Pay close attention to process issues, since the success of KS and ILAC depends heavily on implementing adequate processes.
- Face-to-face interactions are essential for KS and learning
- Frustration can be a source of energy. So don't avoid frustrating situations, but capitalize on them.
- Get the right people involved and get them motivated
- Be sure to get needed management support
- Use task forces and committees as a means of being more inclusive
- There is no template for success. Learn to improvise.

5. Work Planning

***Presentation: Current KS and ILAC work-plans and resources
- Doug Horton***

Note: Presentation handout is available on the KS website.

Reactions of David Balson

- Clarification: This is a 3 year \$1million project. Phase 1 was originally 12 months and has been extended to 18 months. The expectation is that another \$400-600,000 will be raised for the remaining 18 months. The objectives must remain the same, but let's improve the work plan and activities.
- Under “guiding principles,” we should include national and local partners “where appropriate.”
- What do we do with the rest of the system? There has to be some focus and concentration on specific activities in specific centers and programs. But the whole system has to be kept in mind as well, as this project seeks to improve KS at the level of the CGIAR as a whole.
- The proposed March 2005 workshop might not be the best venue for raising awareness.
- The project must address the issue of how to change culture. How this is to be done is not very clear in the work plan.
- There must be a link between the dissemination strategy of the KS project and the broader ICT-KM program.
- Is full-scale “strategy development” the best use of this project’s scarce resources? Wouldn’t it be better to develop generic guidelines for developing KM strategies that could be used system-wide?
- The “pilot activities” are great, as is the use of story telling and providing access to tools and approaches.
- A joint website and joint publications with the ILAC project are attractive, but are they feasible?
- Other suggestions:
 - Identify and nurture KS champions and change agents within the CG.
 - Link objective 3 of the KS project (providing access to KS tools and approaches) to the “Content for Development” thrust of the ICT-KM program.
 - Help people build KS into their own research and development projects

Group work and discussion

After a brief discussion in plenary, participants formed 3 groups to discuss the work plan and produced the following lists of points.

Group 1 proposed a new structure and strategy for the KS and ILAC projects:

- Consolidate the KS and ILAC projects under the umbrella of the ICT-KM program to exploit synergies, and present a united face externally
- Use existing outlets rather than create our own newsletters, websites, etc
- Develop a repository of generic concepts, principles, and skills, including those appropriate for researchers to ensure KM/KS in their projects
- Make presentations on the broader theme of institutional change, not KM separate from ILAC and as part of the ICT/KM program – especially at AGM, and other opportunities with CG leaders and members
- Prepare generic guidelines for developing KM/S strategies
- Provide technical assistance & coaching to existing CG programs to help them incorporate ILAC/KM approaches (including proposals)
- Identify, train, support and nurture KM/S champions (resource persons, change agents, these are needed to do other parts of project)
- Work with HR managers to advance policy changes

Group 2 asked what happened to the “M” in KM&S? (Where is the “knowledge creation / management component that generates knowledge that can be shared?)

- Knowledge management strategies: One should approach their development in a way that embodies KS & ILAC principles. Build on the experience and learning of CIFOR, ICARDA, IWMI & others. Where a center wants to develop a KM/S strategy, do so collaboratively and with the larger CGIAR system in mind. Identify and document principles and guidelines. Develop a “quick and dirty” “participatory-action-research” approach to strategy development embodied in guidelines that can be shared with others.
- Capacity building: Build training and support into ongoing or KM/S pilot activities (just-in-time learning)
- COP: What are they really? And what makes them work?
- “Doug's frequent flyer program:” Organize a KS – ILAC road show. Do a traveling-salesperson marketing campaign for KS ILAC with all IARCs
- Develop a portfolio of stories or examples that illustrate the linkages between KS & ILAC, and deliver a strong message about the utility of KS/ILAC approaches to project implementation and organization change
- Explain what KS and ILAC are and how they are useful
- Develop methods for quick-and-dirty needs assessment
- Try things out and compile lessons across centers, Challenge Programs, System-Wide Programs, etc
- Connect KS and ILAC to other initiatives
- The KS and ILAC initiatives need a coherent strategy for communications, building awareness and support, networking, and scaling up and out

Group 3 emphasized that it is crucial to make the CGIAR more responsive to the poor. This requires cultural change and behavioral changes, which, in turn require things like facilitation training, contact with the poor, learning from the poor.

- It will be important to influence HR policies (for example, rewards, incentives, recruitment policies and staff development)
- Develop an innovative communication strategy for different stakeholders (for example, DGs, HR officers, scientists, etc)
- Support project design to ensure continuous learning (for example, via use of KS tools, facilitation, and farmer involvement)
- Maximize opportunities for collaboration between the ILAC and KS projects
- Find opportunities for scientists to save time, as this is the most critical resource in the CGIAR.

In plenary discussion, the project teams were encouraged to identify links and commonalities between KS and ILAC projects, and explore opportunities to have the two projects linked in a more concrete way (up to Doug, Nathan, Jamie, and David). It was also agreed to prepare a common presentation on KS and ILAC – a coherent statement of what the two projects are trying to achieve and how.

Proposals for KS pilot activities

The ILAC project is currently supporting pilot activities in 3 CGIAR centers. During this session, the participants involved in the ILAC project reviewed the work plan for this project and generated ideas for possible future activities. Participants interested in fostering KS in their centers or programs prepared proposals for KS pilot activities.

