

Overview **Stage 1:** Galvanizing commitment



IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON FRAMEWORK ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (CD) FOR AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION SYSTEMS (AIS)

This factsheet is part of a series outlining tools and approaches to promote capacity development projects for agricultural innovation systems (AIS). The tools described in these pages are designed with a view to the practical implementation of the principles of the Common Framework of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), a G20 initiative. They have been applied in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project, funded by the EU and jointly implemented by Agrinatura and FAO in collaboration with national partners in Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda.

Background

Innovation in agriculture is a precondition for meeting the challenge of feeding the world's growing population in the face of climate change and the degradation of natural resources.

A successful agricultural innovation system (AIS) demands joint action from all the key players and the elevation of the functional capacities of individuals and organizations to a level from which they can navigate complexity, collaborate, reflect and learn, frame strategies and engage in political processes. Just as important is that the enabling environment is conducive to collaboration and interaction.

Creating a sense of **ownership** from the outset and securing a **high level of commitment** from the individuals and organizations involved in the system is indispensable for forging a coordinated approach to capacity development (CD) for AIS.

Galvanizing the commitment of AIS actors through learning, participation and reflection is a prerequisite for CD initiatives.

Galvanizing commitment:

- Raises awareness of the key role that innovation plays in dealing with food and agriculture challenges;
- Systematically sensitizes key actors (research and education organizations, bridging institutions, farming associations and cooperatives, the private sector) and key decision makers in the enabling environment;
- Convinces actors within AIS to question deep-seated attitudes and the business-as-usual mentality;
- Creates space for organizational learning or new ways of working, and stimulates system-wide learning;
- Solicits parties to commit to a coordinated approach to CD for AIS;
- Specifies which institutions, organizations, key players or "champions" need to be involved in the next step (i.e. the visioning exercise).



Who to involve

Not only the direct actors of the AIS, but also broader development partners should be considered for involvement in the process for the galvanizing of commitment. The participants should include ministries of finance and planning, legislators and associations, local government, national think-tanks, financial institutions supporting the agribusiness sector, the private sector and NGOs. Moreover, international organizations and other national development partners should be involved to ensure coordination and harmonized support to future implementation.

Approach

At this early stage, face-to-face meetings with individuals are appropriate, but group discussions within organizations and mixed-group meetings and seminars should also be contemplated. More than one meeting should be planned, especially when the participants include high-level individuals (from ministries, heads of departments, etc.). It is important to have a strategy that lays out who should be involved and how. For face-to-face meetings, the recommended format consists in semi-structured presentations and interviews, while other instruments, such as scoping studies, inception workshops and policy dialogues, can be used and are described in this factsheet.

Scoping Study

Objectives:

- To catalogue and characterize stakeholders, projects, programmes, actors, existing AIS coordination mechanisms, and the individuals active in AIS and in CD initiatives;
- To identify existing innovation platforms and other mechanisms that operate around a single commodity or value chain;
- To discover champions within the AIS (leading individuals or organizations), as well as teams with the potential to contribute to CD initiatives;
- To identify governance structures and initiatives to promote innovation in agriculture;
- To evaluate whether the wider policy framework is conducive to innovation;
- To design CD needs assessments that will shape the implementation stage.



Inception Workshop

An inception workshop consists of a one- or two-days meeting during which a CD initiative is launched. It serves to ensure that a collective understanding has been reached on the nature of the initiative, especially with respect to the interventions that it will entail and the results at national level that it will produce. The workshop is intended to secure the buy-in, ownership and commitment of relevant national stakeholders. The results of the scoping study constitute one of the key inputs for the workshop. To galvanize the commitment of the key actors in the workshop, several analytical tools may be deployed, among them the Timeline, Problem Tree, Network Analysis (NetMap), and Rich Picture.

Objectives:

- To raise awareness and develop a shared understanding of the objectives and expected results of the CD initiative;
- To provide a platform for the sharing and validation of the results of the scoping study, including its recommendations;
- To frame a preliminary shared vision and action plan for capacity development for AIS;
- To identify organizations and individuals to champion CD for AIS at the country level;
- To lay down clear guidelines for the country needs assessment process (e.g. criteria for selecting innovation partnerships);
- To provide a space to learn about the stakeholders' interests and potential engagement in the CD for AIS initiative and to share the findings.

Policy Dialogue

The purpose of a policy dialogue is to improve the process of development or implementation of policy changes that promote agricultural innovation, through dialogue and interaction among key stakeholders. Particularly, policy-makers, participate in the dialogue with a view to increasing the clarity and coherence of national policies and ultimately, of the enabling environment. A policy dialogue is usually organized at a national level, and tackles those problems identified in the course of the capacity needs assessment phase of the innovation partnership which are relevant for policy makers and which require interventions at national level.

Objectives:

1. To reach a collective understanding of the relevance of innovation, policy development and institutional issues for agricultural innovation;
2. To strengthen the capacity of stakeholders involved in the innovation partnership to influence strategic and political processes relevant to their objectives;
3. To recommend improvements to the institutional mechanisms and enabling environment (e.g. the functional efficiency of multi-stakeholder platforms and collaboration incentives/ disincentives) that shape national policies for agricultural innovation, and thus build up a vision of how the enabling environment for agricultural innovation in general can be improved.



For further information

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Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems Project (CDAIS): <http://cdais.net> • **Email:** info@cdais.net



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Common Framework products:



*Conceptual
Background*



*Guidance Note on
Operationalization*



*Synthesis
Document*

*The implementation of the TAP Action Plan is supported by the EU-funded project
Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS).*

*The Common Framework documents are also available in French and Spanish
on the Common Framework pages of TAPipedia.*



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