

**Report on the Face-to-Face Phase 2 of the**  
**Knowledge Sharing Workshop**  
*Collaboration for excellence:  
opportunities for discovering, understanding, and applying  
innovative knowledge-sharing approaches for impact*

**6 to 8 May**

**Executive Summary, Workshop Results and Evaluation**

The KS Workshop Team: Simone Staiger-Rivas, Leader, Institutional Knowledge Sharing Project, Nancy White Full Circles Associates, and Petr Kosina, KS and Capacity Building Coordinator (CIMMYT), and all the KS Workshop Participants:



**Row in the back (left to right):** Nadia Manning (IWMI/ICT-KM), Peter Shelton (IFPRI), Daniel Mwesige (ASARECA), Nancy White (FullCircle), Jean Hanson (ILRI), Grace Ndungu (ILRI), Petr Kosina (CIMMYT)

**Middle Row:** Yuan Octafian (CIFOR), Alexandra Jorge (ILRI), Nicole Demers (Bioversity), Vanessa Meadu (ICRAF), Selam Alemayehu (ILRI), Maria Grazia Bovo (FAO), Florencia Tateossian (CGIAR Secretariat), Janice Proud (ILRI), Dady Damby (FARA)

**Front:** Simone Staiger (ICT-KM), Sandra Velarde (Amazon Initiative), Dina Satrio (CIFOR), Gauri Salokhe (FAO), Davy Simumba (ZARI).

*“I had a fantastic time in Addis and found the workshop to be extremely invigorating. I feel like I can approach my work with new enthusiasm, and also new skills!”* Quote from a participant

## Executive Summary

The ICT-KM Program and its Institutional Knowledge Sharing Project developed a knowledge-sharing (KS) workshop as part of its activity plan. The workshop, divided into three phases, aims to scale up use of knowledge-sharing practices, tools, and principles by CGIAR staff and their research partners. This document reports on Phase 2, which was held face-to-face in Addis Ababa, at ILRI campus in Ethiopia.

The objectives of the 3-day workshop were to support participants in the formulation and planning of KS projects or use of KS components in existing projects. While the online Phase 1 was designed as a discovery of the opportunities and challenges around KS and its tools and methods, the second phase aimed at including the most useful approaches and applications in the work and projects of each participant and their centers or organizations.

The workshop had 18 participants from CGIAR centers, FAO, and FARA. It was facilitated by Nancy White (Full Circle Associates), Petr Kosina- KS and Capacity Building Coordinator (CIMMYT), and Simone Staiger-Rivas, Leader of the Institutional Knowledge Sharing Project.

Day 1 of the workshop offered an opportunity to reflect upon and link the online phase (Phase 1) to the face-to-face meeting (Phase 2). Then, the participants worked in pairs on further developing their project plans and designing project posters which were then shared in plenary. Based on project commonalities, groups were formed to reflect on the Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Strengths (SWOT) of each of the projects. Day 2 focused on a session on tools and on project group work. On Day 3 project knowledge gaps were identified and discussed.

Each day also offered an opportunity for exploring themes that cut across all projects and that participants had identified as relevant in Phase I of the workshop and reiterated throughout the face-to-face meeting: (1) How to use KS for / during project planning; (2) What are the challenges for KS within and among our organizations; (3) How do we get buy-in and commitment to KS? (4) How do we engage our target groups? The workshop dynamics were diverse, offering opportunities for participants to discover different meeting techniques and facilitation methods, including: Peer Assist, World Café, Fishbowl, card sorting, pair work, group work, etc.

Participants evaluated the workshop as follows: When asked what was useful for them from the three days, participants particularly highlighted the value of coming together- ‘Learning with peers, meeting and working with people who have similar problems, and networking’. Participants particularly appreciated learning about methods and tools. When asked about things that they still want to learn more about, they mentioned: tools, tools, and more tools! Particular tools that people indicated they would like to learn more about were RSS feeds, facilitation techniques, approaches related to monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment of KS approaches. When asked “What would you do differently in the workshop based on your experience of the last three days?” participants gave the principle suggestion to have more time to explore tools, and if possible to do so in a hands-on manner (which requires connectivity)..

