

Proposal submission

Improving CGIAR Effectiveness through Knowledge Sharing (KS)

A project of the ICT-KM Program of the CGIAR

CONTACT INFORMATION – PROJECT LEADER

Last Name	Clemett
First Name	Alexandra
Email address	a.clemett@cgiar.org
Organization Name	International Water Management Institute (IWMI)
Telephone/ Fax/ Skype	0094 11 278 7404 / Fax 0094 11 278 6854

Project Details

Title of Proposal	Learning Alliances for Wastewater Agriculture and Sanitation for Poverty Alleviation (LA WASPA)
Area (please include one area: KS in Research; Institutional KS; Virtual Team)	KS in Research
List of staff/partners and expertise working on the project	Alexandra Clemett – livelihoods, participatory planning and wastewater Samyuktha Varma – communications and institutional analysis Priyantha Jayakody – participatory assessment in agriculture Priyanka Dissanayake – environmental management and water quality COSI Foundation - NGO Forum – Capacity building in sanitation NGO Forum – Capacity building in sanitation Municipal Council IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre – Learning Alliances, participatory techniques, water, sanitation and hygiene
Project Duration using Grant Funds (in month)	12 months
Country(ies) of Implementation / Languages used or needed for virtual team projects	Sri Lanka and Bangladesh English

PROBLEM DEFINITION:

The overall problem is one of poor integration of planning in the sectors of water supply, sanitation, wastewater management and urban agriculture. It may not be immediately apparent why such sectors should be planned together but the reality in many cities is that urban and peri-urban farmers are utilizing wastewater, often storm-water drainage mixed with household and sanitary waste, to irrigate crops. This of course has both positive and negative livelihoods implications, especially on health, and requires good management to reduce risks and maximize benefits. In the two cities in which this project will be undertaken, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka and Rajshahi, Bangladesh, over 300 farmers are involved in this practice. Furthermore, hundreds of residents are affected by poor sanitation and environmental conditions in the cities.

The root causes of this problem are: sectoral (rather than holistic) planning; inadequate communication between government officials; no involvement of community members, especially poorer members of society; lack of knowledge about other sectors and alternative technologies; and in some cases ignorance that wastewater irrigation is even taking place. Only by overcoming the problems of lack of awareness and communication can the issues of wastewater agriculture be addressed.

OBJECTIVES:

The objective of this project is therefore to **test and evaluate a methodology to holistically plan and manage sanitation and wastewater in the city, for end-use in agriculture**. This can only be done through collaboration between all the major stakeholders: government officials, community members (city residents and farmers), NGOs and researchers.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:

The Learning Alliances for Wastewater Agriculture and Sanitation for Poverty Alleviation (LA WASPA) project would be an addition to an existing EU funded WASPA Asia project and would build on the existing knowledge sharing methodology, of Learning Alliances (LAs). The ICT-KM project proposed here would augment that project by monitoring and evaluating the knowledge sharing approach being utilized, through “process monitoring”. It would result in a better understanding of the approach and lessons for future LAs.

The LA approach builds on the vast body of work on participatory approaches, and was developed as a way to scale-up innovative ideas in the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. The premise is that alliances of stakeholders at different levels need to come together and share information in order for innovative ideas or practices to be mainstreamed. The stakeholders include: members of institutions that make regulations; the government departments that plan and finance projects; the communities that are affected by, or are at the centre of development initiatives; researchers; and NGOs. The levels at which “Learning Platforms” are built are the local, intermediate and national levels. These platforms then interact to share knowledge and up-scale or out-scale.

The methodology has taken off in the past couple of years, championed by IRC, one of the project partners (see Moriarty 2005; Penning de Vries 2007) but as far as methodologies go it is still relatively young and further evaluation is needed of its potential. The evaluation of the approach as it is applied in WASPA Asia is a unique opportunity to draw important lessons on how disparate institutions that govern city planning, sanitation, health, agriculture and water supply can interact to address the issues raised by wastewater irrigation. Government institutions in developing countries often do not have the resources to meet, plan and have dialogue on issues that require collaboration on problems that are multi-dimensional but LAs are a low-cost and low-maintenance means of doing this.

The **methodology of process monitoring**, which is central to the LA WASPA project, starts by defining a monitoring framework, which needs to include change processes to be monitored, indicators and data collection methods. After the process documentation itself, analyses and reporting will take place. The steps distinguished in this are:

Step	Explanation and Examples
1. Select change processes that need to be monitored. These refer to changes in how stakeholders perform their roles and how they relate to each other. They should be decided with LA members.	Examples: understanding of WASPA concept among stakeholders; attitude towards WASPA concept; changes in practices of stakeholders; development of relations between LA members; interest or motivation to be part of learning platforms
2. Define indicators to monitor change processes – guiding questions and indicators.	Example: do stakeholders appear interested in LAs? Indicator: regularity of meetings, attendance levels, contribution and follow-up.
3. Define sources of information and data storage – change processes can be best captured through observations.	These need to be captured in a structured way: records of meetings and workshops; semi-structured interviews; questionnaires; joint site visits; informal discussions.
4. Finalize definition of process	Combine steps 1-3 into a clear framework (table etc.)

monitoring framework.	
5. Analyze and report - weekly analysis and detailed analysis at logical points in the project.	The plan for analysis and reporting will include: what, how, when, who and format.