Prior to the development of proposals, selection criteria for KS pilot activities were discussed and the following list of points was developed, to complement the one in the KS project proposal.

- Feasibility of the project
- Potential impact and benefit for the CGIAR and its partners
- Clarity in objectives
- Potential contribution to the objectives of the KS project and the ICT-KM program (clear link to desired changes in behavior or organizational culture)
- Presence of a champion who can lead the project
- Demand driven
- Actively encourages experimentation and innovation

Most of the third day of the workshop was used by individuals or groups to develop proposals for their center or program.

6. Next Steps

The final session of the workshop was used to identify some actions to be implemented after the workshop.

Development of pilot activities

It was decided that participants would revise and flesh out their proposals and submit final versions by July 19. Proposals should follow a standard outline with the following points:

1. Opportunities/Justification
2. Objectives
3. Activities
4. Expected Outcomes & Benefits for Stakeholders
5. Key Players
6. Resources required & Cost sharing opportunities (what do you need from this project?)
7. Timeline
8. Potential Risks
9. An indication of consultation and support from management

Other points agreed on include the following:

- Given the very limited amount of resources available, we should first consider only proposals developed by participants at this workshop. It would be difficult for centers not present at the meeting to prepare proposals in keeping with the spirit of the meeting. If the KS project secures additional resources, it should invite others to develop proposals for supporting KS in their centers or programs.
- The ILAC project hopes to establish an “Innovation Fund” in the future, and when this is done they would put out a call for proposals. The KS project could consider a similar mechanism, if it acquires funding for future activities.
- The main support KS pilot projects could obtain from the KS project is technical support. Only a very small amount of funds for operational expenses is available.

Possible common activities of the KS and ILAC projects

Some possible common activities were identified for the KS and ILAC projects:

- Common publication / dissemination activities, such as:
 - A workshop report
 - news items or articles on CGIAR activities related to KS and ILAC

- A “Final synthesis and review workshop” in 2005
- Joint publication series, such as “KS & ILAC Briefs”
- Joint website
- Communication/promotion of KS and ILAC across the CGIAR
- Electronic distribution list to support ongoing interactions among KS & ILAC workshop participants
- Joint training workshops on key topics, such as facilitation, KS and ILAC methods, approaches, and tools
- Work with project developers to include KS and ILAC approaches in activities
- Prepare generic guidelines for developing strategies for KS and ILAC
- Joint work on HR policies
- Collaborate in specific pilots (integrated approach)
- Senior management awareness raising (through workshops, face-to-face meetings, phone conversations)
- Formulate a common statement on KS and ILAC, highlighting possible links, synergies, and benefits (Doug, Jamie, Nathan)

Next Steps for the KS and ILAC project teams:

1. Prepare a workshop summary
2. Revise KS project work plan (Doug & KS project team) to include: Website development ; KS Toolkit; and Support for KS pilot activities (Mark and Doug to propose to project team and then negotiate with proponents)
3. Identify joint KS and ILAC activities, beyond the pilots (Nathan, Jamie and Doug)

After Action Review

What did we set out to accomplish?	What actually happened?	Why was there a difference?	What worked well & what to do differently?
Share past experiences and current practices with KS and ILAC in the CGIAR and elsewhere	<p>People shared their KS & ILAC experiences with the group</p> <p>Small group and individual work on posters and proposals was very productive and enjoyable.</p> <p>The “knowledge fair” produced interesting results and this is a valuable new tool for KS</p>	<p>New approach learned (stories)</p> <p>Learning good facilitation techniques</p>	<p>Include real-time teleconferences for brainstorming</p>
Reach a shared understanding of key KS and ILAC concepts	<p>We worked toward common understandings at different levels, with partial success. Agreed that the 2 sets of ideas known as “KS” and “ILAC” have much in common, but have some important differences as well. Combining them could be powerful. Work is still needed to develop a coherent presentation of the 2.</p>	<p>Differences in KS/ILAC conceptual agreements (different histories, difference in paradigms, & environments)</p>	<p>Skill-building sessions should have been included in the workshop to broaden the group’s understanding of KS & ILAC</p>
Identify priorities and challenges for improving KS and ILAC in the CGIAR (i.e. in challenge programs, CGIAR centers, and projects within the ICT-KM program)	<p>Recognized that there is already considerable experience with KM/S & ILAC in the CGIAR</p>	<p>Good conflict management allowed us to come up with way forward</p>	

<p>Identify high potential areas (opportunities) and activities for the KS and ILAC projects to collaborate with CG centers, challenge programs, and projects within the ICT-KM program, in order to demonstrate several quick successes.</p>	<p>Recognized several conditions necessary for KM/S & ILAC to be successful</p>		<p>We should have used more preparation time before the workshop (to generate proposal ideas with centers/groups)</p> <p>Smaller separate meetings of the KS & ILAC teams would have been useful for them to discuss specific issues</p>
<p>Build relationships and identify next steps (preliminary work-plans for both projects) that will continue the momentum begun during the workshop.</p>	<p>Progress was made in building relationships</p>	<p>Different personality types contributed to the discussions.</p>	<p>It was good to bring the KS & ILAC teams together. It enriched interactions.</p>
	<p>The agenda evolved over the course of the workshop, reflecting learning and the flexibility of the organizers / facilitators.</p>		<p>9.75 on the agenda & accomplishments – overall the group was very satisfied with the workshop</p>

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