The workshop team considered the following aspects in its evaluation: Overall a great energy and satisfaction was felt among participants. The group size was very good and allowed dynamic interactions. The mixture of participant’s background (Communication, IT, Science) was excellent. The focus on project planning was considered as most useful, and allowed an iterative learning approach between KS tools and methods, participant’s interactions and project planning. When working with new methods, the inclusion of a debrief time to analyze the method and consider its variants worked well and would be recommended to others. The venue was great,

logistics went very smoothly, but a better internet connection would definitely be a plus in future events.

Looking forward to Phase 3 of the workshop, the team decided together with the workshop participants to continue to use the Moodle platform and to organize discussions and Peer Assists around the individual learning logs, and monthly conference calls. We will use the Most Significant Change Methodology to monitor and evaluate the workshop throughout.

### List of Participants

From the 18 participants, 12 participants came from the CGIAR, 3 from FARA-RAILS, 2 from FAO, and 3 from a CGIAR partner organization.

The following table shows the list of participants, their names and organizations they belong to, and their e-mail addresses.

<b>Name</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Peter Shelton (IFPRI)	p.shelton@cgiar.org
Vanessa Meadu (ICRAF)	v.meadu@cgiar.org
Nicole Demers (Bioversity)	nicole.demers@cgiar.org
Maria Alexandra Jorge (Bioversity/ILRI)	a.jorge@cgiar.org
Grace Ndungu (ILRI)	g.ndungu@cgiar.org
Janice Proud (ILRI)	j.proud@cgiar.org
Jean Hanson (ILRI)	j.hanson@cgiar.org
Selam Alemayehu (ILRI)	s.alemayehu@cgiar.org
Florencia Tateossian (CG Secretariat)	f.tateossian@cgiar.org
Dina Satrio (CIFOR)	d.satrio@cgiar.org
Yuan Octavian (CIFOR)	y.octavian@cgiar.org
Sandra Velarde (Amazon Initiative)	s.velarde@cgiar.org
Maria Grazia Bovo (FAO)	MariaGrazia.Bovo@fao.org
Gauri Salokhe (FAO)	Gauri.Salokhe@fao.org
Dady Demby (FARA/RAILS)	ddemby@fara-africa.org
Davy Simumba (FARA/RAILS)	simumba08085@alumni.itc.nl
Daniel Mwesige (ASARECA)	
Nadia Manning (IWMI / ICT-KM)	n.manning@cgiar.org
<b>Facilitators</b>	
Petr Kosina (CIMMYT)	p.kosina@cgiar.org
Nancy White (Full Circle Associates)	nancyw@fullcirc.com
Simone Staiger-Rivas (CIAT)	s.staiger@cgiar.org

## **The Projects**

These are the projects that participants have been working on and where phase 3 can provide opportunities for joint learning:

- Selam Alemayehu (ILRI): Enhancing research through a collaborative approach. Implement a tool that strengthens collaborative research and work.
- Vanessa Meadu (ICRAF): A Web site to support the PRESA Community of Practice.
- Nadia Manning (IWMI/ICT-KM): Knowledge sharing in research
- Sandra Velarde: Building knowledge together in the Amazon
- Alexandra Jorge (ILRI): Building best practices on gene bank management
- Yuan Octafian (CIFOR): Forestry 2.0
- Jean (ILRI): Developing best practices for forage germplasm management
- Grace Ndungu (ILRI): Global Challenge Dialogue
- Florencia Tateossian (CGIAR Secretariat) : Build a supportive tool for collaborative communication across CGIAR communications and resource mobilization people.
- Dina Satrio (CIFOR): Promote the usage of our Intranet
- Janice Proud (ILRI): KS within the Napier Grass disease resistance project team
- Gauri Salokhe (FAO): The FAO Knowledge Fair
- Maria Grazia Bovo (FAO): A new FAO permanent representatives Web site
- Nicole Demers (Bioversity): A new SGRP Platform on CGIAR genetic resources
- Pete Shelton (IFPRI): IFPRI Intranet 2.0
- Davy Simumba (ZARI): KS within the Zambian research networks
- Dady Damby (FARA/RAILS): Building KS capacity of RAILS learning teams
- Daniel Mwesige (ASARECA): Development of a project management and information system



# The Workshop Day by Day

## The 3-Day Agenda

### Day 1

- Welcome
- Presentation of the Agenda
- Tagging Ice-breaker
- From the Online phase to our face-to-face meeting: A world Café to find common ground.