The WASPA Asia project is a partnership of several organizations, all of which will be involved in the ICT-KM project and with the LA members will further define the process documentation methodology (note: a more detailed methodology already exists but is too long to reproduce here). The team includes both NARES and INGOs, with adequate capacity to undertake this project. Beneficiary groups will include all LA members as specified in other sections of the proposal, as well as the wider research and policy making communities.

The project will be conducted over a 12 month period with a budget of \$43500 of which \$30000 is requested from the ICT-KM fund. The remaining budget will come from the WASPA Asia project. The budget breakdown is provided separately and the timeframe for activities is given below, including the activities to continue beyond the 12 months of the ICT-KM project.

Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12+
LA development													
Participatory Action Plans (PAPs) developed by LA													
Monitoring of LA process													
Reporting on LA process and effectiveness													
Implementation of PAPs and continued monitoring of LA process and effectiveness													

EXPECTED RESULTS:

The outputs and outcomes of the project, as expressed in the logical framework, essentially fall into two categories:

1. Improving communication and knowledge sharing to facilitate better planning; and
2. Monitoring and evaluating the process so that improvements can be made to LAs, LA formation and LA management.

Logical Framework

Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts	OVI
1. Learning Alliances (LAs) developed	Communication and dialogue between stakeholders improved	Sharing of information and better city planning, leading to improved living conditions for residents	Minutes of meetings shared and made available on the project website
2. Participatory action plan developed by LA	Shared understanding of issues (through assessments, training and discussions) resulting in consensus on ways to address them	Better wastewater management and planning, leading to improved livelihoods	PAP shared and signed by LA members
3. LA process documented and evaluated	Stakeholders involved in evaluation of LA process and LA effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership of LA and PAP. • Uptake of methodology 	Report on LA process and recommendations

These outputs and outcomes will benefit a whole range of stakeholders, including government officials, community members, NGOs and researchers, who will all be part of the LAs, which will be formed in **Output 1**. The community members in particular will benefit from **Output 2** (the development of action plans), as they will ultimately have improved sanitation and agricultural

conditions; but so too will NGOs and researchers as they will be more aware of the needs of beneficiaries and can plan future projects based on the knowledge gained through this process. **Output 3** initially appears to be useful for researchers because it will provide guidance on how to improve the LA process in future projects; however it is equally useful for government officials who can replicate the process in order to plan for other sectors (not just WatSan and agriculture) and who can, through the national platform of the LA, demonstrate how LAs can be beneficial to other cities and government departments. It can also be beneficial to community members who will have increased awareness of how they can interact with government departments, which they currently see as being inaccessible.

The purpose of the overall WASPA project funded to December 2008 is to improve the livelihoods of wastewater farmers, which is intended to be achieved through the implementation of PAPs, which will be funded partially by the WASPA project and partially by funds raised by the LA with the help of the project team. Better ownership by LA members is expected through this route. The purpose of the ICT-KM project will be to monitor and evaluate the methodology used to mobilize stakeholders and to bring them to a platform through which they can develop these PAPs.

In terms of lessons learnt from the ICT-KM project, these will be developed with the LAs and will therefore naturally become part of the LA process in the future. In addition the project team will disseminate the findings of the ICT-KM project via the WASPA project website, the websites of the project partners, and via written media in English, Sinhala and Bangla. The key factor however is that this knowledge is not retained by the project team but is also owned by the LA members.

INNOVATION:

The innovation in this project is two-fold. The first is the use of LAs to bridge the gap between the sanitation, urban planning and agriculture sectors. These sectors are rarely, if ever planned holistically and tools such as LAs are practically non-existent in government arenas. This project offers an opportunity not only to implement such a tool and to facilitate knowledge sharing between sectors, but also to monitor and assess its effectiveness in a structured way, through process documentation. This offers the second innovation, which is to utilize the participatory process documentation tool. Few projects go beyond the rhetoric and actively engage beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation, this project does. Added to this is the fact that lessons learnt will not be limited to a single country, but also enable a direct comparison of how LAs function in different cultural contexts.

REPLICABILITY:

The project will develop a methodology for monitoring the LA development process, its functioning and how it deals with developing and implementing PAPs. This methodology will be made publicly available via the project website, as well as partner websites. In addition to this, national LA platforms will be established, which will facilitate scaling-out of the work, as government officials at the national level and in other districts, other researchers and NGOs will become aware of the project findings. National platforms will include international organizations which will further enhance prospects for replicability. Similarly both the LA methodology and the evaluation methodology can be used by other CGIAR centers.

What is critical about this project is that it is monitoring the LA process and their effectiveness so that the process of LA development and their operations can be more readily replicated else where and for other sectors. What has been seen so far is that LA formation is often erratic and does not follow a simple pattern; this project will monitor that and provide guidance on how to structure the LA process to reduce the time required for LA development and to ensure positive results in other projects.