Break

- Work on our projects in pairs and develop project posters. Mini-poster presentations

Lunch

- Discover commonalities in our projects and form working groups

Break

- SWOT Analysis within our working groups
- Closure in plenary

### Day 2

- What Are the Challenges for KS Within and Among our Organizations? A World Café
- Debriefing of the Method

Break

- Tools session: Wikis, RSS, Blogs Social Bookmarking

Lunch

- Working in groups on our projects and identifying KS Knowledge Gaps

### Day 3

- Peer assist on How Do We Get Buy-in and Commitment to KS? How Do We Engage our Target Groups?

Break

- Open Space on our identified knowledge gaps

Lunch

- Project planning

Break

- Update, next steps, review and evaluation

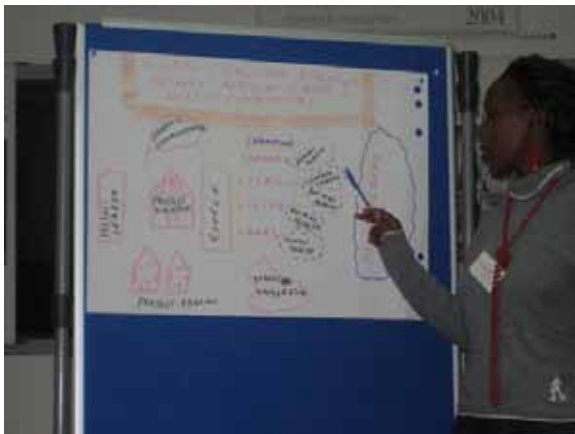


## About World Cafes

The World Cafe is a whole group interaction method focused on conversations. A Cafe Conversation is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes. The environment is set up like a cafe, with paper-covered tables. People sit four to a table and hold a series of conversational rounds lasting from 20 to 45 minutes about one or more questions which are personally meaningful to them. At the end of each round, one person remains at each table as the host, while the other three travel to different tables. Table hosts welcome newcomers to their tables and share the essence of that table's conversation so far. The newcomers relate any conversational threads they are carrying — and then the conversation continues, deepening as the round progresses.

More on our KS Toolkit:

<http://kstoolkit.wikis.cgiar.org/The+World+Cafe>



## Formulating Our Projects

Phase 2 of the KS Workshop is dedicated to the planning of KS activities that we will incorporate into our work and existing projects. To get the planning process started participants paired up, worked on their ideas and prepared posters that were then shared in plenary in 2-minute presentations.

Here is a Grace presenting her project. It is about constructing a dialogue between climate change and health communities.

The dialogue will have an on-line and a

face-to-face component, and aims to involve more than 200 participants from CG Centers and stakeholder organizations. Grace wonders for example how to assure to get buy-in from participants, and what platform to use for the on-line phase.

## Forming Groups of Related Projects

In the afternoon we spend some time sorting out the project posters to come up with a number of groups that could work together on their projects throughout the workshop. This was not an easy task: Should we group the projects by tools, by audiences, by themes?

We ended up with 5 groups who's participants defined their area of common interest as follows:

1. Best KS practices. KS about KS
2. Intranets
3. Web sites for interactive information sharing
4. Get buy-in and make most out of communities
5. Foster communities based on regional priorities



Those groups then looked deeper into their commonalities through conversations and individual reflections on their project's strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). On the picture we see Vanessa, Nicole, Jean and Yuan using the project posters for their conversation:

### **SWOT of Workshop Projects: You Project Strength is my Weakness, my Project Opportunity is your Threat.**

On day one of our workshop we asked participants to think in groups about their project's internal strengths, weaknesses, and external opportunities and threats. The findings were written on cards and then grouped and analyzed. As part of the post workshop documentation process we created tag clouds ([www.tagcrowd.com](http://www.tagcrowd.com)) and discover the following patterns:

- Key internal strengths in the projects are: good team work, strong communication, experience and expertise, support (from management), and good level of practice in project teams. Many of our participants have the content ready, and funding assured.
- Participants identified internal weaknesses of their projects: Lack of collaboration among stakeholders and teams, lack of content, connectivity, geographic dispersion of teams.
- Among the opportunities that are external to the projects were mentioned: People who support, collaborate, fund, champion, and adopt your projects. Sharing of information and content creation is growing, willingness to learn together.
- Looking at the threats, connectivity is clearly the primary issue for many of our projects. This relates to possible weak connectivity of our target groups as well as low connectivity in some of our organizations. Then we see a group of threats related to buy-in, support and commitment of teams and stakeholders, and finally issues related to weaknesses in skills, understanding, lack of training of our end use

When we have a look at the below tag cloud that includes all notes on the SWOT session we see how our issues can be read as strength, and opportunities, as well as weaknesses and threats. It also gives a quite good overview of the success factors of any KS project.



- About creating a KS culture: We share more outside our organizations than inside (result of a FAO study)

### **Learning More about Fishbowls**

Fishbowls involve a small group of people -usually 5 to 8- seated in an inner circle, having a conversation in full view of a larger group of listeners sitting in a larger circle



around the discussants. Fishbowl processes provide a creative way to include the “public” in a small group discussion. Fishbowls are useful for ventilating “hot topics” or sharing ideas or information from a variety of perspectives. Although largely self-organizing once the discussion gets underway, the fishbowl process usually has a facilitator or moderator. The fishbowl is almost always part of a larger process of dialogue and deliberation.

How did we apply it? For a general discussion to tackle an issue that participants of phase 1 identified as important (What are our challenges for KS within and among our organizations). We used a variation called the Samoan Circle, that offers others a chance to speak only if they join the ‘inner circle’. After the discussion, we did a debrief on the method. Participants highlighted that it is not easy to get started. It seemed to many as being a good dynamic for brainstorming discussions, but not really for reaching conclusion. Participants thought that it could be used as a starting point for a meeting and in combination with other dynamics. We made the point that Fishbowl is a method that opens up (divergent) and does not lead to conclusion (convergent).

During coffee break Davy Simumba from the Zambian Agricultural Research Institute mentioned how much he liked the fishbowl: “ It helps to bring out issues and everybody was trying to jump in. I have to try to bring this into my organizations, within my group.” See the KS toolkit on Fishbowl: <http://kstoolkit.wikis.cgiar.org/Fish+Bow1>

### **Tools, Tools, and More Tools**

Before launch we did a 2 hour session on KS tools. Participants had identified previously a set of tools that they wanted to get to know better and discuss further.

We used the [Commoncraft Show](#) videos as an introduction and then shared our experiences, questions and answers. Here are some examples:

#### **Wikis**

- Can two people edit a wiki at the same time?
- What does History mean and what is it good for?
- SPAM is often a problem. It is better to have login and password protection.

- A specific version of Tiki Wiki allows you to work offline which is useful for those with bad connectivity (like our colleagues at ILRI campus in Ethiopia 😊) Also Google just released a service.
- Is the administrator is the only one who can change and go back to previous version?
- What are the weaknesses of wikis? Formatting issues, not easy to see tracked changes.
- Wikis focus on content and not on the voices of the contributor. Not good for conversations.

### Blogs

- Stories: hard to keep up.
- It is useful to use plugins to send the same blog post to different blogs.
- When we have project blogs we tackle the problem of writing our personal thinking versus institutional messages. We need to get language right.
- Blogs don't need to be a discussion forum, they can be used as an announcement mechanism.
- Difference between discussion forums and blogs. As far as blogs are concerned, there is a main blogger and the comments are secondary. In discussion forums everybody is on the same level which is better for equally distributed conversations.
- It is difficult to promote blogs when the center restricts access.

### RSS

- With RSS feeds we subscribe to content and take it from one place to another.
- Does the use of RSS limit our spirit of discovery?
- RSS allows knowing quickly when our organizations are mentioned in the news.
- Gauri shared [www.agrifedds.org](http://www.agrifedds.org) with the group which is a services where feeds from different web sites have been aggregated. It allows us to subscribe to selected feeds related to our specific interest.
- Social Bookmarking
- How can I see what others are bookmarking?
- Being rigorous with tags is important.
- Recognition of tags in different languages will help to create multicultural bridges.

### **Working Again on our projects and identifying KS Knowledge Gaps**

In the afternoon we went back to our groups and worked further on our projects. We asked participants to think about the following: What are the next steps? What do you need to explore further? What are the gaps and what are your needs? When we came back into plenary, we asked participants to write each need or gap on cards and we sorted them into groups.

The following overall topics emerged



and will be further discussed tomorrow morning:

- Identifying user needs
- How to choose the right tool?
- Get buy-in, commitment and engagement from the people we need to make KS work
- M&E of KS
- Peer Coaching
- RSS Feeds
- Communities of Practice Best Practices
- More Tools (Delicious, Dgroups, blogs, yellow pages)

### **How Do We Get Buy-in and Commitment to KS? How Do We Engage our Target Groups?**

How do we get buy-in and commitment to KS, how do we engage our target groups?

This is an issue that came up over and over again as a principle challenge for KS during phase 1 of the workshop and also now in our meeting here in Addis. That is why we decided to give us an extra opportunity to tackle the issue in our first morning session.



We choose the **Peer Assist** methodology and provided space for two groups: Grace Ndungu from ILRI wanted to get feedback on possible ways to engage participants into ILRI's upcoming dialogue on climate change and health. Gauri Salokhe asked in her group for ideas and suggestions on how to get broad buy-in at FAO for the Knowledge Fair planned for December this year. Here is a summary of the two discussion rounds around Grace's challenge: ILRI and partner organizations have identified climate change and its

consequences on human and livestock health as a niche for further research. Google provided funds to undertake a broad consultation in order to define pertinent research questions and be able to formulate proposals. ILRI has set up a working group composed by "champions" who represent the various actors. The following consultation process has been designed:

- A "challenge paper" has been written by scientists that lay out the overall framework and challenges
- An invitation has been sent to 200 stakeholders for participation.
- Their feedback on the paper will be taken into a count and build the starting point for an online dialogue to be held between June and August.
- A face to face meeting will be held in September.

Grace's issues were summarized by the group and with the help of the facilitator, Florencia as follows: How to get buy-in from researchers from the climate change, health, and livestock sector, people who are not used to work together? How can we reach a

level of trust that motivates participation? How could we address different types of participants with different levels of knowledge and different perspectives?

Here are some examples of feedback that Grace got from the two groups:

- Strengthen the group of champions (conference calls, pre-meeting) and promote the event through the champions to attract attention from stakeholders. Create short podcast with champions who could share the importance of the topic and consultation process.
- Don't start from scratch, build on what you have (people, resources).
- Multiply the communication channels to address multiple publics and information consumption habits: A Web site with basic information resources, e-mail invitations that are forwarded by champions, a blog that could help diffuse the content of the challenge paper by small bits and cover the whole event.
- Create perhaps a linkage to the high-level conference on climate change in Rome in September.
- For the online dialogue, pay attention to the platform (e-mail or web based or both), the need of a facilitator, the rhythm and structure over the weeks. Give options to time-poor participants to digest the dialogue.
- Look at materials, existing experiences and evaluations of on-line events.

### **How to Get Buy-in for KS? Using the Peer Assist Method to Gather Ideas**

Blog posted by Posted by Gauri Salokhe



This week I have been attending the Face-to-Face part of the Knowledge Sharing Workshop at ILRI in Addis. The F2F part builds upon a month of online discussion on KS tools and methods. Today I had the opportunity to benefit from the collective knowledge of colleagues working at various CG institutions, FAO and FARA and at the same time, learn about an extremely useful KS Method called Peer Assist. We started off the session by watching and getting introduced to the Peer Assist

Method. As we were more than 10, we were divided into two different groups. As a Peer Assissee, the person or team facing a challenge or problem, I had the opportunity to discuss the issue of getting buy-in from the Staff members of the Rome-based agencies (Bioversity International, IFAD, FAO, WFP) to participate in the upcoming Knowledge Fair. The discussion was facilitated by Vanessa.

During the first group discussion, I had the opportunity to detail out my issues and gather feedback from the colleagues. Once we finished the first session and moved to the second, the task of explaining the problem seemed much lighter. I detailed out the problem, refining it slightly based on the feedback I received in the first group. Vanessa then read out the points we had gathered from the first discussion. Because we already

had covered some of the ideas, the participants felt that in the second round, they had the opportunity to build-on the ideas and give additional suggestions.

Here are just few of the ideas that surfaced during the two rounds of discussions we had:

- Prepare a strong marketing strategy to raise awareness and build interest
- Ensure that the event is perceived as a collaborative effort rather than led by just one organization
- Show examples of cross organizational, multi-disciplinary and multi-lingual knowledge sharing
- Involve staff from different departments from participating organizations who are currently doing activities that demonstrate knowledge sharing.
- I thought the role of the facilitator was crucial in ensuring that the discussion stayed on track and that important points were well captured.

More information on the [Peer Assist Method](#) is available from the [KS Toolkit Wiki](#).

### **Parallel Sessions to Fill Knowledge Gaps**

On our last day and before lunch we hold a session based on the needs and knowledge gaps that we had identified the day before, and that participants considered as important for their projects. We used the session to introduce the [Open Space Technology](#), even if we used it only to a certain extent. Participants could add session topics to those that we had previously identified. They were then asked to sign up for a maximum of two sessions. A short review of the numbers of sessions and the sign-ups, the group decided to go for two rounds of parallel sessions on 4 different topics:

1. Monitoring and evaluation of KS
2. How to choose a KS tool or method
3. How to identify user needs
4. Learning more about RSS, CMS and Yellow Pages

Here is a summary of the M&E discussion:

Two types of M&E have been discussed among Selam, Pete, Gauri, Petr, Maria Grazia, Nadia, Grace, and Sandra:

- 1) M&E of Web resources
- 2) M&E of KS

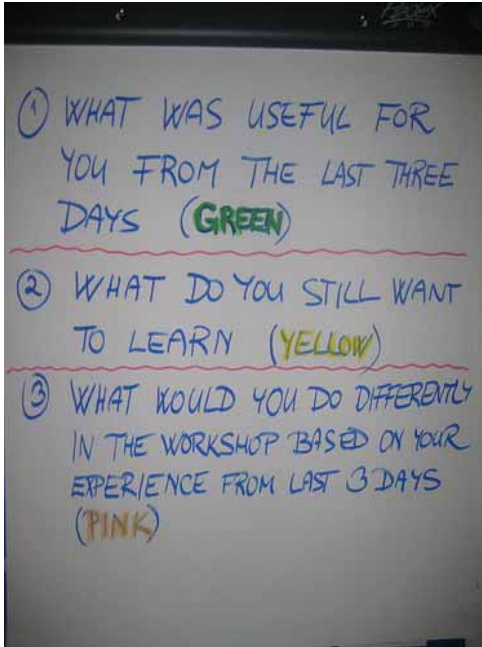
On the first topic Pete Shelton pointed us to a [blog he wrote](#) on that topic where he lists a few potential indicators for measuring impact on the web while commenting their overall value and utility: Page views/visitors, downloads, citations, mentions in the media, RSS feeds, Search Engine rankings. Pete would like to identify IFPRI's different audiences and perhaps use a planning, and M&E method to reach them more effectively.

On the second topic we mentioned and briefly introduced some possible methods, like the [Impact Pathways](#), [Outcome Mapping](#), [Innovation Histories](#) or [Most Significant Change](#). Those methods have in common that they provide ways to look at behavioral changes through SNA, storytelling, interviews, and more.

Gauri mentioned an effort at FAO to measure the usefulness of [Communities of Practice](#) at FAO. The number of members of s CoP (they are run on [Dgroups](#)) is not an indicator of success. Gauri asked for ways to find out more about their impact. The group

suggested doing a survey combined with a set of interviews. Nadia raised the issue of the need to always combine different methods in order to cover different aspects of M&E.

### Participant's Evaluation: We Want to Learn More Tools!



Last but not least we went through an evaluation of the workshop. As a way to share reflections and to crystallize trends, we asked participants to reflect individually and answer three questions, then to share those answers in pairs and finally in groups of four.

When asked what was useful for them from the last three days, participants highlighted the relational aspects: Learning with peers, meeting and working with people who have similar problems, networking... those have been primary positive and useful aspects of the workshop. Participants also appreciated learning about methods and tools. The Peer assist methodology was mentioned several times, as well as the hands-on sessions about tools.

The second question was about things that our group still wants to learn more about, and this are: tools, tools, and more tools. The use of RSS feeds

is a real learning need for many participants. But our colleagues are also intrigued to learn more about some methods, like facilitation techniques, and approaches related to monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment, specifically of KS approaches. When asked “What would you do differently in the workshop based on your experience of the last three days?” participants gave us the principle suggestion to have more time to explore tools, and if possible hands-on (which requires internet connection ;-).